

Catchment Management Group

Departmental Managers' update for period ending 9 April 2010

Biosecurity (Davor Bejakovich, Manager)

1. Pest Animals: (Ray Clarey)

1.1 Native Bird Monitoring Report

The annual native bird monitoring report will soon be ready for circulation and placement on the GW website. This draft regional report has been prepared for and share funded by GW, Wellington City Council and Upper Hutt City Council. The report contains chapters' specific to these city council areas but also presents an overview for the region. Five minute bird counts are conducted to determine the relative abundance and distribution of native birds, to disclose the presence of rare species, to record the changes in populations over time and to note the response of native bird populations to predator control. The draft report concludes that more monitoring in the Wairarapa and Kapiti Coast is required to provide a more robust regional picture of trends. The report also surmises that improvements in biodiversity will occur if predators are removed and the size and connectivity of forest remnants is increased.

1.2 1080 Aerial – Pest Control Industry Guidelines

These draft guidelines are now available for final review. They are being prepared for publication by the National Possum Control Agencies and supported financially by a consortium including Local Government, the Animal Health Board, ERMA, Animal Control Products and Department of Conservation. This document was triggered by one of the recommendations from the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) following the reassessment of 1080 in August 2007, specifically that "pest management practices around aerial drops be standardised around best practice". Part of this requirement has been met by the publication 'Communication Guidelines for Aerial 1080 Operations'. The Pest Control Industry Guidelines (1080 aerial) is the next step to fulfil ERMA's and the industry's requirements. These guidelines are designed to ensure that operators understand critical risks, together with the performance outcomes that must be achieved to manage them. These guidelines will be supplemented by detailed guidance in the form of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Whilst GW already has SOPs covering the range of topics relevant to aerial and ground laid use of vertebrate toxic agents, it will be good to be able to have agreed national standards that will regularly be reviewed by practitioners.

1.3 Makara-Ohariu Community Board Funding Application

Wellington City Council (WCC) and Greater Wellington (GW) Biosecurity and Environment staff met with a representative of the Makara Community Board in May, to discuss an expansion of the possum control programme into the Makara area. The

Makara-Ohariu Community Board is eligible to apply for funding for a community project from Meridian Energy, the company who established the 'Westwind' wind turbine farm in the Makara area. The 12,000 hectares of the Makara area is one of the few remaining areas in the Wellington region which is not under on-going possum control. GW proposed an area of 2,300 hectares for possum control, extending west from the current control area in the Wellington western hills to the Makara coastline, incorporating Makara village and the surrounding farmland. Possum control in this area would help manage the numerous possums around the village, and act as buffer for the current WCC and GW control work in the northern suburbs, slowing the possum reinvasion in this important ongoing programme. GW Biosecurity will assist the Community Board with the funding application in the hope of being able to expand our current possum control work.

1.4 Uraba Biocontrol Agent Submission - ERMA

GW Biosecurity submitted to the Environmental Risk Management Agency in support of the release of the parasitoid *Cotesia urabae* as a biocontrol agent for the Gum Leaf Skeletoniser *Uraba lugens*. Gum Leaf Skeletoniser is an introduced insect which lives on eucalypts and produces toxic venom that can cause skin irritation in humans. It also defoliates eucalypts, threatening these utility trees in forestry and amenity situations. It is currently only found in the upper North Island, but has the potential to spread. The release of the parasitoid as a biocontrol agent will help manage this pest species.

1.5 Test Certifier Regulations Submission - ERMA

GW Biosecurity submitted to the Environmental Risk Management Agency on the Discussion Paper Improving the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (Personnel Qualifications) Regulations 2001. GW employees and contractors work with herbicides, insecticides and Vertebrate Toxic Agents that require a range of testing and qualifications to ensure they meet the requirements of the HSNO and ACVM Acts and other relevant legislation. Some of this testing is undertaken by qualified GW staff, but the majority is outsourced to external providers. GW strongly supports any move to make this small part of a complex piece of legislation more user-friendly, and to ensure greater equality and consistency amongst the testing fraternity.

1.6 Long Gully Possum Control Operation

GW Biosecurity staff completed a possum control operation in the Wellington Natural Heritage Trust land to the south of the Zealandia Sanctuary in early May. Targeting possums, Biosecurity staff laid almost 500 Feratox (potassium cyanide) poison strikers in the 132 hectare block over two days. GW has been managing possums and mustelids in the block since 2007, but has struggled with intermittent grants and a lack of volunteers to fund and undertake the on-going control. The Heritage Trust land provides an important territorial extension to the Zealandia Sanctuary, and GW staff have sighted saddlebacks, robins, kaka and bellbirds within the block. These species are extremely rare in the Wellington region. The presence of juvenile saddlebacks and un-banded robins indicate that these vulnerable species may be breeding outside of the protection of the sanctuary fence. The latest possum control will help to protect these native species, and hopefully ensure another successful breeding season next spring.

1.7 Pukaha – Mt Bruce Predator Trap Maintenance

In anticipation of the little brown kiwi release at Pukaha -Mt Bruce on May 7, GW Pest Animals and BioWorks staff spent two days servicing predator traps in the southern end of the reserve. These traps are usually serviced by Department of Conservation (DOC) staff and volunteers, but because of the tight timeframe of the release, the assistance of GW was required. Staff reported a high number of ferrets, stoats, rats and hedgehogs caught in the traps, and observed a number of live predators while working in the Pukaha bush, illustrating the need to have the traps ready to protect the kiwi upon their release. DOC biodiversity officers checked the kiwi release site the following day and were delighted with clear evidence of the new kiwi settling in well. There were obvious signs that they had been out foraging and feeding. The 30 new kiwis add to the established group of 24 birds and provide genetic diversity which is a must for species survival.

GW has been providing predator control in the 'buffer' on the farmland adjacent to the reserve since September 2002.

1.8 Rook Control Workshop

A rook control workshop hosted by Environment Waikato was in held in Taupo on 27 April. Two Biosecurity officers attended from GW. Other participating regional councils included Auckland, Environment Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay and Taranaki. Environment Canterbury and Otago Regional Council supplied information on their current rook situation and reported their control outcomes to date. This national meeting is likely to replace the traditional annual post-control meeting held between Hawkes Bay, Horizons and GW Regional Councils. A national forum is seen as a preferential way of considering such topics as contracting, research opportunities and novel control methods. The participants agreed that there was an urgent need to work with ERMA and the NZ Food Safety Authority to facilitate label changes for the avicide DRC1339 to allow the use of baits such as maize, walnuts and pasta products such as macaroni. Also discussed was the capture and banding of rooks to gain insight into their potential dispersal patterns and to look for other suspension compounds that may be superior to the petrolatum which is currently used to incorporate DRC1339 for rook nest baiting.

2. Pest Plants (Richard Grimmett)

2.1 Pest Plants Control Activity

2.1.1 Surveillance

Surveillance was suspended from April 2010 to allow staff and contractors to complete annual inspections and control at known Total Control sites. Two new blue passion flower sites were registered during other activities.

Total Control	Maderia vine	Blue passion flower	Moth plant vine	Woolly knight shade	Climbing spindle berry	African feather grass	Current Totals	Annual Totals
TC delimits start period	6	3	1		5		15	47
New TC sites		2					2	17
TC delimits completed								47
TC delimits end period	6	5	1		5		17	17

Surveillance	Bomeria vine	Flame creeper	Chocolate vine	Purple loose strife	Asiatic knotweed	TOTAL
Surv spp start period	17	3	14	1	6	41
Surv delimits complete						
New Surv spp sites						
Surv spp end period	17	3	14	1	6	41

2.1.2 Didymo

GW employed a contractor who worked on the didymo advocacy and awareness project over the summer months. This project is delivered with the help of MAFBNZ funding. The annual report of advocacy activity was completed and delivered to MAFBNZ.

MAFBNZ hosted staff from regional councils, DOC and iwi in Queenstown for a didymo identification workshop. The workshop was also aimed at understanding the environmental factors influencing the establishment and dominance of didymo in a range of river environments. Richard Grimmett attended this two day training session. To date, three Biosecurity staff have received this training.

The visual design of the Check Clean Dry campaign is now four years old and needs updating to attract people's attention. MAFBNZ is updating the communication package to include other aquatic pest species in the awareness programme.

2.1.3 Total Control

Staff and contractors worked through this period completing annual inspections on invasive vine and aquatic pest plant species. The data gathered during this season is being analysed for collation of the Regional Pest Management Strategy Operational Plan report. Generally some species are showing faster decline than predicted (e.g. blue passion flower) and some are proving more difficult to control effectively (e.g. Madeira vine).

2.1.4 Containment

Staff completed an aerial survey with WCC and GW Environment staff on the west coast south of Makara identifying a number of serious weed infestations. The information will be used to plan activities for the next season. To effectively control containment pest species in this harsh environment staff will have to rely on help from helicopter and abseiling contractors.

2.1.5 Site Led

During this period staff have undertaken 57 client responses following public reports of pest plants. Many reported infestations were small and controlled during the inspection and the owners were provided with adequate information for future control. Most owners were complying with staff requests to undertake control following boundary complaint reports.

2.2 Community Max

The Community Max field workers continued to complete operations ahead of schedule and to a very high standard. They have completed the Growsafe Course, introduction level, and passed practical assessments. The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has delivered a seminar to the team about requirements of the employment with the emphasis on work culture and attendance. Attendance and field performance was generally very good across the teams over the last period. The training of the team will continue with health and safety and forklift operator courses.

The **Western Zone** crews worked on the following projects:

- Eastbourne Hills - climbing asparagus control. Vines were pulled out of trees and sprayed on the ground. Team worked on a very steep terrain.
- Hutt River - old man's beard control for Flood Protection. Vines were cut and treated using Vigilant gel. Lots of access lines were cut through blackberry to allow for future maintenance work.
- Pencarrow dunes – boneseed control. Team successfully treated well established infestations south of the road-end gate (25 years of growth).
- Tarakena-Rangitata Bay - karo and lupin control.
- Makara Bay - woody weed removal.
- Keith George Memorial Park. Team worked on cutting tracks.
- Forest Lakes - environmental weed control work in lowland scrub bush around the lake.

The **Masterton** crew:

- Worked for DOC for two weeks on hut warden duties in Tararua
- Spread metal to a new section of tracks for DOC Tararua on the entrance from Mikimiki Road and at Carnival Park
- Completed work at the Riverdale Beach dune restoration project for GW Land Management and Environment
- Completed weeding and mulching on Makoura and Papawai restoration projects
- Completed dune weeding on the Wairarapa south coast for the Land Management
- Sprayed kikuyu grass and controlled weeds around restoration plantings at Onehunga Bay.

2.2.1 Future Opportunities

The Community Max programme has strengthened the Biosecurity department relationship with other GW departments and external agencies. The department increased the biodiversity outputs far beyond our current budgeted programs by participating in the Community Max programme. GW has established a good professional relationship with MSD through this programme. A lot of staff effort and GW resources have been allocated to this project establishing the platform for future co-operation with the Ministry.

The project is now approaching the final six weeks. MSD are very pleased with our management and the delivery of the service. We have had general discussions with our partners, DOC and TLAs, whether they would continue to support this type of initiative into future years. All the GW partners are very pleased with the outcomes of the programme and supportive of continued involvement. They were impressed with the team performance, the efficiency in delivery of service and the social and

biodiversity outcomes of the programme. Collaboration between agencies has been further enhanced through this programme. The Pest Plant team is trusted and respected in the delivery of quality biodiversity initiatives in the region.

Biosecurity is now reviewing opportunities to provide contract service to MSD as a training provider. Richard Grimmett and People and Capability staff met with MSD industrial advisers to explore the opportunity further. The MSD staff are very interested to develop cooperation with GW as a pilot project. The focus would be on training and work experience in land management and pest control. The training would prepare participants for a wide range of careers including entry level positions in local government and DOC, and farming, forestry and horticulture industries. The transition from the current Community Max to the new programme can be undertaken with relative ease. The training programme and resources prepared to support current crews are in place. GW currently employs staff recognised as trainer/assessors in a number of relevant training areas.

2.3 Biosecurity/Biodiversity Database Project Update

Pedro Jensen, in cooperation with Hui Chen (GW IT) and Jim Fretwell (EBoP) has finalised development of the Biosecurity database user-requirement documents. Biosecurity formally supported the TFBIS funding submission for the EBoP/ARC Biodiversity database amalgamation project.

The user requirement documents capture operational activity processes. The document focused on the Pest Animals team, Regional Predator Control Programme, BioWorks and monitoring requirements. Discussions were held with Land Management to assess if the proposed database development could capture their needs.

2.4 Communication

Two staff attended the annual Weedbusters coordinator's workshop at Turnbull House in Wellington. The focus of the workshop was on support from the community for the programme.

Staff have been working with Carolyn Lewis (Weedbusters) and Craig Davey (NZ Biosecurity Institute President) to develop a communications plan for a pilot 'Biosecurity Month' media blitz in July (to align with next National Education and Training Seminar (NETS)). Staff prepared articles on climbing spindleberry for the next issue of *Our Region*, Asiatic knotweed for local newspapers and an article for the *Protect* journal based on the NETS conference theme "Know How, Can do, Job done!".

Staff attended a follow-up *Weedy Wellington* meeting hosted by the Sustainability Trust. The aim of the project is to produce a weed-map of the region drawing together weed location records from GW, DOC, Botanical Society and the TLAs. An important development since the last meeting is the involvement of Graeme Bourdot and Mike Dodd from AgResearch who will use the completed weed-map for spatial-spread modelling programs they have been developing. The outcome of these projects is of great value for the next RPMS review.

2.5 Biological Control

2.5.1 Boneseed leaf roller

Monitoring of the Wellington sites was conducted on 29 April. There was only one boneseed leaf roller found at the Miramar wharf. Landcare Research advised staff to reduce monitoring to twice a year unless a population boom occurs.

2.5.2 Buddleia

Staff searched for the buddleia weevil at Belmont Quarry, the original release site. Just one weevil was found, however a reasonable amount of damage was seen on one of the surveyed trees which is promising. This weevil is slow to establish initially, but devastating when numbers increase. Scion (formerly Forest Research) delivered a free release population of weevils in April. Staff completed the release on the Waingawa River. This biocontrol agent is now present at two sites in the region.

2.5.3 Scotch thistle gall fly

Scotch thistle gall fly were harvested early April from the Pauatahanui release site. This site once again had good numbers of the agent. Collected flies were released in Wairarapa.

2.5.4 Gorse Pod Moth

Gorse pod monitoring was conducted with Craig Sixtus from Landcare Research only to find that some of the bushes in the control area had been sprayed. Staff have found a new monitor site at the Whitireia Park in Onepoto.

3. Bovine Tb Vector Management (Graeme Butcher)

3.1 2009/10 Vector Control Programme

Table 1: Summary of the projects let for the 2009/10 year.

	Possum Control (ha)	Ferret & Possum Surveys (ha)	Pig Survey (ha)	Total
GW BioWorks	67,646	35,583	0	103,229
Professional Guiding Services	97,577	23,843	0	121,420
Central Districts Pest Control	24,481	0	0	24,481
J McCaslin	11,565	0	0	11,565
T Oakly	0	0	249,039	249,039
Totals	201,269	59,426	249,039	509,734

Table 2: The following table details areas of the 2009/10 control programme which have been completed as at the end of March 2010.

	Possum Control (ha)	Ferret & Possum Surveys (ha)	Pig Survey (ha)	Total
GW BioWorks	35,124	20,659	0	55,783
Professional Guiding Services	86,107	23,843	0	109,950
Central Districts Pest Control	4,700	0	0	4,700
J McCaslin	5,842	0	0	5,842
T Oakly	0	0	105,517	105,517
Totals	131,773	44,502	105,517	281,792

Contractors have completed 44 possum control projects (38 performance control and 6 input control operations) and have commenced control activities within a further 16 projects. A total 65% of the possum control program has been completed and assessed by performance monitor or audit.

Contractors estimate that they have completed a further 35,000 ha of possum control but these areas are not yet ready for monitoring. Their estimates indicate that 83% of the possum control program has been completed.

3.2 2009/10 additional work

AHB has negotiated with Central Districts Pest Control (Hawkes Bay contractor) to undertake additional control within the Region. The projects include three strata from the South East Wairarapa Stage 2 operation (HR 3, HMR 1 and HMR 2) covering 6,019 hectares.

These projects are due to be completed June/July.

3.3 2009/10 Monitoring

To date 38 performance monitors have been completed:

- Professional Guiding Services have completed 25 of 30 projects, including 5 input projects.
- BioWorks have completed 17 of 29 projects, including 1 input project.
- CDPC has completed 1 of 7 projects.
- J McCaslin has completed 1 of 2 projects.

Eighty-nine trend monitors have been completed to date. Trend RTC results are as follows:

- 0.0% to 2.9% 40 projects (132,786 ha)
- 3.0% to 4.9% 33 projects (87,279 ha)
- 5.0% plus 16 projects (50,695 ha)

3.4 2009/10 Possum and Ferret surveys

The following table details possum and ferret surveys for the 2009/10 year. Seventeen surveys (44,502 ha) have been completed and audited (approx 75% of survey programme). All other surveys have commenced and will be completed during June. Contractors have estimated that 83% of survey areas have been completed.

Project	Strata	Area (ha)	Progress (% completed)	Required Estimated Samples		Samples received to date		Suspicious Tb samples
				<i>Possums</i>	<i>Ferrets</i>	<i>Possums</i>	<i>Ferrets</i>	
Bideford	HMR 3	4824	100	N/A	5	N/A	3	0
Bideford	HR 1	2641	100	N/A	5	N/A	5	0
Bideford	MR 1	3494	100	N/A	5	N/A	5	0
Bideford	MR 7	3173	100	N/A	5	N/A	5	0
Castlehill	HR 1	2017	100	45	N/A	76	N/A	0
Masterton Flats	HR 1	1482	100	40	3	3	1	0
Masterton Flats	MR 1	3546	100	60	4	23	0	0
Mt Bruce Waipoua	HMR 4	418	100	25	N/A	14	N/A	0
Mt Bruce Waipoua	HMR 5	642	100	25	N/A	30	N/A	0
Mt Bruce Waipoua	HR 1	3083	100	185	5	25	2	0
Mt Bruce Waipoua	HR 3	1799	100	100	3	46	5	0
Mt Bruce Waipoua	HR 4	1816	100	50	3	46	4	
Mt Bruce Waipoua	MR 1	4266	100	100	5	98	6	0
Mt Bruce Waipoua	MR 2	3301	100	150	5	19	1	0
Otaki Buffer	HMR 1	3023	30	150	5	5	3	0
Otaki Buffer	HMR 2	1587	100	80	N/A	87	N/A	0
Otaki Buffer	HR 1	2404	70	130	5	9	0	
Pakowhai	HR 1	1829	100	100	N/A	28	N/A	0
Whangaehu	HR 1	4583	100	250	5	7	1	0
Whangaehu	HR 3	2375	30	50	3	14	1	
Whangaehu	MR 3	7123	20	40	5	197	2	0
Totals		59426		1580	71	727	44	0

3.5 2009/10 Pig survey

The following table details pig survey progress to date for the 2009/10 year.

Project	Area (ha)	Progress % completed	Estimated Samples	Samples received to date	Suspicious Tb samples	Positive Tb samples
Akatarawa	20,538	93	30	47	5	4
Bideford	39,023	63	40	29	1	2
Castle Hill	4,500	80	30	34	0	0
East Alfredton	4,900	25	20	5	0	0
Featherston	5,325	100	30	13	0	0
Homewood Riversdale	25,789	100	120	86	0	0
Kapiti	22,486	30	50	10	0	0
Mataikona	6,779	100	40	50	0	1
Moonshine	6,250	81	20	13	0	0
Otaki Crown	3,552	67	15	17	0	0
Pakowai	6,910	100	60	61	0	0
Stronvar	25,976	66	85	52	0	0
Te Wharau	13,995	64	100	69	1	0
Tinui	35,675	100	120	154	0	0
Wellington	29,640	66	50	31	0	0
Totals			810	671	7	7

3.6 2009/10 Feral Deer Survey

A feral deer survey is currently underway within the Tararua Forest Park over approximately 88,500 hectares. This survey is being undertaken in conjunction with the normal activities of the contracted helicopter company. To date 121 samples have been autopsied, none have yet been positively identified with bovine tuberculosis.

3.7 2009/10 Feral Cattle Control

This project is ongoing in the South East Wairarapa operational areas. To date 5 feral cattle have been destroyed, 3 by landowners and 2 by AHB contractors.

3.8 2009/10 AHB Vector Management Services

Greater Wellington has a two year contract to provide Vector Management services to the AHB. This contract requires 1.5 staff members and includes 2,640 hours for the 2009/10 year. To date (after 46 weeks) the actual hours to deliver the programme are 2516.5 (181.5 hours or 7.8% over estimate).

3.9 Tararua Range Aerial Project

The Holdsworth Woodside Crown operation (8,000ha) is proposed to be treated with aerial 1080 pellets within the 20010/11 year. This project was last treated in October 2003. It has been proposed to undertake this project in conjunction with the Department of Conservations' Project Kaka (22,000ha) in August 2010. AHB and DOC have met and agreed to work together with these operations.

Benefits of a combined operation include:

- Avoids duplication in obtaining statutory approvals
- Opportunity for one message by all agencies
- Use of complementary resources
- Economies of scale
- Reduces confusion to the general public.

A project brief has been prepared which includes a Steering Group to oversee the project, made up of senior AHB, DOC and GW staff. A project team has been identified, made up of AHB and DOC staff, whose role is to ensure the project is delivered. The Project Manager is Graeme Butcher.

Consultation is currently underway with numerous interested parties and is hoped to be completed by early June. Contractors are currently identifying adjoining landowners and determining if any private water supplies are likely to be affected.

3.10 2009/10 Infected herds

		I Herds @ June 2009	I Herds @ end of April 2010 (one clear test in brackets)	Target I Herds @ June 2010
VFA	Cattle	0	0	8
	Deer	0	0	
VRA	Cattle	5	5 (1)	
	Deer	0	0	

Flood Protection (Graeme Campbell)

1. Manager's comments

Construction and maintenance work for the year is close to completion. Staff are now considering the end of year reporting and preparations for next year's work programme.

Investigations work is continuing with significant effort now being put into the Boulcott/Hutt Stopbank project to ensure staff can meet the required programme to start construction this coming summer.

More details on the individual programmes are set out below.

2. Western Floodplain Management Plans [Daya Atapattu]

2.1 Ava to Ewen project

Ava to Ewen project is complete. The final inspection of Strand Park stopbank construction contract is planned for June 2010.

2.2 Boulcott/Hutt stopbank project

The public submissions on the Boulcott/Hutt stopbank NOR/Consent applications closed on 4 May 2009. A total of 59 submissions have been received - 6 neutral, 8 in support and 45 opposed. Key issues raised in the submissions include, construction access from the northern end, impacts from potential residential development and golf course improvements and a Safeway submission to include their property within the flood protection scheme. A Hearing will be held in mid July 2010. GW staff will meet with some of the submitters and also attend a pre-hearing meeting in an attempt to resolve some of the issues before the Hearing.

The public process for selecting a contractor for the stopbank construction has now commenced. Suitably experienced contractors have been asked to register their interest before 11 June 2010. Contractors will be pre-qualified through this process to tender for the construction contract in July/August 2010.

The stopbank construction is scheduled to commence in October 2010. To achieve this, three temporary tees, a permanent green and associated works have to be completed at the Hutt golf course in late July/August 2010. These works will be funded by GW and implemented by the golf club and will be limited to work permitted under the provisions of the HCC district plan.

2.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank

Establishing full grass cover on the Whirinaki Crescent stopbank is taking more time than expected. UHCC officers will take over the stopbank for maintenance on the basis that GW pay an agreed sum to meet the costs of establishing the full grass cover. Staff have agreed to hand over on this basis and the amount will be recovered from money due to the contractor. A planting day to complete the project is scheduled for 19 June 2010.

2.4 Maoribank and Ebdentown works

The Maoribank urgent works are now complete. The option investigation for the design of the Ebdentown rock line is progressing.

2.5 Kapiti floodplain management

2.5.1 Waikanae Floodplain Management Plan

There were no major capital improvement works undertaken during the period. The Operations team have added a 30 metre length of rock lining to the rock wall constructed last year by the Otaihanga Boating Club. The rock line will continue to be extended down stream to the boat ramp as funds permit.

Investigations are underway to determine design levels for the Jim Cooke Park stopbank reconstruction, due to commence in 2013/14. This will enable us to determine what impact the proposed stopbank will have on the adjacent soccer fields. KCDC will be advised of the findings.

2.5.2 Otaki Floodplain Management Plan

Mills Albert Ltd Contractors were awarded the contract to construct three rock groynes on the right bank of the Otaki River, upstream of the railway bridge. Works has commenced and is due for completion by the end of May. In addition to this work staff have arranged for the contractor to construct pier protection rip-rap around three SH1 bridge piers on behalf of, and to be paid by NZTA. These works are programmed to be completed by mid June.

Construction of a walkway between the carpark behind the GW depot and the Chrystalls walkway entrance has progressed with the formation of the path and concreting the section that passes beneath the SH1 Bridge. Handrails are presently being manufactured for the section that passes beneath the bridge.

Plans have been drawn up for an observation platform at the Rangiuru carpark as requested by FOTOR. This will provide views to Otaki estuary and beyond to Kapiti Island. FOTOR are presently planning to seek funds from KCDC and the Lotteries Grants Board to construct the observation platform.

2.5.3 Friends of the Waikanae River (FWR)

The group has started major restoration work at the Oxbow opposite Otaihanga Domain on the Waikanae River. The Friends held their last executive meeting on the 5th of May 2010 and have arranged to have their Honda Treefund public planting day on the 12th of July. This will take place at the partially restored Dricon site below SH1 and will include the creation of heritage trails. The recently formed partnership between GW and the Department of Corrections for restoration/maintenance work on the Waikanae River Corridor will see the support from community workers in the preparation of this site.

2.5.4 Friends of the Otaki River (FOTOR)

The Friends have completed their fifth milestone for Sustainable Management Funding from the Ministry for the Environment on the 1st of May 2010. In 2010,

work is continuing down at the Otaki Estuary in preparation for restoration planting over winter. The first planting of node sites is commencing on 29th May. The Friends have also been nominated to receive Honda Treefund funding for restoration work on the Otaki River corridor (specifically, at Chrystalls Bend) this year. The Friends held their last executive meeting on 14th April, at which they have scheduled the public planting day for the Honda Treefund for 26th June 2010.

3. Western Operations – Jeff Evans

3.1 Hutt River

Work programmes are running to budget, rock line and groyne maintenance is now all complete, tree removal from stop banks in Totora Park in Upper Hutt is underway and work has been carried out at the sand plant at the Hutt mouth to pull back old eroded demolition material from the foreshore and generally tidy the area up.

3.2 Hutt River ranging services

Staff have installed some samples of the new style river trail furniture at County Lane. These have received a lot of positive comments to date.

There have been a number of events over the last period. The “Crazy Man” attracted over 400 entries, the Trentham Harriers had a half marathon with 200 entrants and the Petone Working Men’s club held their charity duck race, with proceeds going to the Hospice.

3.3 Otaki River

Long reach mowing is underway on the Otaki stop banks, a channel diversion has been carried out opposite the Cliffs at Lutz’s to stop the river eroding the immature willows against the bank and work is underway with the Otaki Friends at the Estuary to replant the area with suitable native species.

3.4 Waikanae River

A rock line extension and small groyne has now been completed at Otaihanga. Also a small earth stopbank was reshaped and filled, as the works went into the scientific reserve. Permission was granted from DOC prior to work commencing.

3.5 Western Watercourses

Maintenance runs are being carried out on the Waiwhetu and Waitohu Streams. This has involved the removal of trees and obstructions from the channel and berms. Drain clearing runs have been carried out on the Rangiuru and Mangapouri drains. Gravel extraction is underway on the Waitohu below the SH1 bridge.

4. Wairarapa Operations [Mike Longworth]

4.1 Wairarapa River Schemes

General

The work programmes in the Wairarapa rivers for 2009/10 are now substantially complete. The new work programmes for 2010/11 have been developed and presented to the Scheme Advisory Committees at the annual scheme meetings held in April and May.

Annual Scheme Meetings

The annual scheme meetings went very well with the advisory committees expressing satisfaction with both the work that had been done during the year and the new work programmes for the coming year. This year local Iwi, Fish and Game NZ, and Forest and Bird representatives were invited to the river inspections and meetings. The inclusion of these additional stakeholders in the advisory committee meetings helps in ensuring a more inclusive debate is likely in the management decisions for the rivers.

The advisory committees made recommendations on both the rates to be levied and size of the work programmes which have been included in the 2010/2011 budget.

The schemes are now in a much stronger financial position than they have been in previous years and have now nearly all built the appropriate level of reserves. In the 2011/2012 year the work programmes should be increased (they were largely frozen this year) so as to maintain and ideally improve their resilience when another period of large floods occur, but putting in more permanent works rather than cheaper repair options.

Development work programme for the LWVDS

The development work programme has been completed for this year. The main expenditure was:

- The land purchase for the gravel deposition area at the Tauanui delta and the construction of the first stage of the stopbank to contain the gravel.
- Construction of bank protection works with rock and river boulders

4.2 Investigations and Technical Advice

River Management Consents

The process of varying the conditions of the existing consents is nearing a conclusion which should satisfy all parties with an interest in the consents. It is anticipated that one more meeting of the working group will be needed to sign off on both the quantum of work and a Memorandum of Understanding that describes how the interested parties interests will be catered for.

Tawaha Catchment Diversion

Investigation of the Tawaha drainage into the Whaka drain is progressing. A consultant was engaged to investigate various options and a report was submitted at the last Advisory Committee meeting to outline the options. Consultation with the affected landowners will be undertaken shortly.

Waiohine Floodplain Management Plan

Waiohine River FMP is progressing with the goal of completing the first phase of the process by the end of this financial year. The stopbanks have been surveyed to provide more accurate information for the hydraulic modelling and also to provide details required for a geotechnical investigation. The geotechnical investigation will allow the performance and risk of failure of the existing stopbanks to be assessed. Also progressing parallel is the initial flood damage assessment giving an indication of the probable cost of flooding to the community. All of the existing information will be summarised in a report, which will be used for consultation in the next phase.

5. Investigations and Assets

5.1 Waiwhetu cleanup project

Good weather continued in April and May which allowed excellent progress to be made in the removal of contaminated ooze and flood protection works. The excavation and removal of contaminated ooze was completed during the week of 19 April with practical completion certified on 4 May. The U channel works are mostly completed with the majority of reno mattresses and other flood protection measures in place. The urupa reinstatement works should be completed by the end of June. Works near the mouth are underway including work under Port Road bridge which is a difficult area to work in due to proximity to the Hutt River and the influence of the tides. There is much property reinstatement work to do as well as installing floodgates and wing walls on all the stormwater outlets. Works remaining include the ecological enhancements with the planting of over 20,000 eco sourced natives due to start soon. The final costs for the job will not be known for a while as the contractor has yet to make a final claim and contract variations need to be evaluated.

A closing ceremony is planned for 17 June with the Minister for the Environment confirming his attendance.

The next Waiwhetu Stream Advisory Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for 23 June.

5.2 Pinehaven flood hazard assessment

Stage one of the project, to deliver flood hazard maps for the Pinehaven Stream, is complete. The report has been finalised and officers from both councils met in March and May to discuss the next stages. A project scope for the next stage (options identification) is being developed. Progress will be updated at the next meeting.

6. Strategy and Technical Support [Sharyn Westlake]

The following table summarises the number of formal, written requests for advice responded to over the period from 1 April – 21 May 2010. These include information requests from the public, local authorities and also Flood Protection comment on resource consent applications to GWRC.

	19 February – 30-March 2010	YTD
Requests brought forward	1	6
Additional requests received	70	351
Responses provided	67	352
Outstanding requests	4	5

The increased volume of information requests resulting from the data sheets sent out in January regarding flood and erosion hazard from the Wainuiomata River, Hutt River and Waiwhetu/Awamutu Streams are continuing.

Over this period, the Strategy and Technical Support team have supported Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC) officers at a pre-consultation meeting for the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan District Plan Change (UHCC PC15), and also responded to queries and requests for information regarding this plan change. Along with UHCC officers, staff have also held a working group meeting for the Mangaroa River Floodplain Management Plan.

Staff have assisted Greater Wellington Environmental Policy with the submissions on the NZTA Private Plan Change to the Regional Freshwater Plan, and the Building Act Review. Additionally, staff provided technical support at the Plan Change Hearings for Wellington City Council Proposed District Plan Changes 72 (Residential Area Review) and 73 (Centres and Business Areas Review).

Land Management (Dave Cameron)

1. Manager's comments

1.1 Meeting with Hinakura Landowners

In February 2009 an incident relating to stock in the Pahaoa River was investigated by the Consents and Compliance section. While this did not result in prosecution it raised the issue of stock access to waterways, particularly in the hill country environment. As a result of this incident, a set of guidelines have been prepared to offer landowners advice and information on managing stock access to waterways. A number of stakeholder groups have been party to the draft document.

The final part of this process was to return to the Hinakura district and present the draft to landowners affected by the initial complaint. This proved to be a very successful exercise and comments on the draft document were received within a few days. In addition, requests have been received for copies of previous Farm Plans, advice on river protection options, and a copy of the Wairarapa Coastal Strategy has been forwarded. These latter actions have resulted from an advocacy and non-regulatory approach to an issue and, while there is more work to do, the result for all parties has been a very positive one.

1.2 Rainfall event 24/25 May

After a period of record low monthly rainfall especially in March and April, the skies opened up over the Wairarapa hill country on Monday, 24 May. The event which caused havoc in parts of Canterbury and North Otago deposited some 50-60mm of rain in a 12 hour period over much of the Wairarapa. Much heavier falls were recorded in a coastal belt from Castlepoint to Glenburn. Hardest hit appears to be the Homewood district where 120mm was recorded with hourly figures in excess of 20mm.

There have been reports of damage to pasture, tracks and fences. A number of the Homewood Catchment Scheme assets have been damaged, although in light of the intensity of rainfall and subsequent high run-off rates this damage has not been severe. The most urgent repair work is required on the culvert and flood spillway protecting the Okautete swamp. This structure has just been upgraded and some of the flood bank has been washed away. The overall integrity of the structure remains intact but repairs will need to be completed before the next heavy rains.

The Storm Damage Reserve will be used to fund repairs to this structure. Other work of an immediate nature is the clearance of tree debris from a couple of major streams and removal of considerable gravel accumulation under the Homewood Bridge.

1.3 Emissions Trading Scheme Seminar

The Ballance Farm Environment Award winners were George and Sarah Tatham of 'Matariki', Homewood. Their property also won the Wairarapa Farm Business of the Year. As a field day had already been held on the property within the last month the

organisers of the Farm Environment Awards decided to host a seminar on the Emissions Trading Scheme.

In excess of 140 landowners, agri-business people and sponsors listened to three very good presentations. Jacqueline Rowarth from Massey University presented her views on where NZ Inc should position itself over the next ten years to maximise returns from the farming sector. Clayton Wallwark from Greenco updated attendees on the current state of the ETS and how farmers might look to mitigate emissions. Anders Crofoot from Castlepoint Station presented a case study of his property and explored the various farming decisions required to take advantage of the ETS.

This was a very successful day that was rounded off with a panel discussion and questions from the floor. Participation levels were very high, indicating a rising awareness amongst landowners of the risks and opportunities with the ETS.

1.4 Issues for the next period

- Completion of the first ten WRECI Sustainability Plans
- Appointment of Streams Alive Co-ordinator
- Opening of the Akura Conservation Centre
- Catchment Scheme Advisory Committee works programmes completed
- Preparation of annual works programmes for 130 Farm Plans

2. Farm Plans (Don Bell)

2.1 Delegated Approvals - New Plans, Reviews and Annual Programmes

Farm Plan Programmes 2010/11	Approved to Date	Annual Plan Target	Budget Estimates	Expenditure to date
WRECI Plans	-	10	\$80,000	-
New Sustainability Plans	-	3	\$15,000	-
New Conservation Plans	3	2	\$4,000	\$5,684
Ten Year Reviews	16	20	\$60,000	\$48,134
Programme delivery 2009/10	Annual Programmes Undertaken	Annual Plan Target	Annual Plan Budget	Expenditure to date
Annual Programmes	145	130	\$565,000	\$452,100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability plans • Conservation plans • Shelter plans 				
Isolated works	5	10	\$10,000	\$2,700

2.2 Highlights

Plan preparation and programming

Amalgamated Helicopters were the successful tenderer for the 2010 pole delivery programme. An OSH session will be held at their base on 4th June and include all the elements of bundling, hooking up, exiting and re-entering, and working the hooks. A small number of poles will be gully-planted to demonstrate the correct layout.

This year map grid co-ordinates will be recorded on all job sheets in the event a helicopter is required to attend an emergency.

Staff are steadily compiling the pole planting and delivery schedules. Planting of ground-spread poles is planned to commence after Queens Birthday (8th June). The first flight is planned for 17th June.

The AGS seedling planting programme is planned to start 14th June.

Staff have attended two seminars, one on the Emissions Trading Scheme and the other on Carbon Farming. Government policy is clearly aligned towards encouraging afforestation, which is likely to positively impact on land management programmes in the future.

Community Events

Approximately eighty graduates and supporters of Papawai-Kaikokirikiri Trust, assisted by Land Management and Environment Education staff, planted an area on Tilson's Creek, a tributary of Papawai Stream. This was their first official involvement in the Care Group programme as well as the first step towards planting waterways on the large dairy unit which operates over their trust land.

3. Akura Conservation Centre (Stan Braaksma)

3.1 Nursery Operations

In the last report, Akura Nursery was near soil moisture deficit, and new juvenile growth had definitely slowed as a result. Most stoolbeds have lost their autumn leaves and the nursery is ready for pole harvesting. Late May rains have arrived and with good soil moisture levels now present, soil testing will commence.

All stoolbed rows at Akura have been sprayed and Mangapakeha will be completed shortly. Mowing of headlands and rouging of unwanted weeds has been completed.

3.2 Harvesting Operations

The harvesting contractor has been selected with competitive tender rates similar to previous years, including the same crew members for the past two years. Pole cutting has commenced and it is planned to have 3,000 – 4,000 poles available by 14th June.

Pole counts have been completed with a potential 28,000 3 metre poles available. The Land Management Department have ordered 25,000 of these and Horizons Regional

Council is interested in 1500 – 3000 poles. Orders from Flood Protection have increased considerably and a spreadsheet has been supplied to them indicating availability of other material.

The Nursery Managers workshop was hosted by Akura staff focussing on Horizon's (Bulls Nursery), budget plastics (sleeve recycling programme), and our GW nurseries (clonal mixes, field auditing performance, irrigation and Weraiti 1987 poplar trial). A very successful two days which reinforced that Akura nursery is still a very well run operation.

3.3 Eco-sourcing

Eco-sourced seed collections have almost been completed with over 40 seed species collected and delivered to Morgan's Road Nursery in Blenheim. Two species remain to be collected as seed ripening is awaited. These collections are all recorded by date of collection and location, this coding recorded onto every eco-sourced Root trainer tray. GW held a recent workshop on eco-sourcing of native species, attended by Annabelle Butler our seed collector, Raewyn Hullena and Stan Braaksma. Akura can be very satisfied with progress in this area.

Norfolk Road nursery has been visited to assess plant quality and numbers available for supply. A visit has also been made to Blenheim to tour the nursery and receive a full briefing on our seed collecting, and fine tuning requirements for future supply. Both nurseries have held their prices this year.

Staff visited Cambridge Nursery to inspect the quality of this year's pine seedlings along with rooted poplar cuttings and some alternative exotics. Pines are ready for release on 8 June. With increased planting requirements from the successful Afforestation Grant Scheme and many replants of recently harvested forests, staff have ordered a further 100,000 seedlings. (250,000 total)

Staff have secured open grown flax and other natives from the Coppermine nursery in Woodville.

3.4 Publicity and promotion

Both newspaper and radio advertising space has been placed to run in early June. The Akura catalogue is in draft form with only a couple of prices yet to be confirmed.

The Nursery Manager attended the GW stand at the Otaki Small Farmers field day. Stan Braaksma has made presentations to a local iwi group and the Lakes Garden group.

3.5 Budget

The Akura Business Unit has an operating surplus at the end of April 2010 of \$24,000 against a budgeted annual surplus of \$28,600. The end of year forecast has been revised as part of the Six Month review to show a surplus of \$2,100.

The Nursery unit is exhibiting a deficit of \$36,000 after ten months. The forecast position at year end will be a loss of \$17,300 (c.f budgeted loss of \$14,300). This forecast adjustment was noted in previous reports.

The April result for trading shows a surplus of \$50,000 which is slightly ahead of budget. The forecasted end of year result is a surplus of \$19,400 (c.f budgeted surplus \$42,900). This shift of some \$20,000 is a result of reduced gate sales and was reported in February 2010.

Activity	Operating Surplus – Annual Budget 2009/10	Forecast End of Year Position	Operating Surplus - Actual to May 2010
Nurseries	(14,300)	(17,300)	(36,000)
Trading	42,900	19,400	50,000
Total	28,600	2,100	14,000

4. Biodiversity (Jacki Byrd)

4.1 Ongoing works

Streams Alive site assessment and property plans for all winter planting sites have been completed. Tree orders have been placed to cover the planting programme and contractors have been secured for spraying and planting requirements. Jacki Byrd who has run the Streams Alive programme for the last two years has resigned and returned to Auckland. A replacement is currently being sought and should be in place by mid-July.

4.2 Expenditure to date

	Budget 2009/10	Expenditure to May 2010	% of Budget
Riparian Management	\$196,200	\$193,200	98.5%
Streams Alive	\$100,000	\$94,919	94.9%

5. Operations (Kevin Burdan)

5.1 OSH

- Two roll bars have been installed on quads within the Department. These are a new Australian design that has particularly high ratings for preventing severe injuries to riders when quad rollovers occur.
- Staff are working in teams to update some of the more prevalent serious harm hazards: Working Alone, Working with Helicopters, Working with Quads, Working with the Hi-ab, Working with Four Wheel Drives, and Winter Pole Planting.

5.2 Silviculture

Activity	Completed	\$	Annual Plan Target (hectares)	Year to date	\$
Thinning	0	0	100 ha	70.2 ha	29,504
Pruning	17.2ha	11,605	100 ha	65.8 ha	47,755
Total	17.2ha	11,605	200 ha	136.0 ha	77,259

- Silviculture was carried out on two properties during the last period bringing the total number of properties where silviculture has been completed this year to eleven.
- Despite the lift in log prices over the last three months farm owners are still hesitant regarding the silvicultural programmes, generally deferring them until the next financial year.
- The summer works programmes in all six of the catchment scheme areas have been completed with some extensive works completed in the Awha catchment on a notorious section of road at Usshers Hill. Inspections undertaken since the recent heavy rainfall have shown the works to be working very effectively.

5.3 Forestry

- Tracks within Stoney Creek have been metalled to ensure safe winter access.
- A further 15ha of pruning and 5.5ha thinning has been completed at Hiwinui.

BioWorks (Richard Grimmett)

The teams are progressing rapidly through surveys and control operations at present. Only three output contracts are yet to be monitored and are close to completion. The remainder of the year through June focuses on input contracts. To date all contracts have passed monitor and audits without failure.

BioWorks has been successful in its Expressions of Interest application for Southern North Island aerial operations. There are now two Preferred Suppliers that will be able to tender for aerial operations over the next three years.

Tender Round 1 (2010/11) contract results were favourable. BioWorks were awarded two of the three operations tendered for. The third project was withdrawn after the closing date. Some AHB post tender comments were that our applications are as close to 100% as possible. The AHB has opened another tender round. BioWorks will tender for 4 of the 7 projects.

The Preferred Supplier offer parcel has been assessed and questions submitted to AHB. BioWorks has discussed the operations and submitted plans and prices two weeks ahead of deadlines.

The current year's programme is on track for completion at the end of June. Discussions and extensions of contract dates into June have been agreed with AHB. The teams are well aware of the need to ensure no contracts fail at this stage of the year and the transition into new works on 1st July.

A meeting has been requested with the AHB to discuss administration of contracts. Staff believe that GW's advanced technology can be used to report more efficiently and effectively. This is in line with the aim to capture information electronically and deliver in a format superior to that required by the AHB. AHB are visiting our depot in early July to establish direct reporting from our GIS tables, also reducing duplication. They are also very interested in working with us to develop electronic data capture and delivery systems. They are currently putting together business plans to address this opportunity and may use our business as a pilot. All of these initiatives improves our attributes and maintains our low risk service delivery status.

Integrated Catchment (Ian Gunn)

1. Natural Resources Management Plan

Engagement meeting dates are being set. Meetings have been booked in the Wairarapa for 7th July (Martinborough), 12th July (Masterton) and 14th July (Martinborough). These dates have been chosen to enable farmers to attend the meetings prior to calving and lambing. The programme of engagement will continue throughout the region until September.

Internally within Catchment Management, there is debate going on about the benefits of developing codes of practise for operational activities. There seems to a very good opportunity to potentially reduce the requirement for resource consents.

2. Research and Development/Monitoring

Following the consultation to vary the resource consents for Flood Protection works in the Wairarapa, the interested parties have requested that GW review what its strategy is for research and development/monitoring in our river systems. The interested parties are keen to understand what our current strategy is and whether there is benefit in having a combined strategy for research/monitoring in the river systems. Some internal work is required before continuing these discussions.

3. Emergency Management

The introduction of the new emergency management web-based system called e-sponder has been delayed until later this year. Work continues on a "shared services agreement" within the region.

Forestry (Barry Leonard)

Review of operations for the period ended 31 May 2010

1. Plantation forests (Wellington)

1.1 Log Harvest Contract

April prices increased slightly or held their own only for the benefits to be subsumed by the shipping cost, which was up by \$US1.50, and the exchange rate, which changed from 0.70 to 0.71.

May prices fell slightly at destination and there were further increases in shipping of \$US1.00 and exchange rates up to 0.72. There is reported oversupply in China as a consequence of the Chinese New Year break and increases in volumes shipped in. Despite this, the feeling among sales staff in China is that the drop is only temporary and the long-term (12 month) outlook is favourable.

Table 1 - At Wharf Gate prices per JAS:

	P	PP	AO	A	K	KI	KX	Shipping \$US
July 2009			73.84	67.65	61.46	55.26	42.88	38.00
August			82.32	76.27	71.73	65.67	52.05	38.00
September			82.96	77.12	72.75	66.91	56.70	43.00
October			82.98	77.41	73.22	67.65	57.89	40.70
November			83.40	77.90	73.78	68.29	58.67	43.30
December (Korea)			91.78 85.35	86.16 83.94	81.94 81.13	76.32 72.70	66.49 54.44	46.00
January 2010			91.66	86.09	81.91	76.34	66.58	45.50
February	144.86	123.48	114.92	109.22	104.95	92.12	89.26	47.00
March	151.99	130.52	121.93	116.20	111.91	99.02	96.16	46.50
April	146.85	125.75	117.31	111.69	107.47	96.22	90.60	48.00
May	124.95	111.10	102.79	98.63	93.09	82.01	77.85	49.00

Domestic prices were adjusted from 1 April, with most rates increasing by at least \$10 per tonne. Although the traders did not welcome the increases, they knew they were coming and demand is still such that we are struggling to meet our orders out of metro forests.

The quarter end coincided with the fuel cost review and, as a consequence, contracted cartage rates increased by 1.69 percent and “log and load” costs by 18 cents per tonne.

With KI and KX prices so high, we have taken the opportunity to harvest some poorer quality trees on the ridgeline in Valley View. In order to service our domestic customers, we had to ensure that the other crew was in a good sawlog stand.

We were fortunate to be able to harvest about 2.3 hectares of the eucalyptus stand at Raupo Swamp.

Log 6, the Tuckey ground based crew, has been based on the main ridge at Valley

View and in April produced 2,280 tonnes for revenue of \$81,256. Log 36, the hauler crew, was based in Boiler Gully and harvested 2,722 tonnes for a return of \$134,249.

Log 5, the ground based crew, was based in Centre North in Puketiro Forest. They are preparing settings for the hauler to use later in the year. Their production was 1,735 tonnes for a return of \$69,800.

Log 5 has now left the forest to work elsewhere for Rayonier. They have purchased a hauler and they are learning the skills required for that type of logging. This will be an advantage to Greater Wellington Regional Council if they return at some stage.

The April result was a total 6,736 tonnes for \$285,305, at an average of \$42.36 per tonne. On a pro rata basis this tonnage would have produced a revenue of \$316,794 had prices been the same as March.

The return for May was 6,265 tonnes for \$209,390 at an average of \$33.48 per tonne.

1.2 Silviculture Contract

In April 23.2 hectares of silviculture were completed at a cost of \$14,151.

During May a further 39.77 hectares were completed at a cost of \$24,311.

To date 70 percent of the 2009/10 Contract silviculture has been completed.

1.3 Plantation forestry operations

The good weather of February and March continued until the last week of May. As a result, there were few roading issues other than wear arising from the road surface being extremely hard. It was necessary to metal the road to assist the trucks when cornering and ease the tyre wear.

The logging contractor completed the upgrade of the road from 7.5 km Valley View down to Raupo Saddle and along the valley into the eastern side of Boiler Gully. One crew will be based here for winter, while the other goes to Puketiro.

While the weather was good we metalled, cleared water tables and checked all the culverts on the main road at Puketiro. There were a number of culverts blocked.

Most recently we have completed the logging through the Gratton property but are still sourcing metal in Reservoir Ridge and transporting it back to Lindsay's Road through the Gratton land. I now have to metal the Gratton access route and make some fence repairs where the combination of wind-throw and harvesting has damaged the existing fences.

Employees have continued to supervise the Silvicultural Contractors and monitor the quality control plots.

1.4 Forest access

The lack of access into Maungakotukutuku remains. The proposal to log the neighbour's forest through Maungakotukutuku has been delayed and no progress has

been made. All main roads are in good order.

1.5 Market trends

Demand is still good from the domestic mills, despite the steep increase they faced on 1 April. Of recent weeks we have managed to meet our allocations of sawlog to Davis but still struggle to produce sufficient M22 grade and M30 grade sawlog for Kiwi Lumber and Eurocell. Current standing orders are Davis five loads, Eurocell five loads and Kiwi Lumber eight loads per week.

Export demand remains strong, with the present “glitch” being caused mainly by port congestion at destination. The downside of the demand is that shipping costs are expected to rise, although predictions are for rates to reduce as more of the laid up ships are put back into service. Centreport is becoming a bottleneck, with load outs from the forest suspended while ships are loaded.

The New Zealand dollar looks to have fallen significantly on the back of the European problems and, if it remains around current levels (0.67 United States dollar to 1 New Zealand dollar), it may overcome the price reduction and shipping increase and give us higher prices at the wharf gate.

1.6 2010-2014 Forest Harvest and Marketing Contracts

The Contract changeover occurred without any problems. Ultra Logging, the ground based crew at Tauanui, has finished and found work elsewhere. At present we are planning the next segment of road that has to be built before the hauler can move in.

2. Reserve forests

2.1 Tauanui logging

As stated above, there is no logging taking place at present while road extensions are constructed.

2.2 Hiwinui silviculture

Medium pruning was completed on 8.3 hectares and 6.7 hectares of high pruning in of second rotation Hiwinui. A total of 5.5 hectares of regeneration thinning was carried out.

2.3 Tauanui rainfall

After only 20 mm of rainfall for February and 67.5 mm for March, nature has done its thing with 345 mm up to 21 May.

Stoney Creek had 497mm and Hiwinui 215 mm over the same period.

2.4 Road maintenance

Remetalling of selected tracks was carried out in Stoney Creek.