

Flood Protection Manager's Report for period ending 30 May 2003

1. Manager's comments

New staff

We have just completed a successful recruitment round. Jacqueline Cox and Sharyn Westlake fill our vacant engineering positions at the end of June 2003. Jacqueline has just completed an environmental engineering degree at Unitec, Auckland and will assist Steve Murphy in the Operations Support area. Sharyn is currently working for Opus Consultants, and will bring 10 years experience and excellent technical skills to the Department. Sharyn will work with Phil Purves in our advisory and investigation areas.

We have also filled the vacant Riverhand position at Mabey Road, and are in the process of recruiting a contract Riverhand to assist the Otaki team over the busy winter planting season.

Mabey Road Depot

The feasibility study into the future of the Mabey Road Depot is essentially complete. The independent valuer has confirmed the valuation estimates used to determine whether staying at Mabey Road or shifting to a new site is the most economic option. I aim to put a report to the Policy, Finance & Strategy Committee by the end of June 2003.

Digital cameras

Taking photographs of projects, events and the rivers in general is an important part of keeping a record for the future. These photographs are in turn used extensively for presentations, displays and in reports.

We have now entered the modern hi tech age by purchasing digital cameras. The photo record will now be held digitally and can be quickly accessed at both the Depots as well as at the Regional Council centre. It will speed up and simplify the preparation of presentations and displays, and largely eliminate film and processing costs.

2. Waikanae River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Otaihanga Domain stopbank

The design work for this project has been completed and resource consents obtained. Tender documents are currently being prepared with the aim of calling tenders in June 2003. A four month time window is to be given to contractors for the start of construction in an attempt to encourage more competitive tenders. The large time window will allow contractors more opportunity to fit this job within their existing work. However once the contractors start work they will have to complete the work within eight weeks.

2.2 Friends of the Waikanae River

A Friends meeting was held on 15 April 2003, and the next meeting is set for 29 May 2003. Key issues at present are planning the next stage of the care group project and planning for the AGM on 18 June 2003.

2.3 Gravel extraction

A further 2,000 cubic metres of gravel is currently being extracted from the Pukekawa reach of the Waikanae River. This extraction, due to be completed by the end of May, is the last from this reach for the year. Extraction will start again in the tidal reach in December 2003.

2.4 Waikanae River mouth

KCDC have released their report on the "Strategies for Managing Coastal Erosion Hazards on the Kapiti Coast". The report draws some links between the management of the Waikanae River mouth and erosion on the coast. We will carefully review this aspect of the report, and any other issues affecting Flood Protection responsibilities, and prepare a response to KCDC if appropriate.

A letter was received from the Otaihanga Boating Club about the current position of the river mouth following two articles in the local newspaper. We have subsequently inspected the mouth and formed a view that no action is needed at this stage.

3. Otaki River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

3.1 Friends of the Otaki River

A meeting of the Otaki Friends was held on 30 April 2003. No specific issues arose that required attention from Greater Wellington.

3.2 Stresscrete protection works

The construction of the Stresscrete extension works has been completed on budget, and an as-built survey undertaken.

3.3 Flood hazard mapping

A considerable number of responses have been received as a result of the advertising of the revised flood hazard maps by Kapiti Coast District Council. We are working with KCDC to log the calls and then respond to them once the submission period ends in mid June 2003. Work is also continuing on a report documenting the results of the mapping exercise.

4. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]

4.1 Ava to Ewen project

The Strand Park realignment project has now been delayed by 12 months following advice from LINZ. The transfer from MOE to Greater Wellington must follow the procedure set out in a Cabinet directive dated November 2000 for the transfer of land from the Crown to a Local Authority for a public work.

In essence this will require the land to go through a process which considers Maori interests before the land can be transferred. The process is expected to take about 7 to 8 months, meaning it will probably be about January 2004 before we know the land can be transferred and we can get access to the land to start work.

The details of the delay to the Strand Park realignment project and recommended changes to the Hutt capital improvement programme are reported separately.

4.2 Belmont improvements

The design for the edge protection works and environmental enhancement is largely complete, with only our standard internal design review yet to be finalised.

The draft consent application was sent to interested parties for submission. No submissions were received from the Belmont community. Only a few minor amendments were made to the final application, and by the time this report is received, the consent application will have been lodged.

An information sheet was sent to residents in the area notifying them of the application's lodgement, and the results from the consultation process. Construction will begin in 2003/04 financial year, as programmed.

Peter O'Brien is currently following up with landowners where encroachments need to be removed. An inspection in April showed most still had not undertaken agreed commitments to remove encroachments.

4.3 Implementing non-structural measures

District plan provisions

Steady progress is being made with developing draft district plan provisions for high-risk flood hazard areas.

At this stage it appears that the HRFMP non-structural measures principles can be accommodated within existing or modified district plan provisions. In most instances current planning rules can remain unaltered, or be tweaked slightly, to accommodate restrictions to manage flood hazard effects. District plan issues, objectives and policies will however need to be modified in places to aid the interpretation of planning rules.

Emergency management measures and voluntary actions

The six emergency management enhancement projects, covering areas such as flood emergency maps, school education kits, and a media management plan, are generally complete. A summary of final outputs will be provided in late June, along with some of the supporting documentation.

Council is also producing a series of flood hazard fact sheets following a collaborative effort between the Flood Protection and Resource Policy Departments, and Wairarapa Division. A general summary sheet and one covering Wairarapa flooding are currently being printed. The sheets provide an account of past floods, flood extent information including the possible effects of large floods, and useful flood emergency and voluntary actions tips to help people consider planning ahead for flooding. The sheets will be distributed to the likes of schools, business and other public and lifeline agencies. Sheets dealing with the Hutt and Kapiti areas will be produced next financial year.

5. Porirua Stream

5.1 Seton Nossiter safety review

Our consultant advisors, DamWatch Services Limited, are now well through the review. The key issue has always been the safe management of extreme storm events, given that this is not a purpose designed dam, and it has no auxiliary spillway.

A preliminary verbal report indicates that the main recommendation will be to improve our emergency management procedures. This is to ensure public safety in the most unlikely event of an over design storm, and that we continue to operate the dam within accepted New Zealand dam safety standards. The review outcomes will be reported fully to the Committee once the final report is received.

6. Planning and development services [Phillip Purves]

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during April 2003:

	April 2003	YTD
Requests brought forward	27	13
Additional requests received	12	148
Responses provided	16	138
Outstanding requests	23	23

In the second week of May the Kapiti Coast District Council informed all property owners affected by the revised Kapiti flood hazard maps. The letters contained a map, showing the revised extent and type of flooding for each property plus a copy of the proposed changes to the flood hazard planning provisions. Feedback on the revised flood hazard maps and provisions has been invited and the closing date for comments is 27 June 2003. This mail out has resulted in a large number of flood hazard enquiries and has significantly increased the number of telephone requests to the Flood Protection Department for information.

The results of the Mangaone Stream Flood Hazard Assessment (June 2002) have been included as part of the revised Kapiti flood hazard maps. The consultation process for the District Plan change will provide the opportunity for landowner feedback on the results of the Mangaone Stream study. In addition, the Otaki and Mangaone models have been linked in order to show the full southern extent of flooding from the Otaki River. Ground level information was not available to show the full extent of the hazard previously, and hence there is an artificial flood extent cutoff in the current District Plan maps.

6.1 Waitohu flood hazard assessment

Work has now started on the important hydraulic modelling component of the study. We expect the project to be running close to the programme set out in the project scope at year-end (30 June 2003) despite the significant delays in the field survey previously reported.

7. Operations

7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]

Hutt River

We have struggled this financial year to obtain rock for scheduled maintenance work up and down the river. An unusually large demand for rock for a variety of projects in the region, including the Wellington City Council beach improvement project at Oriental Parade, is the main reason for the supply difficulties. However the Tararua Roding quarry at Linton, Palmerston North has now started supplying us with rock, and we expect to have our order for 2,100 tonnes completed by the end of June.

Further steel and demolition rubble has been removed from Petone foreshore immediately adjacent to the river mouth sand plant. This is part of an ongoing programme to tidy up the area.

Repairs have been completed to the top surface of sections of stopbanks in both Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt. Most of this maintenance work is to repair wear and tear caused by the high number of people who walk or cycle along the stopbank. Where there is no sealed path pedestrian traffic will eventually damage the grass cover, causing pot holes and rutting.

Hutt River trail

The trail has been extended by 400m on the right bank under the Melling Bridge. The project, a joint venture with Rotary, completes a missing link in the trail.

A prison work gang from Rimutaka Prison completed some much needed maintenance of the trail in the Taita Gorge section adjacent to the Eastern Hutt Road. Work completed included surface reshaping and metalling.

Hutt River ranging service

Good progress is being made educating 4 wheel drive and motorbike users about not using the river as a playground. A visit was made to a local motorcycle dealer who was using the area as a motorcycle testing ground, and a brochure on 4 wheel drive vehicle use of the river has been drafted. Once finalised this will be distributed to car dealers in the Hutt Valley explaining Greater Wellington's policy on this issue.

A presentation was made to the Hutt Valley Angler's club explaining the role of the River Ranger, and several planting days have been arranged with local schools in the area.

Organised events held during the last period include a half marathon run by the Trentham Harriers, a water survival exercise run by the New Zealand Army, and the Crazyman event run by the Hutt multisport club on the lower reaches of the river. Several walking groups also used the trail for mid week rambles.

Watercourses

A stream clearing run has been completed in the Te Mome Stream, and a gravel build up was removed from the Waiwhetu Stream, under the Summit Road Bridge.

Work for other departments

Two artesian bores were sealed at the old Dominion Dyes site at Petone for Resource Investigations, and further work has been undertaken to repair vandalism to the Resource Investigations river recorder at Waikanae.

7.2 Kapiti [Garry Baker]

Otaki River

The on-going programme to re-build and improve edge protection works in the lower Otaki River has taken another step forward with the completion of two further jobs:

- Extension of the Lethbridge rock lining (left bank, below bridges) 30 metres upstream a further 30 metres - 500 tonnes of rock.
- Extension of the Stresscrete rock lining (right bank, above bridges) 90 metres downstream a further 90 metres - 1,800 tonnes rock, Capex funded.

Watercourses

The annual clearing run of the major drains and minor streams in the Kapiti District is underway. Most of the work is able to be completed using contracted hydraulic excavators, but some hand clearing is required in the Mangapouri and Waimeha Streams.

Gravel extraction

Gravel extraction figures to the end of April 2003 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	Period		Year
			Year 2002/2003 (cubic metres)	Year 2001/2002 (cubic metres)	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	3,822	34,482	35,238
	River	Horokiwi	0	9,693	22,680
Otaki	River	Winstones	5,300	48,420	36,250
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	7,472	4,295
	Below Greenaway Road	Various	0	2,047	
TOTALS			9,122	102,114	98,463

7.3 Operations support [Steve Murphy]

Waiwhetu Stream

Weed spraying

A pre winter inspection of the stream revealed extensive growth of willow weed right through the stream. This weed required control and was sprayed with glyphosate in mid May. Members of the Waiwhetu Working Group and Iwi were consulted as a courtesy.

Cape pondweed was generally within acceptable limits, particularly in the upper reaches. There are areas of thicker growth below Cleary Street, and particularly through Te Whiti Park where it is probably benefiting from fertiliser run off. This area is the least affected by any rise in flood level however, so no pre winter application of diquat was considered necessary.

Hayward Terrace flooding

A further meeting has been held with residents from the lower end of Hayward Terrace, Lower Hutt, on 17 May 2003. A video of flooding from the Waiwhetu Stream on 22 November 2001 was shown to the Committee at the March 2003 meeting.

The residents of this area are lobbying hard for increased protection against flooding. As a result of the meeting, Flood Protection agreed to identify and rank the most vulnerable areas along the Waiwhetu Stream. If this process identifies Hayward Terrace as a priority, the costs/benefits and feasibility of suitable flood protection improvement works will be examined.

Estuary Bridge walkway, Hutt River trail

We are managing the construction of a new walkway under the eastern end of the Estuary Bridge. The proposed walkway will enable users of the river trail to avoid the dangerous crossing of Waione Street. Hutt Rotary, Hutt City Council, and Flood Protection are jointly funding this Rotary initiated project. The total estimated cost of the project is \$30,000.

Flood Protection staff will commence construction as soon as the required building and resource consents are obtained.

Geoff Dick
Manager, Flood Protection

Parks and Forests Manager's Report for period ending 30 May 2003

1. Manager's comments [Murray Waititi]

1.1 Visit to Auckland Regional Council

Two senior Parks and Forests staff and I spent two days visiting our counterparts in Auckland. The visit was of immense value to us because it gave us the opportunity to swap ideas, compare programmes and meet others in the industry. Things of particular interest to us were how they ran their education, "Partnerships in Parks" and volunteers programmes. The information we gathered during the visit will help us to strengthen our own programmes.

1.2 Draft Regional Park Network Management Plan

Submissions on the draft Regional Parks Network Management Plan closed on 16 May 2003. Approximately 300 submissions have been received and we are in the process of assessing these submissions and will report to Council in due course.

1.3 Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park

Presentations of the draft Regional Parks Network Management Plan to the local community provided the opportunity to broach the idea of forming a Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park. This idea has taken hold recently as the local community determines how to cater for the needs of motor racing enthusiasts on the Kapiti Coast, and whether this could be accommodated at Queen Elizabeth Park. This local issue provided the catalyst for around 100 people to attend a public meeting on Sunday 18 May 2003 to discuss the forming of a Friends group. Facilitated by Derek Wilshere, the meeting clearly illustrated that a Friends group was needed for the Park, with around 25 people volunteering to set up an Establishment Group. This group will now set the Terms of Reference for the Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park. From our recent experience with setting up the Friends of Belmont Regional Park, we expect that this process will take around six months. The first key issue facing the Friends is the development of the Queen Elizabeth Park management plan early in 2004.

1.4 Hutt Catchment 1080 operation

Medical Officer of Health and resource consent approval have been received for the Hutt Catchment 1080 operation. Any further progress on the operation has been suspended however due to the current power crisis. The operation will mean that water will need to be pumped from the Stuart Macaskill Lakes and the Hutt aquifer to compensate for not drawing water directly from the Hutt River intake (which is gravity fed). Pumping water will use large amounts of electricity and this is not considered a prudent use of power given the current national campaign to conserve electricity. Unfortunately, if the operation is to be carried out this year, it needs to be done so by the end of September because of restrictions around when water can be drawn from the storage lakes. If the current power crisis does not end by late July, the operation will have to be postponed until next year.

1.5 Answers to questions raised at the last meeting

1.5.1 Whareroa Farm

In the March Committee meeting, Councillor Barr advised the Committee of issues arising from the February meeting of the Wellington Conservation Board (WCB) and requested that officers look into the possibility of securing walkway access across Landcorp's Whareroa Farm.

Officers have begun a process to identify the proposal's costs and benefits. To date, Landcorp have agreed in principle to allowing walkway access through the farm to be incorporated into any subdivision of that farm should it be sold. At this point in time we are investigating in conjunction with DoC, KCDC and Landcorp:

- options for securing the walkway into any proposed sale
- what land might be acquired
- the implication that acquiring that land might have on ongoing resourcing requirements.

We should have a firmer idea of all the issues in the next month or so. At that point we will be better able to assess whether the walkway concept is feasible or not.

1.5.2 4WD vehicles in the Hutt River

At the March Committee meeting concerns were expressed by Councillors that the Hutt River was being used by 4WD dealerships as a "showground" for 4WD vehicles.

In response, officers compiled a letter that explains what activities are permissible in the Hutt River and distributed it to dealers.

1.5.3 "Whitireia Possum Free" press release

At the last Committee meeting officers were asked to prepare a press release in association with the Department of Conservation about the success of the possum control operation at Whitireia Park. The press release has been prepared by Parks and Forests, and sent to DoC for comment and approval. The press release should be published in local newspapers by the Committee meeting.

2. Planning and policy [Dr Philippa Crisp]

2.1 Review of resource information

The review of the 'resource' information for the regional parks, forests and water collection areas is progressing well. The review will provide us with up to date information of what historical, archaeological, physical and biological resources are in each of the parks. This information will flow through to the development of interpretative signs and brochures as well as providing background information for the management plan process. The initial scoping of the historical and archaeological information has been completed and the review of physical and biological information is almost complete. We are also updating our GIS information and developing a range of maps.

2.2 Wind farm proposals

Victoria Owen accompanied Murray Kennedy to meetings with Lower Hutt and Porirua City Councils to discuss the wind farm proposals. These meetings have been useful in outlining the proposals and discussing potential issues arising from the territorial authorities' perspectives. We have also been requested to participate in a panel discussion on the proposed windfarms being held by the Friends of Belmont Regional Park.

2.3 Capital works projects [Graham Laws]

2.3.1 Kaitoke toilets construction progressing

In April, Parks staff completed the trenching for the power, telephone and water supply for the toilets and ranger's office on the upper terrace at Kaitoke. The contractor is currently constructing the modified design 'Versatile' cottage and we expect to have it completed and on site by the end of June.

2.3.2 Plans complete for Queen Elizabeth Park toilets

Architects have completed working drawings for toilets at Whareroa Beach (four cubicles) and MacKays Crossing (six cubicles including two disabled accesses). We are currently applying for archaeological, building and resource consents and construction should begin in late June.

2.3.3 Rimutaka Rail Trail works proceeding

Contractors are fabricating a footbridge for the Munitions Bend bridge. We have applied for archaeological, building and resource consents for the bridge and for the car park at the Kaitoke entrance.

3. Marketing and Design [Amanda Cox]

3.1 Signs at Battle Hill

Eleven information and interpretation signs will be erected at Battle Hill in time for the Arbor Day celebration on 13 June 2003. These include three signs for the kiosk outside the Ken Gray Education Centre and eight free-standing signs for various points of interest around the Park. Still to come are signs for the battle site and graveyard; these will be developed once a review of the history of these areas is completed.

3.2 Korokoro Dam 100 year celebration

On Sunday 25 May 2003, an event marking the centenary of the Korokoro Dam in Belmont Regional Park was held. The Dam was the first mass concrete gravity dam built in New Zealand. The celebration included speeches by Dr Rob Aspden of the Institute of Professional Engineers (NZ), Bob Offer, an engineer and author of 'Walls of Water,' and Councillor Margaret Shields. Information about the dam was also on display at the Oakleigh Street entrance. Attendees were invited to view the structure through an organised walk to the dam.

3.3 Arbor Day

This year we are focusing on two wetland restoration sites, one at Queen Elizabeth Park, Monday 9 June, and the other at Battle Hill Farm Forest Park, Friday 13 June. Local school children and the general public are invited to help plant out flax, cabbage trees and manuka in these areas; hardy plants which provide good food sources for wildlife. We are inviting a member of the local Iwi and the US military (at Queen Elizabeth Park) to speak, along with an address from Councillor Shields.

3.4 Community newsletter

The first edition of our new community newsletter was published in April, and sent out to around 400 people on our contact database. The newsletter featured contributions from the Friends of Belmont Regional Park, Friends of Maara Roa and Graeme Jupp of the Friends of the Fell Museum. The newsletter also focused on the success of the Regional Outdoors Programme, and promoted our upcoming planting events. Produced in our new corporate brand format, the newsletter generated very positive comments from many of the recipients. We plan to publish the next edition in late 2003.

4. Environmental asset management [Dr Philippa Crisp]

4.1 Control operations

The balloted hunting in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Catchment Area ended on 29 April. The final tally was 8 deer, 7 goats and 6 pigs. This compares with 10 deer, 11 goats and 2 pigs in 2002, and 10 deer, 11 goats and 2 pigs in 2001. It was disappointing to see that two hunting blocks had very little hunting in them as the balloted hunters did not turn up. The hunter hours were between 6am and 6pm and it was estimated that 68% of the possible hunting time was used over the ballot period. In general, the weather was good for hunting and the biggest stag was an 11 pointer.

Recent weed control operations include:

- old man's beard in Akatarawa Forest and Belmont Regional Park
- pest plant infestations in the remnant bush at Kaitoke Regional Park
- pest plant infestations in the regenerating bush at Battle Hill Farm Forest Park
- new pampas and buddleia infestations in logged areas of Akatarawa Forest.

4.2 Monitoring

Owen Spearpoint re-photographed selected rata trees in the Northern Block of East Harbour Regional Park. Fifty ratas were chosen two years ago for measurement by digital photography to assess any changes in foliage density after possum control.

Tracking tunnels have been put in place in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Catchment Area as part of a monitoring programme to ascertain the numbers of rodents and mustelids in the Catchment. Owen Spearpoint obtained the help of several volunteers (many from the Kaumatua Tramping Club) to assist in undertaking this work.

4.3 Environmental planning

4.3.1 Control operations

Officers are working with the Friends of Maara Roa care group to assist them with pest control in the Cannons Creek bush. A pest plant control plan was prepared for the area by officers that helps them to identify pest plants and select the correct control procedure. A process is also being put into place whereby the volunteers can monitor any new weed infestations.

4.3.2 Monitoring

A monitoring kit for monitoring forest health, developed by Peter Hunford of Forme Consulting, is currently being trialled by the Friends of Maara Roa. The kit contains equipment and information for monitoring forest health and the Friends of Maara Roa will assess its “usability” and report back to Peter Hunford.

4.3.3 Restoration

Officers have been working with MIRO to try and resolve an issue concerning the group. The issue is whether the bands on selected rata trees developed to stop possums climbing them, were constricting growth. Officers met with the MIRO care group and renowned ecologist Philip Simpson to look at the issue, but findings were inconclusive.

Transpower have agreed to fund half the work involved in restoring the fish passage at a ford in the Akatarawa Forest. The ford was originally built by Transpower to access their pylons in the area. Work on the fish passage will begin next month.

5. Western sector [Matt Ballantine]

5.1 Battle Hill Farm Forest Park

5.1.1 New fertiliser techniques used

A different approach was used this year to fertilise pasture on the Battle Hill Farm to try and minimise the environmental impacts that can come from top dressing.

The flat areas and rolling country have been fertilised by truck in order to reduce the amount of fertiliser going into the stream. On the hill country a slow-release super phosphate (RPR) was used when top-dressing. RPR has been found to have a lower rate of leaching therefore reducing the amount of runoff. The new fertiliser, along with the streamside re-vegetation work that has been carried out by Greater Wellington and volunteers over the last few years, will help to reduce the amount of nitrates that enter the waterways. This new approach only increased the cost of fertilising by less than \$1,000pa.

5.1.2 Less people, more mushrooms!

Camping has begun to quieten down with the recent spell of cold weather, but casual and day visits remain steady. The weather, despite the temperature, has been settled and people have been making the most of it.

The mushroom season has been quite good and a lot of people have been making the most of public access to a farm to look for the tasty fungi. They have been enjoying the fresh air and exercise along with the added bonus of a bag of 'mushies' at the end of the day.

5.1.3 Salvation Army tour of duty

The Salvation Army Conservation Corps has recently completed a tour of duty at Battle Hill. They carried out a variety of conservation related work including weed control, mustelid trapping and cleaning up the waterways. The Corps finished with a 'bush drop' where the members had to camp out and fend for themselves while completing a work assignment given to them. The weather was kind and the team had a good time.

5.1.4 Events continue

There have been a number of large equestrian events held on the Park. Numbers have been good and people attending have enjoyed themselves and the fine weather. As winter sets in however, the horse riding events will stop due to wet ground conditions.

The Olympic Harriers held their cross-country event in the Park and the ground conditions and cool weather meant that some good race times were set.

5.2 Belmont Regional Park

5.2.1 Projects continue

Work has continued on the repair of the Korokoro valley track, and we gave started preparations for building the Cannons Creek bridge. The bridge will form part of a track link from Cannons Creek to Takapu Road.

The area of Cannons Creek that was decimated by fire was inspected by officers and plans are being prepared to re-vegetate part of the site with the assistance of Friends of Maara Roa.

Fencing was completed near the Stratton Street Education facility to provide for a native re-vegetation area near the Korokoro stream.

5.2.2 Army exercise

The territorial army utilised the Park for a navigational exercise one weekend during early May.

5.3 Queen Elizabeth Park

5.3.1 Horse riders get new track

A small wetland alongside the MacKays Crossing entrance road has been fenced off to allow horse riders to meander through the Park on their way to the current coastal horse track. This new track will provide a safe and aesthetic alternative for horse riders and walkers who currently walk and ride along the roadside.

5.3.2 Drought causes erosion

Due to the drought we have had increased erosion in our recreation areas and on our tracks. Once the grass dies the bare sand is highly prone to erosion. To combat this problem we have placed topsoil over the worst affected picnic areas and sown drought-tolerant grass species. Staff have also been “hard-surfacing” eroded walking tracks to prevent sand blow outs forming.

5.3.3 Planting days planned

Over the next two months we have organised planting days in a variety of key native ecosystems within the Park. The first two events have proven to be very successful.

5.4 Whitireia Park

Work will commence in early June to remove the stock yards and fences from the Onehunga and Te Onepoto Bay areas. The yards and fences are no longer required and are considered an eye-sore to Park visitors due to their run down state.

6. Eastern sector [Fraser Oliver]

6.1 Akatarawa Forest

6.1.1 Roads on the mend

Due to the recent dry conditions, good progress has been made on maintenance to several main arterial roads that provide access to the Akatarawa block. This has involved hydra mowing of vegetation, grading and water table maintenance using a digger.

6.1.2 Has anyone seen my dog?

Both the Police Dog Training School and the Central Search Dog Club are using parts of the Akatarawa Forest for ongoing dog training exercises.

6.2 Pakuratahi Forest

6.2.1 Roads in good condition

Both the Rimutaka Incline and Tunnel Gully access roads are in good condition and have only required minor routine maintenance i.e. vegetation control, pot-holing and grading of road surfaces.

6.2.2 Vandalism declining

Vandalism to padlocks and gates seems to be declining with the installation of better gate systems. These gates are larger and stronger than the previous ones so are less susceptible to vandalism.

6.2.3 Forest still popular due to good weather

Several school groups have been using both Tunnel Gully and the Incline walkway during this period and mountain biking is still very popular, as the weather has been favourable. Tunnel Gully remains popular with family groups for picnics and bush walks.

6.3 Kaitoke Regional Park

6.3.1 Work continues on new bridge

Work continues on the Pakuratahi river truss bridge and associated tracks. All the relevant consents have been granted and the foundations for the bridge are in place. The bridge components are currently being fabricated. New access tracks have been constructed to link up with the original track along the river.

6.3.2 Summer camping drawing to an end

Easter and ANZAC weekends saw the last of the campers for the summer season in the Park. The campground is now very quiet and will remain so until October.

6.4 Wainuiomata

6.4.1 Boundary fence construction about to start

Contract agreements for the first section of the northern boundary fence line have now been completed. Savings due to favourable tender prices has allowed for an additional 11km of fence line to be erected. This will allow us to now complete the section from the head of the eastern Wainuiomata to the west of the Narrow Neck saddle. The contractor is due to start construction however wet conditions of late combined with the steep terrain has made access to the site treacherous.

Vegetation clearance on the Sledge Track loop extension has now been completed. The Sledge Track will provide an attractive 30 to 45 minute return walk from the Popular Gums loop walk.

6.4.2 Quiet month for the ranger

General ranging duties have continued throughout the catchment. Unauthorised public movement has been minimal with no major issues to report.



Murray Waititi
Manager, Parks and Forests

Landcare Support, Divisional Accountant's Report for period ending 30 May 2003

Financial summary

Direct expenditure

Budget timing issues and the sourcing of rock are continuing to create a favourable variance in direct expenditure of \$676,000 as at the end of April 2003. However, the rock supply issue now appears to be over and approximately \$120,000 worth of rock should be sourced during May and June.

There is around \$1,935,000 to be spent in May and June (equating to around 25% of the annual budget) which is consistent with the spending pattern of 2001/02.

We are forecasting a year end favourable variance in direct expenditure of \$163,000, predominantly due the rebudgeting to 2003/04 of costs relating to the Hutt catchment 1080 drop.

Landcare Division					
Financial Summary Statement					
For the 10 months ending 30 April 2003					
\$000					
	Year to Date			Full Year	
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget
External Revenue	10,475	10,472	2 F	12,609	12,566
Internal Revenue	868	907	(38) U	1,101	1,088
TOTAL REVENUE	11,343	11,379	(36) U	13,709	13,653
Direct Expenditure	5,953	6,630	676 F	7,888	8,052
Indirect Expenditure	3,149	3,359	210 F	4,002	4,044
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	9,102	9,988	886 F	11,890	12,095
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	2,241	1,391	850 F	1,819	1,558
Net Asset Acquisitions	305	477	172 F	274	576
Capital Projects	735	1,517	782 F	1,103	2,706

Net asset acquisitions

Net asset acquisitions have a favourable variance against budget of \$172,000. We are forecasting a year end favourable variance of \$302,000 as a result of rebudgeting to 2003/04 the Strand Park and Logan Whanau land purchases.

Capital projects

Capital expenditure is under budget by \$782,000. The main variance here is the Strand Park Channel work where the delay in the land purchase has pushed the project back a year.

A full year favourable variance of \$1,604,000 is forecast. The major driver of this is the Strand Park project (\$1,563,000).

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