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Committee Rural Services and Wairarapa
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Divisional Managers' Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about the activities and progress and any matters that have arisen since the Committee's previous meeting held on 20 June 2006.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Managers' reports

The Departmental Managers' reports and the Catchment Division's year end management review are attached.

4. Divisional matters

4.1 Geoff Dick – Catchment Management

Manager appointments

I am pleased to advise that I have appointed Dave Cameron to the role of Manager, Land Management. You will all know Dave well from his former role of Regional Land Management Officer. Dave will lead a team of 10 staff to deliver Greater Wellington's land management responsibilities across the region.

Applications for the Manager, Support Services have closed and interviews will be underway by the time of the meeting. The advertisements for the Manager, Flood Protection are being prepared and will be placed shortly.

Fiona Bancroft's resignation

Fiona Bancroft (Biosecurity Officer, Animals) has accepted a position with the Department of Conservation in Wellington as a Biosecurity Technical Officer and resigned effective from 21 July 2006. Her new role has national responsibilities co-ordinating and promoting the Biosecurity Strategy within DoC. Fiona worked within GW's Biosecurity Department for five years and had recently taken a lead role in the review of GW's Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.

Divisional year end review

Attached to this report is the Divisional year end review. Overall the Division met most of its targets and the report shows the tremendous amount of work achieved over the last 12 months.

There were some projects that were not completed including new rating classifications for the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme and the Kopuaranga River Enhancement Project. Completing these significant initiatives is a high priority for the Flood Protection team. However the benefits of the clearing work completed to date in the Kopuaranga were amply demonstrated during the recent floods.

We also had about \$500,000 worth of uncompleted Bovine TB work at year end. I will be working with Wayne and the VM team to see whether we can get our contractors to deliver an improved result for this year.

Lakeside farmers

On 26 July Crs Buchanan and Long and I met Stewart Barton, Mike Moran and Bob Green to discuss the flooding caused by the very high lake levels and the breach of the private stopbank protecting the Barton and Moran properties.

Since the meeting we have managed to improve the Lake Onoke outlet to assist lowering of Lake Wairarapa. We have also offered to provide some engineering assistance with repairs to the stopbank. In the longer term we have been asked to consider the status of these stopbank in terms of the LWVDS.

Pauatahanui and Waikanae catchments project

I have a meeting arranged on the 7 August with Peter Handford of PA Handford & Associates to discuss how the Council can best be involved in the implementation of this project. Peter and his team have essentially completed the MFE funded work to set up this project, however they have managed to gain some funding (including from this Council) to undertake an interim catchment co-ordinator role. I will report back to the Committee once I have a suggested way forward.

Communications – Catriona Robertson

The recent flood events were a major, albeit unplanned, part of the Catchment Division's communications activities in July. I worked closely with Craig Hamilton, Ted Taylor and his team and others across the organisation to ensure that regular and up-to-date media releases/advisories were sent out. During the two events I issued a total of twenty-two media releases. Emergency management training over the past year proved really beneficial when faced with the real thing.

A large part of my work has been focused on the design, production and print of the consultation document for the first stage of the five-yearly review of the Regional Pest Management Strategy. Advance copies will be available at the Committee meeting. The consultation document will be published on Monday 14 August. Submissions close on Friday 13 October.

The inaugural planting was held at Tauherenikau Bush on Monday 7 October as part of Conservation Week. Children, parents and caregivers from St Teresa's school in Featherston planted 200 native trees as part of a pilot programme involving local schools in the area. They have taken ownership of a piece of land in the bush block which will be part of an ongoing educational programme. Featherston and South Featherston schools will be involved from next year. Media coverage and public awareness is ongoing for the project.

Permanent signage is in production for the Papawai Marae Stream Care group. It will be installed late August.

I'm currently working on the August/September issue of Rural Services Newsletter. Publication has been delayed slightly due to the flood events but it is scheduled for release in late August. Articles include the Lower Valley Scheme rating review, dams, capping water takes, the RPMS review consultation and the Ballance Farm Environment Awards Small Farm/Lifestyle Block Field Day on 10 September.

4.3 Nigel Corry – Environment Management

The Regional Policy Statement (RPS) review process has been continuing since the last meeting of the Committee, with about 80 submissions on the discussion document, *Our Region - their future*, being received. These will be useful in identifying some of the key issues of interest to the community. We are also meeting with Wairarapa District Council staff in early August, and the political representatives from all Wairarapa Councils on 22 August, to discuss key points of the RPS review process thus far, and to highlight key areas of future discussion.

At the full Council meeting of 20 July, the Dangerous Dams Policy, as required under the Building Act 2004, was adopted for public consultation. We have subsequently written to all dam owners and notified the policy in newspapers. There was a collaborative approach taken by Regional Councils across the country in the development of this policy, with a joint template being developed which forms the basis of the draft dangerous Dams Policies

used by all Councils. All councils are working towards achieving the 30 September 2006 deadline to have this policy adopted. A subcommittee consisting of Rick Long, Chris Turver, Chris Laidlaw and Rex Kirton will hear any submission received in early September.

On 1 July, the new Environment Divisional Structure was confirmed. The key outcome of the review was to integrate the existing Policy, Investigations and Consent Departments into new structures based on function, as opposed to having 'separate' teams in the Wairarapa and Wellington offices. As a result of this process, a new department, Environmental Regulation, has been formed which brings together all our regulatory functions. There is also a new Environmental Monitoring and Investigation departments which has a sole focus on our science and monitoring needs. This new structure is reflected in the way in which we are reporting from this meeting onwards to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee. I have provided a diagram of the Division's structure for information as Attachment 4.

I have also advertised for the positions of Manager, Environmental Regulation, and Manager, Environmental Monitoring and Investigation. Applications close on 11 August and I aim to have appointments confirmed as soon as possible.

4.4 Murray Kennedy – Water Supply, Parks & Forests

Tree harvesting has continued during the period in spite of adverse winter conditions. Details of the damage caused by the storm events are contained in the Forestry Manager's Report.

Forestry Manager's Report - Barry Leonard

Tauanui Harvesting

Harvesting within Tauanui recommenced on 1 July. Production figures for the month are not yet available, but it is anticipated that approximately 2000 tonnes will have been produced from a remnant of the 1970 planting.

A short haul down the road to an old skid site means that the logging rate for this work was lower than recent rates. This has generated a new round of rate negotiations with the contractor who is seeking a significant rate increase to cover fuel price increases.

Forest Access Damage

The three major rainfall events during July resulted in 546 mm of rain being recorded at Stoney Creek and 336.5 mm recorded at Hiwinui. We do not yet have a rain gauge at Tauanui.

These events caused significant damage to the Tauanui access road. The Tauanui River escaped from its course and flowed down the road for 50 metres, scouring the road to a depth of two metres. As soon as the flow returned to the main river course this section was repaired and protection works constructed.

In addition a slump on the access track and a slip from the harvesting operations in Pirinoa 8B also required attention. Access was restored within four days and protection works minimised damage from subsequent events.

Crossings in Hiwinui and Stoney Creek required some repair work.

Silviculture

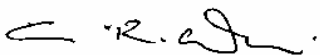
Contractors are continuing with thinning in Hiwinui and Tauanui in conjunction with seasonal planting operations.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

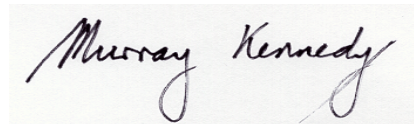
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Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4: