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Committee Environmental Wellbeing Committee
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General Managers' report to the Environmental Wellbeing Committee on 16 April 2013

1. Purpose

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

2. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

3. Catchment Management

3.1 Flood Protection

3.1.1 Boulcott/Hutt Project

The Boulcott/Hutt project is progressing to the shortened programme, with the target of completing the project by June 2013. The stopbank works are now substantially complete. The top soiling and grassing of some sections remains to be completed. The contractor is currently progressing with the landscaping works, the installation of the Military Road stormwater pipe and the works at the Safeway entrance. Security fencing and improvements at the Safeway Storage entrance remain to be agreed with Safeway.

The Golf Club is also making good progress with the reinstatement works along the stopbank and the disturbed areas of the former Boulcott course.

3.1.2 Hutt River - City Centre Upgrade Project

Project scoping for the City Centre Upgrade Project is progressing. The purpose of this is to:

- Identify key components of the project, its aims and its timeline.

- Identify key issues and links with the interests of the other parties and the community.
- Recommend a project management structure to achieve the aims of the project.

The Chief Executives and senior staff of Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) and Hutt City Council were briefed on the project extent, key issues and risks in February 2013. Boffa Miskell has been appointed to assist GWRC with producing the scoping report. A presentation was made to the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee (HVFMS) on 19 March 2013. A GWRC internal workshop and an external stakeholders workshop are planned for April 2013. Project scoping is programmed for completion by June 2013.

The Waimarie Croquet Club Committee membership supported the relocation fundraising proposal at a special General Meeting of the Club held on 9 February 2013. The Club made a presentation to the HVFMS on 19 March 2013, setting out the current status of the relocation plans.

3.1.3 Lower Waitohu Stream

Land entry negotiations with the landowners along the lower Waitohu Stream from Convent Road Bridge are progressing. On 21 March 2013, the Maori Land Court appointed three representatives from the 36 Maori land owners of 74 Convent Road to progress land entry negotiations with GWRC. Staff are continuing discussions with other landowners along the stream. Five landowners have signed the agreements.

3.1.4 Otaki River

Staff are currently investigating river bed management options to maintain a stable channel alignment for the Otaki River from the Mouth to the Gorge. The selected option will form the basis for the maintenance and improvement works in the river corridor.

3.1.5 Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme (LWVDS) Work Programme

The main development work programme for 2012/13 is continuing with boulder protection work being constructed at Paul's Bank, following the completion of similar work at the Macland farm bank adjacent to Lake Onoke. A section of the Lake Onoke stopbank has been upgraded.

The house on the Tobin property stopbank upgrade site is being repaired prior to the sale of the balance of the property not required for river protection purposes.

3.1.6 Floodplain Management Plans (FMPs)

Waiwhetu Stream

A community workshop was held on 11 March with the Friends of Waiwhetu Stream committee to discuss progress of option combination refinement.

An interim summary report is being prepared which collates all of the economic, environmental, social and cultural value information, with the results of the extensive community consultation that led to development of the current floodplain management plan option combinations.

An extension of delivery to the 2013/14 financial year was accepted by the Environmental Wellbeing Committee, and the option combination information will be presented to the Committee in June 2013.

Pinehaven Stream

In conjunction with Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC), a community consultation strategy is being developed with a particular emphasis on one-on-one consultation with affected landowners. The first round of consultation commenced at the beginning of December 2012.

The preferred option combination was included in the report referred to the March HVFMS meeting. On a separate day, a field trip to key locations within the Pinehaven Stream catchment was held for UHCC and GWRC Councillors; this was attended by two UHCC Councillors and one GWRC Councillor.

An extension of delivery time to the 2013/14 financial year was accepted by the Environmental Wellbeing Committee.

Waikanae River

The Waikanae Flood Management Programme (FMP) is being republished with an addendum to reflect the recent FMP review. A publishing proof of the FMP has been received, and it is expected that an initial print run to satisfy immediate demand will be carried out by the end of April.

Ongoing work is to be carried out including, as required, the development of a target bed levels envelope supporting the river management consent applications.

Waiohine River

Phase 3 investigations are proceeding. Options were presented to the Scheme Committee in January. The Scheme Committee requested that Options 4 and 7 be subject to a more detailed evaluation, including planning matters, river management details and an engineering assessment of costs with further public consultation.

A further round of public information meetings was held in late March. This second round of consultation addressed some of the questions from the community relating to the hydraulic impacts, and provided more information on the costs. The information and results of the two rounds of consultation will be presented in April to the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee will then weigh up the information and comments from the community before making a recommendation to the Environmental Wellbeing Committee.

Upper Wairarapa

The Upper Wairarapa Valley FMP Project (UWVFMP) scoping report has been completed.

The focus now is on the community engagement, climatology and hydrology survey and hydraulic modelling, and geomorphology components. Other elements such as erosion and flood damages assessment and cultural values assessment will commence in coming months. In general, the project is running approximately two weeks behind schedule.

3.1.7 Other Investigations and Project Support

Whakawhiriwhiri Stream

Following the request of the GWRC Resource Environmental Regulation Department, it was agreed to have a second independent review commissioned of the hydraulic modelling and channel design. It was anticipated that this would be completed by the end of January 2013, but was not received until 4 April 2013.

A first round of consultation/discussions has been completed with affected landowners on entry agreement, mitigation, compensation and future maintenance requirements. Follow-up letters have been sent to all concerned parties, and work is progressing on these agreements in anticipation that a pre-hearing meeting will be held.

Flood Hazard Advisory Services

Staff have been involved in the McKays to Peka Peka (M2PP) and Peka Peka to Otaki (PP2O) Roads Of National Significance (RONS) projects on the Kapiti Coast. We have recently provided feedback on the M2PP consent conditions and submitted on the PP2O project. The PP2O project is expected to be publicly notified in early May, but we are investigating whether we can get a copy of the hydraulic modelling report by Opus beforehand to give us more time to review whether our previously-raised concerns have been addressed.

Queries on flood hazard advice have considerably slowed down in comparison to the same period last year. Based on the current trend, the total number at the end of the fiscal year is still projected to be around 300.

Floodplain Management Guidelines

Work on the Floodplain Management Plan guidelines is almost complete. The only outstanding task is a final review by the Flood Protection department, at which point they will be published.

3.1.8 Recreation Activities

There has been significant participation in the Summer programme events with “Bike the Trail”, “The Great Gravel Grabs” and “Have a go Fly Fishing” attracting a lot of attention. The Radio New Zealand Spectrum feature by Jack Perkin on the Otaki Gravel Grab will be aired at 12noon on 28 April.

3.1.9 River Management Resource Consent Project

Since the last report, the resource consent application for the Hutt River operations and maintenance activities is now complete and lodged on 5 April 2013. The focus is now on progressing the final application for the Waikanae River to be lodged in May 2013. The Otaki and Wainuiomata Rivers applications will follow later in 2013.

Work is complete on the various technical reports that are required to support the applications, including ecology and river morphology. The environmental monitoring strategy, river morphology and recreation reports are all completed. As further monitoring information comes to hand, it is anticipated that these reports will be added to. Work on the Code of Practice has progressed, and will be completed during 2013 prior to the granting of any consent applications.

The two year short-term resource consent for the Waingawa River was lodged in January 2013. Submissions have now closed, and three were received. It is anticipated that the consent will be granted during April without the need for a hearing.

3.1.10 Health & Safety

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is currently developing a new River and Stream Works Health and Safety Code of Practice. These activities were previously included in the Code of Practice for Safety and Health in Forest Operations, which has recently been updated. Staff have been participating in a national working party of river management staff to prepare the draft document, which will be finalised following wider consultation.

3.2 Biosecurity

Pest Animals

3.2.1 Waikanae River Pest Animal Control

A group of enthusiastic volunteers have initiated a predator control programme along the Waikanae River corridor from SH1 Bridge west to the Waikanae Estuary. Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC), Transpower and GWRC Flood Protection have all contributed funding to install possum, rat and mustelid control equipment on both sides of the river. Volunteers and GWRC staff will service these alternately to ensure the programme is well maintained and serviced regularly. KCDC are leading the project, with GWRC staff undertaking the planning and field work support.

3.2.2 Volunteer involvement in pest animal operations

With the tightening of budgets and the potential loss of biodiversity funding from some Wellington City Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) areas, Wellington City Council (WCC) has been actively pursuing volunteer assistance for new

and existing pest control programmes. WCC have encouraged volunteer groups to apply to their fund for financial assistance with some of this work.

The volunteer group at Whitireia Park have been servicing mustelid traps and have now agreed to help service the bait stations and possum traps that help keep the peninsula possum free. Staff undertake regular spotlight checks to monitor the success of the programme.

3.2.3 Wainuiomata/Orongorongo aerial operation and Mainland Island

The Wainuiomata-Orongorongo aerial 1080 operation has been completed. Testing confirmed that 1080 content in the bait is now below the detectable limit and all test carcasses are fully decomposed. All the warning signage has been removed and the treatment area is safe for public use, with all precautions now removed from the area. To our knowledge, no incidents occurred during this operation, and sign vandalism was minimal.

3.2.4 Akatarawa Forest aerial 1080 possum control 2013

Planning is underway for a 15,000 ha aerial 1080 operation in the GWRC owned Akatarawa Forest. Consultation has been carried out and approvals from the Medical Officer of Health and the GWRC Environmental Regulation Department are being worked through. Feedback from the consultation shows general acceptance that the operation is necessary. Wide spread notifications are due to happen in the next few weeks, with the operation proposed to commence in early May, depending on the weather. The last aerial 1080 operation occurred in 2007.

3.2.5 Sea squirt *Styela clava* found in Porirua harbour

The invasive marine sea squirt *Styela clava* has been confirmed in Porirua Harbour. A survey carried out by Boffa Miskell Ltd several weeks ago, as part of their NZTA Transmission Gully construction monitoring, found the sea squirt at two locations near Duck Creek in Pauatahanui inlet. *Styela clava* has a tubular brown club-shaped body with two siphons (holes) on the end. It grows up to 16 cm in length. It is an invasive, fast growing, nuisance fouler of vessels, marine farms and fishing equipment.

Styela clava was first discovered in New Zealand in Auckland during 2005, and has since been found at multiple sites across both islands of New Zealand, including an incursion in Wellington harbour. Eradication from New Zealand was investigated by a technical advisory group of marine experts and found to be unfeasible. Biosecurity staff are not involved in the management of marine pests, but we are working with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) to prepare a joint press release and information for the public who use the area.

3.2.6 Reassessment of approvals for zoo animals

The Environmental Protection Authority is consulting on the reassessment of the controls for animals in zoos and aquariums in New Zealand. GWRC Biosecurity will submit on the consultation, with a focus on the resourcing and containment requirements for smaller facilities. We are aware of a number of

smaller facilities within the region holding high risk species such as wallabies and rooks for zoological purposes. Because of the high eradication or management costs associated with these species, should they escape or be released within the region, it is important that the smaller zoos have adequate facilities and staff to reduce the risk.

Pest Plants

3.2.7 Surveillance

Current KNE contracts, RPMS control works and client response activities are the priority for staff for the remainder of the year.

Staff showed two PHD students and a professor from Leicester University, England, around several of our Asiatic knotweed sites. They were travelling through New Zealand sampling sites to trace the genetic source to assist biocontrol specific research. During the visit, seedlings were found for the first time at an Akatarawa site. These may potentially be a hybrid between Asiatic knotweed and our native *Muehlenbeckia* species. We will learn if that is the case once the Leicester team complete their genetic work back in the United Kingdom.

(1) *Hieracium* and *Pilosella* species investigations

Hieracium and *Pilosella* are high risk pastoral and environmental pests widespread in the South Island. They are toxic to stock. Our team has continued work delimiting the distribution of this species in the region, assisting Department of Conservation staff and responding to client queries. Three species were discovered in the region: *H. xstoloniflorum*, *H. murorum* and *P. officinarum*. Currently they are found only in the Wairarapa and plants are removed or sprayed upon identification. Successful biocontrol agents exist and this option for control is being assessed.



Hieracium xstoloniflorum (left) and *Pilosella officinarum* (right)



Hieracium murorum

(2) Check Clean Dry

GWRC again applied for funding from the MPI to employ an advocate for MPI's freshwater pest awareness campaign over the summer months. The main purpose of the campaign is to raise awareness of didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) and other aquatic pest plants, and to ensure waterway users know how to *Check, Clean, Dry* (CCD). The program was completed during February.

A range of tactics are used to engage with members of the public including waterside advocacy at high risk access points, attending outdoor events, distribution of information to relevant businesses, organisations and clubs, and releasing information into the media. This year there was a focus on attending events from the GWRC outdoor events programme and gathering information from users of the high risk waterways. This information has been worthwhile for assessing the level of knowledge members of the public have about freshwater pests. Our advocate found it very challenging to get the message across to people who were competing at any of the multisport events attended. In future, we have to place responsibility for ensuring that freshwater pests are not being spread by the competitors on the organisers of these events.

3.2.8 Biodiversity

Staff are continuing to carry out weed surveys of the proposed new high value sites, and to produce weed maps of the areas. We have completed or activated 13 more contracts for a total of 51 control contracts in the KNE and Reserve sites. Staff have treated a number of sites previously issued to contractors, due to a shortage of skilled contractors.

3.2.9 Biological control

Staff made several releases of the *Tradescantia* leaf and tip beetles and broom leaf beetle in the Carterton district. Five transfers of the green thistle beetle were made over this period to various sites throughout the Wairarapa.

Six translocation sites of Scotch thistle gall fly have been inspected this year. Galled seed heads were found at all sites infesting a very high percentage of each plant. These transfers were made 12 months ago so this is looking promising, as when a plant is heavily infested there is very little seed produced. Staff were collecting galled seed heads (over a thousand) to store over winter for releases next spring.

(1) Aquatic Species Investigations underway

The National Biocontrol Collective is supporting Envirolink-funded feasibility studies investigating the potential for biocontrol of three priority species: oxygen weed (*Lagarosiphon major*), hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) and Brazilian waterweed (*Egeria densa*), in New Zealand.

The first report on oxygen weed shows promising opportunities to link with international research. A collaborative project between University College Dublin (UCD), Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI), and Rhodes University (South Africa) began in 2008 to investigate the prospects for biocontrol of this pest. Surveys of *lagarosiphon* have been conducted in the native range and a number of candidate arthropod agents have been identified, including a leaf-mining fly (*Hydrellia lagarosiphon*) and a shoot-tip mining midge (cf. *Polypedilum* sp.). Host-range testing of these agents is well progressed and the fly appears to be sufficiently specific for release in New Zealand, although additional host-range testing is required to confirm this. Reports on the two other species are due in April.

(2) GWRC leading the application to import biocontrol agents for Japanese honeysuckle

Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) is a weed of concern throughout New Zealand and particularly in the North Island. It is listed as a pest in the Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS) of 11 regions. The National Biocontrol Collective has determined that biological control is the most likely means of achieving environmentally acceptable and cost-effective management for Japanese honeysuckle in New Zealand.

GWRC Biosecurity volunteered to be the principal applicant to introduce the Honshu white admiral butterfly (*Limenitis glorifica*) as a biological control agent for the weed Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*). The application has been completed with help from Landcare Research following wide consultation with iwi and the general public.

BioWorks

3.2.10 Rimutaka Range Aerial Project

Testing confirmed that 1080 content in the bait is now below the detectable limit and all test carcasses are fully decomposed. All the warning signage has now been removed and the treatment area is safe for public use with all precautions now removed from the area. The Animal Health Board (AHB) has

provided final sign off that the operation is now complete. To our knowledge no incidents occurred during this operation.

3.2.11 Pukeatua Aerial Project

1080 baits were declared non toxic on 11 February. Possum carcasses continue to be monitored.

3.2.12 Ground projects

Staff have completed approximately 33,000 ha of the 56,500 ha AHB programme for the 2012/13 year.

3.2.13 Regional Possum Predator Control Programme

Control has commenced in the RPPCP within the Kapiti District covering 12,300 hectares. Staff are setting bait stations and filling them with brodifacoum. A further 7,700 hectares is expected to be treated within Porirua City. Control is not being undertaken within the urban areas.

To date response from the public has been good with only a few landowners opposing control on their property. Progress is slower than expected due to the heavily populated area.

The Wairarapa RPPCP (15,000ha) is scheduled to be completed in June.

3.3 Land Management

3.3.1 Akura Conservation Centre

The Centre has achieved a good performance over the last nine months. Nursery management is up to date and the pruning, mowing and spraying components are complete. Irrigation was stopped after rainfall of 110mm during 18/19 March but, with soil moisture deficits of around 100mm, the irrigation was started again on 3 April. The current low flows in the Waipoua River mean that the water take has been halved until further notice.

Growth rates in the new nursery continue to exceed expectations with a near-perfect mix of irrigation and hot weather over the last three months.

3.3.2 Forestry update

The Hauler at Tauanui (Wairarapa Reserve Forest) is yet to be repaired. An obsolete bearing on the main hauler drum is unobtainable with a replacement having to be engineered from scratch. The Hauler is required to extract remaining timber from a very difficult setting. A ground based machine is now operating in the interim.

The three crews harvesting at Valley View are working through the final stages of the harvest plan before moving to work in Puketiro. Two areas in Puketiro pose some difficulties for harvest. Firstly, the trees alongside the three transmission lines that supply power to Wellington, and secondly, the first of

the blocks adjacent to Transmission Gully and located in the headwaters of the Horokiri Stream which drains into Pauatahanui Inlet. Harvest plans for these and other areas are being prepared over the next month.



The very dry conditions have provided the most extreme fire season since 2008. As a result, a restricted fire season and more recently a prohibited fire season was declared. Initially this only covered the Wairarapa but then was extended to cover all rural areas in the Wellington Region.

Recent rainfall has provided some reduction in critical indices, but the overall risk remains very high with the prohibited fire season expected to continue until further significant rainfall occurs. As a precaution, access to the Metro and Reserve Forests has been restricted. Several serious plantation fires have occurred within the Wairarapa in the last two months. At least two of these may be arson fires (investigations are continuing).

3.3.3 Wellington Regional Erosion Control Initiative (WRECI)

The fourth year of the WRECI programme has had a successful start with the third year of plantings starting in July. Over summer most work is concentrated on writing Plans and monitoring last season's plantings. During this period one WRECI plan has been completed and work has continued on seven other plans. Work has included farm visits with landowners, vegetation mapping, Land Use Capability mapping, and annual programme development.

GPS monitoring of last year's plantings has also started, although progress has been slower than anticipated because of difficulties in securing contractors to do the work. So far 1,925 poles out of the 8,195 planted (23%) have been recorded. The average stocking rate of recorded poles is 83 per hectare. Survival of poles has been affected by the very dry conditions.

Associated with the WRECI programme, Land Management hosted six Ministry of Primary Industries staff for a day visit to the Wairarapa on one of the WRECI properties at Bideford. This visit discussed the future of the WRECI programme, as well as looking at the types of work, (planning and on-farm works) accomplished by the WRECI programme and the previous Farm Plan.

3.3.4 Mangatarere Catchment – Field Day

Land Management are now forming a wait list for farmers in the Mangatarere catchment interested in working with GWRC to develop a Farm Environment Plan for the 2013/14 year as all eight of the available slots have now been filled for 2012/13. The strategy for Plan implementation in this catchment also included the holding of a field day at the completion of the second year of the programme.

The field day will be held in early June and will utilise expertise from DairyNZ, fertiliser companies, Irrigation NZ and Fonterra around efficient use of resources and environmental management. Speakers will cover a range of economic and environmental issues facing the dairy industry with the draft of Clean Streams Accord Two now in the public arena.

The latter part of the day will involve a farm inspection looking at the discharge of effluent to land and the calculations required for effluent storage. These are very topical at the moment and farmers are certainly very interested in compliance regimes around effluent disposal.



3.4 Wairarapa Moana Wetland Project

3.4.1 Recreation

The draft Wairarapa Moana Experience Development Plan was adopted by the management team and is currently out for discussion amongst interested parties.

The Wairio/Te Ara o Parera walkway resource consent has been granted and a contractor will commence construction of the boardwalk shortly.

3.4.2 Marketing

Content is being prepared for a project website which is likely to go live in May. Protocols have been approved for the logo.

A copy of the book “Wairarapa Moana The Lake and its People” has been forwarded to all the primary and secondary schools within the Wairarapa. The book was well received at a meeting of principals/teachers from South Wairarapa recently.

3.4.3 Relationships

The new sign for the Lake Domain has, after input from our iwi partners, been agreed. It will now be called “Wairarapa Moana Lake Domain”.

Topics discussed at the latest Wairarapa Moana Coordinating Committee meeting included what is a viable grazing policy (fencing off and leaving areas to become weed wildernesses), the Ramsar document, the control of Canada geese and the contribution of phosphates from detergents to our degraded waterways.

The review of the grazing policy continues.

3.4.4 Biodiversity

A response to the Ramsar application is still awaited.

DOC has received a legal interpretation on the native and exotic fish status at Wairarapa Moana. DOC considers that the statutory responsibility placed on the Department under the Conservation Act is “to preserve so far as is practicable all indigenous freshwater fisheries and protect recreational freshwater fisheries and freshwater fish habitats within conservation areas” [Conservation Act s6 (ab)].

Statutory and regulatory priority is given to indigenous fish species over exotic fish species.

S26ZO of the Conservation Act provides for the legal occupier of the land to fish and this provision applies to DOC as the current legal owner (of its parts of Wairarapa Moana).

In addition, the Area Manager may authorise third parties to fish under s17Q(1) of the Conservation Act.

Secondly, on some questions around tuna:

The Reserves Act s50(1) provides that the taking or killing for commercial purposes of any eels in any reserve is prohibited unless it was a condition of the establishment of the reserve that the donor, vendor, or lessor has reserved the right to take or kill eels for commercial purposes in the reserve. Wairarapa Moana, Allsops Bay Wildlife Reserve, Ruamahanga Cutoff Wildlife Reserve, Matthews and Boggy Pond Wildlife Reserve all fall within the Reserves Act and would be subject to this provision.

Commercial eeling is also covered by the Fisheries Act, administered by the Ministry for Primary industries and this Act has various mechanisms to control or restrict commercial eeling. For example under s297, regulations can be made to prohibit the taking or possession of any fish or aquatic life from any area. This could be used specifically to prohibit the taking of longfin eels from within Wairarapa Moana. Initiating these regulations would be the responsibility of the Minister for Primary Industries.

Reporting mechanisms under the fisheries regulations relate to where the fish were caught and can be very specific. It is not sufficient to relate the catch to the quota area. If tuna were taken from Wairarapa Moana, then this must be specified in the catch reports and it should be possible to focus even more tightly to ensure that any take from within the reserves cannot simply be reported as “Lake Wairarapa”.

In these instances, action taken under the fisheries legislation would carry a greater potential penalty than under Conservation legislation. Given this interpretation, it appears that DOC has the ability to authorise third parties to fish exotic fish to protect native fish. Further discussions with the Ministry for Primary Industries could result in specific reporting requirements for commercial tuna fishers within Wairarapa Moana.

3.4.5 Freshstart for Freshwater Cleanup Fund - Progress

- On farm assessments – a successful meeting has been held with “willing” land owners. The type of projects identified from the assessments is listed in the table below.

Summary of on-farm opportunities from farm assessments

Project type		Number of properties
Improve effluent management	Storage & irrigation	11
	Reduce effluent production	5
Eliminate run off from tracks		2
Develop constructed wetland		6

Improve quality and accuracy of fertiliser spreading		2
Improve accuracy and efficiency of water irrigation		7
Improved drain management		6
Monitoring drainage water quality		5
Monitoring fish in waterways / drains		2
Restoration of wetland areas		3
Riparian fencing and planting		15
Planting - restoration	Stopbanks	3
	Erosion control shelter	1
	Shelterbelt management	12
	Weed control in existing retired areas	10

These projects are now being ranked and a grant system devised taking into account the different benefits to the Cleanup Fund project and the landowners. There was considerable discussion about the introduction of the storage pond calculator. Staff have met with the Environmental Regulation team members to clarify a number of the issues raised.

3.5 Biodiversity

3.5.1 Biodiversity advice

Statutory planning and policy advice

- The department prepared a detailed submission on the South Wairarapa District Council's draft Coastal Reserves Management Plan. Many of the reserves listed in this plan overlap with identified Biodiversity Management Areas.
- Staff continue to work with Environmental Regulation and Science departments to streamline the provision of advice on resource consents, and to improve consenting processes.

Site specific biodiversity advice

- Technical biodiversity advice was provided to 18 external and 11 internal stakeholders regarding forest, riparian, coastal and wetland ecosystems.

3.5.2 High value biodiversity areas

- Biodiversity operational planning was undertaken for 37 Biodiversity Management Areas (BMAs) in the region during this period. Pest animal control was undertaken in 42 sites, and pest plant control in 44 sites.

- Biodiversity Areas Plans (BAP), are being prepared for East Harbour (northern forest), Baring Head, Parangarahu Lakes, Otaki Coast, Makara coast, Waitohu Dunes and coast, Riversdale-Orui, Te Hapua wetlands, and Strangs Bush.
- Meetings were held with Parks department staff to progress BAPs on selected parks. Drafts are being revised for Whitireia, QE Park and Belmont-Korokoro.
- Friends of the Greytown Memorial Park have agreed that the feral cats will be removed to protect wildlife values. Biodiversity will work with the Friends to capture the cats alive and try to re-home them. The Friends have a small amount of funding that they can use to cover SPCA costs.
- A meeting was held with Flood Protection staff to discuss the proposed Katihuku Wetland Restoration Plan. This is a collaborative project being worked on by Biodiversity and Nga Hapu (the landowners).
- Meetings were held with the Maori owners of Lake Wairongomai to discuss support for the restoration project being planned by the owners as part of a wider Kapiti-Horowhenua coast initiative being led by local iwi.
- A meeting was held with DOC and Clive Paton (Aorangi Trust) to discuss opportunities to develop biodiversity projects around the buffer area of the Aorangi Forest Park. A number of actions will be followed-up by Biodiversity to complement the work of the Aorangi Trust.
- A meeting was held with KCDC to discuss planning issues for Pharazyn Reserve, and the potential to include it in the Te Harakeke wetland BMA.
- Staff have provided input into the development of the co-management plan for Parangarahu Lakes.
- Meetings were held with QEII Trust representatives (including the new CEO) to build closer working relationships between the Biodiversity department and the Trust.

3.5.3 Priority areas for community engagement

Wairarapa Moana

- Guidelines for the use of the Wairarapa Moana logo have been approved by the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project Management Group. The guidelines have been distributed to project partners to use.
 - The Content Management System (CMS) for the Wairarapa Moana website is set up and content is being collated. The Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Project Management Group has approved the web management protocols. The Biodiversity department will manage this website.
 - Staff facilitated a planning meeting with the South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group on ecological restoration of the banks of Lake Onoke Lagoon. In the process of developing a restoration plan for

this site, it was discovered that the area was an archaeological site so an archaeological assessment was undertaken. A presentation was given about the archaeology of the site and responsibilities this imposes (Christine Barnett - consultant archaeologist).

- Planning for bird surveys, a plant baseline survey and site preparation for re-vegetation planting for Onoke Lagoon is underway.
- A restoration planting plan for Lake Domain for the next 3 years is being prepared.
- Staff are currently developing a calendar to coordinate community group planting days at sites around South Wairarapa.
- An organisation contact list (Wairarapa Moana Restoration network) has been collated for distribution to community groups.
- Biodiversity staff are investigating how to actively engage the community in projects other than planting.
 - A meeting was held with South Wairarapa schools' staff to discuss how to best support schools to use the habitats and biodiversity of Wairarapa Moana for teaching and learning in context.
 - Amber McEwan (Consultant) is currently developing a protocol for the community, supported by the Biodiversity department, to monitor kakahi fresh water mussels in Wairarapa Moana.
 - Biodiversity staff are collaborating with Environmental Science to investigate the possibilities of organising community volunteers (eg. Masterton Branch of the Ornithological Society) to interpret data from bird recordings taken as part of the current Eastern Lake Wairarapa shore bird survey work.

Porirua Harbour and catchment

- The final draft of the Porirua Harbour Ecological Restoration Plan has been received for stakeholder comment. Planning for sea rush trials in both harbours has begun.
- A restoration planting plan has been completed for the area of the Pauatahanui Wildlife Refuge that is owned by Forest and Bird. Planning for a community planting day is in progress.
- Biodiversity staff are developing restoration plans for other areas in the catchment that were identified in the Porirua Harbour and Catchment Strategy and Action Plan.
- Groundtruth (Peter Handford's consultancy) are developing a "Whole-of-Catchment Revegetation Plan" which focuses on reducing sediment entering the harbour by planting erosion prone land and riparian margins (Action SB5).
- Biodiversity staff are interacting with the community in this catchment through:

- The co-ordination of community education and restoration efforts in the Porirua Harbour catchment for the Porirua Harbour Community Education Group (PHCEG),
- Projects that engage the local community (eg school engagement, community based restoration, salt marsh trials) to investigate best practice for salt marsh restoration.

3.5.4 Region-wide ecological restoration support and key messages

- Nature Space Restoration Day 2013 will be held on Saturday 27 April at Silverstream. This event provides an opportunity for members of care groups from across the region to attend a range of workshops about ecological restoration and learn how make their groups sustainable.

4. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

Report prepared by:



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