

Manager's Report, Environment Co-ordination

Geoff Skene, Manager

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1. Regional Native Plant Guide a Best Seller! (John Holmes)

In the four weeks since the launch of the Guide on October 21, 1700 copies have been either sold or distributed. There has been a sustained demand for the Guide from the retail outlets stocking it, with a number of plant shops coming back for repeat orders. This is an extremely pleasing result; there has been nothing but praise for the Council, and the Guide's sponsor Boffa Miskell, in numerous media reviews and in the feedback we have received.

The Guide is currently for sale in 20 plant stores and nurseries, 7 bookstores, 2 public information offices, and at the offices of the Council. In order to make sure that it meets its RPS objectives of promoting increased native planting in the Region, we have distributed it to local authorities, community groups, and environmental interests. All schools will also get a copy. We have promoted the Guide through all forms of the media (including an appearance by John on local television), with especially good coverage in The Evening Post, The Dominion, in community newspapers, and on The Breeze radio station. We are continuing to seek out new opportunities to sell the Guide. An update on sales will be given at the Committee meeting.

2. Pauatahanui Inlet (Tim Porteous)

The Pauatahanui group is continuing to make good progress with the vision and action plan for the Inlet. The group held a well-attended public meeting on November 2nd to discuss its ideas and seek a community mandate for its recommended actions. Recreational groups have also been consulted. The group plans to report back in December (as requested) to the management agencies and interested parties which initiated this whole process back in May.

The group believes it has developed a vision and identified a number of actions which need to be taken to provide for the Inlet's management over coming years. The "report back" will give the management agencies an indication of what might be expected of them and the group hopes that the agencies' responses (and those of other concerned groups) will provide an idea of what can be done in the short term and what requires more longer term action or additional expenditure. (At the time of writing a date for the meeting had not yet been confirmed.)

3. **Waiwhetu Stream (Tim Porteous)**

The water quality and ecological health of this stream have been impaired for some time. This year's RPS implementation work programme allows for work to commence to address these problems. At present Tim is investigating the potential of a Pauatahanui-type approach to the Waiwhetu's problems. He has had a number of meetings with key players in the catchment to gauge their interest in a community vision for the stream and in the preparation of an "action plan". Some form of community planning is clearly necessary before major works can be undertaken and the action plan concept seems to be a method which leads quickly on to the activities needed to solve the problems identified.

There are a number of parties interested in the Waiwhetu and, what is heartening, in doing something about it. The Stream Liaison Group, a group set up to deal with flood protection issues, has given its full support to the vision/action plan concept, as have the local tangata whenua. We propose to hold a workshop for all concerned in February to identify the way forward for this troubled water way and will advise Councillors of this in due course.

4. **Te Whiti Park Planting (Tim Porteous)**

The riparian planting for the Te Whiti Park area on the Waiwhetu Stream planned for this spring has been postponed until the autumn of 2000. This is because the seedlings, grown from locally sourced stock, had not developed sufficiently to be planted out and require a little more time.

5. **Trees for Survival (Nigel Clarke)**

Nigel has distributed this year's plants to the participating schools and is now arranging planting days. 7 schools took part in planting days on the Akatarawa, Ohariu, Mangaroa, Hutt, and Moonshine rivers during November. We have been heartened by the continuing support of the Region's Rotary Clubs which have committed to the programme for another year. Rotary has offered to provide Nigel with a helper to do some of the day-to-day work.

With still more schools keen to take part, Nigel is on the lookout for potential sponsors. These need not be service clubs and can include businesses looking to align themselves with such a worthwhile environmental cause.

6. **Environmental Education – New Staff**

I am happy to announce that two new staff have joined the Division to spearhead the Council's environmental education initiative. Jo Campbell, a specialist in this field, has come from Scotland to be the co-ordinator of the programme. Richard Morgan is a former teacher who is working part-time to develop the Learnwell schools component of the programme.