



**Report**                **03.369**  
**Date**                 26 June 2003  
**File**                  Y/21/1

**Committee**        **Rural Services and Wairarapa**  
**Author**            **Colin Wright, Divisional Manager, Wairarapa**

## **Divisional Manager's Report**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Committee of current activities and provide information of interest since the previous meeting held on 27 May 2003.

### **2. Divisional Matters**

#### **2.1 Financial Years**

At the time of writing staff are very busy completing matters relating to the 2002/03 financial year. At the same time we are beginning to implement the programmes for the new Long Term Council Community Plan which was finally approved on 30 June 2003.

#### **2.2 Waiohine Bridge**

Committee members have probably noted that the replacement of the State Highway Bridge over the Waiohine River has been advancing significantly in the latest Transit/Transfund programmes. This change should enable the improved flood protection planned for the Waiohine River stopbanks to proceed on schedule.

One matter that will now need to be progressed is the funding of the agreed \$300,000 "local contribution" for the bridge replacement. A meeting will be arranged with the Carterton and South Wairarapa District Councils to progress this matter.

#### **2.3 Staffing**

Laura Watts, Resource Advisor, has resigned to take up an appointment as Hydrologist in the Environment Division, Wellington office. Her vacancy has been advertised.

Jennifer Rogers has commenced at the Upper Hutt Depot as Biosecurity Officer (Monitoring) replacing Fiona Bancroft.

Murray Hudson has been appointed to the position of Biosecurity Officer (Investigations), previously held by James Lambie who is now Section Leader, Investigations & Monitoring.

Graham Reidy has been appointed to the position of Engineering Officer in the River Management Section. His previous position as Technical Assistant has been advertised.

Changes in staffing within the Land Management Section have taken place with Roger Wood having been appointed to the position of Senior Land Management Officer and Don Bell as Land Management Officer (Biodiversity).

Phil Cooper has been appointed on a short term contract as Assistant Works Supervisor in the Land Management Section.

### **3. Biosecurity Department: (Wayne O'Donnell)**

#### **3.1 Communications**

Staff have arranged or assisted with departmental displays and education programmes at:

1. The Otaki Small Farmers Field Day. This show attracted over 5000 people with large numbers passing through the Biosecurity display. The Otaki Field Day is the Department's major publicity opportunity in the north western part of the Region.
2. Harley Street School. Displays and presentations were given to over 100 students on biosecurity issues managed by the Council. Feedback from both teachers and students has been extremely positive.
3. A display focusing on Eradication species effecting pastoral farming was arranged for the annual Wairarapa Federated Farmers meeting.
4. Staff were in attendance at a display arranged for the Berhampore Open Day.

#### **Pest Plants:**

#### **3.2 Eradication Plants**

Recent publicity on Eradication species at public displays and in a series of articles in Elements has generated a number of notifications of unrecorded infestations. Minor infestations of Moth Plant, Madeira Vine, Smilax, Blue Passion Flower and Sweet Pea Shrub have been advised by the public following the publicity initiatives.

Two species of Eradication Plants are proving difficult to control under the programme. Madeira Vine produces numerous corms which are often buried deep in the soil where they are unaffected by herbicide application. These produce constant regrowth material despite spray application. Physical removal from the soil is required to gain any long-term control. Two well established sites in the Kapiti District will probably require the use of an excavator because of the size and depth of the rooting system.

The majority of Smilax sites are located in residential gardens and often in association with hedges with the vines spread throughout the valued host plants. Cut and treat methods are difficult to implement as this species has numerous runners. Herbicide spray application is the most practical control method. However, there is a limited range of herbicide products that are effective, and all may damage the host species. Smilax control will, therefore, prove to be a labour intensive process at most sites.

### **3.3 Manchurian Wild Rice**

Manchurian Wild Rice control through the Te Harekeke wetland and the adjacent KCDC reserve at Waikanae has been completed. All of the original infestations have now been cleared and ongoing control will only involve regrowths and seedling plants. As an Eradication species all future control costs in this area including the KCDC reserve will be the responsibility of Greater Wellington.

### **3.4 Water Hyacinth**

Several plants of Water Hyacinth were found growing in a pond operated by a fish breeder in Kapiti. The site was located by staff while checking nurseries and plant retail outlets under the National Pest Plant Accord. All plants were destroyed and MAF notified as Water Hyacinth remains a notifiable organism under the Biosecurity Act. MAF have ultimate responsibility for management.

## **Pest Animals:**

### **3.5 Key Native Ecosystem Management**

The proposed work programme for the 2003/04 is being fine-tuned. Agreements by way of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are being sought with the significant partners of the Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) programme. These are the four city councils and the Kapiti Coast District Council. There has been general agreement for some time about the overall size and funding requirements of the respective joint territorial authority programmes. However, formalising the partnerships was delayed until the recent release of the Regional Pest Management Strategy. It is pleasing to note the increasing commitment to biodiversity issues given by the larger territorial authorities in the region.

The 2003/04 KNE programme will include pest control over 63 sites at a cost of approximately \$314,700. This is the Greater Wellington share, with many programmes cost shared equally with the affected TLA (e.g. all of Wellington City's 19 KNE programmes are on an equal share basis).

In addition to the KNE programme funded through the Biosecurity Department, there are other significant works funded by the Parks and Forests Department for which Biosecurity staff will take a major operational role. These works are situated at East Harbour (HCC, 2375ha), Whitereia Park, (PCC, 243ha), Speedy's Reserve (HCC, 154ha) and the Pencarrow Lakes Block (HCC, 400ha).

These works have a budget cost of \$113,400.

### *Miramar Peninsula*

The Miramar Peninsula (825ha) initial operation is nearly completed and will then move into a consolidated maintenance phase. This operation is unique in aiming for an outcome of eradicating possums from such a densely populated metropolitan area. Everyone concerned with this operation is still very optimistic that this outcome is achievable.

Now that the possum population has been substantially reduced using a variety of methods, bait stations are being located at strategic locations throughout the peninsula to ensure that possum numbers are continually targeted. These stations will be replenished at regular intervals with anticoagulant baits and become the mainstay of the maintenance phase.

This complex operation has gone smoothly. This is testament to the competence of the staff and the support from Wellington City Council and the peninsula community.

The Public Health Department conducted an audit of this operation principally because Feratox (encapsulated cyanide) was used within the northern part of the peninsula. A staff member from the Environmental Risk Management Authority attended to research the function of the Medical Officer of Health in relation to controls on vertebrate pest toxins. The audit report was favourable and commended Glen Falconer and his team for a well-run operation.

### **3.6 Wairarapa Wetlands Survey**

This survey commenced on 29 May 2003 and is an objective of the Greater Wellington Wetlands Action Plan (April 2000) to develop a concise inventory of all wetlands in the area. An ecologist has been employed to initiate the process and up-skill two Biosecurity Officers (Harvey Phillips & Steve Playle) in the surveying requirements. The officers have now been assessed as competent for the level of detail collection required. Originally there were 160 sites considered worthy of a survey. To date, 44 have been completed with a further 33 now excluded from the survey because they do not reach the base criteria. One of the basic criterion is that the wetland must not be 'man-made'. Five additional wetlands have been discovered and are now included on the database.

Some occupiers have suspicions about the survey. They have concerns that the information may be used at some future date to disadvantage their personal choice of land use. However, all of the occupiers approached to date have been courteous to staff.

## Bovine Tb:

### 3.7 Operational Plan

The 2002/03 programme to be completed is:

	<b>Hectares</b>
Possum control	336,349
Ferret control	22,525
Feral surveys	<u>16,664</u>
	375,538

### 3.8 Areas Completed to Date

The following operators have completed or are currently waiting for monitoring to be completed:

	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Hectares Treated</b>	<b>%</b>
GWRC Bovine Unit	196,784	168,743	85.8
Professional Guiding Service	39,405	33,896	86.0
Trappersnz	58,165	54,119	93.0
J McCaslin	51,895	37,167	71.6
Target Pests	7,290	7,290	100.0
Horizons.mw Business Unit	11,042	11,042	100.0
Totals	364,581	312,257	85.6

It is clear that the 2002/03 programme will not be completed by 30 June 2003. However, discussions with contractors indicate that operations should be completed by the end of July.

These delays can be attributed to the resources and time used within the Mangaroa-Kaitoke operation, and the delay in obtaining approval for the Holdsworth – Woodside aerial operation

### 3.9 Monitoring

Approximately 142,000 hectares of vector control has been completed since the previous report. Some of this area has yet to be monitored.

The following monitoring results have been reported in this period:

<b>Operation</b>	<b>Strata</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Operator</b>
Featherston	HR 1	757	1.8	Bovine Unit
Holdsworth- Carterton	MR 2	1,319	1.7	Bovine Unit
Kahutara-Pirinoa	HR 4	3,139	0.6	Bovine Unit
Mataikona	HR 1	3,102	0.5	Professional Guiding Service
Mataikona	HR 2/3	2,105	0.3	Professional Guiding Service
Pakowhai	HR 2	2,668	0.6	Professional Guiding Service

<b>Operation</b>	<b>Strata</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Operator</b>
Pakowhai	MR 1	1,820	5.0	Professional Guiding Service (fail)
Ponatahi-Longbush	MR 2	4,756	3.5	<i>Trend Monitor</i>
SE Wairarapa Stage 1	MR 1	6,156	0.9	Trappersnz Ltd
Stronvar	HR 1	4,700	0.8	Trappersnz Ltd
Stronvar	MR 1	8,192	2.1	Trappersnz Ltd (line failure)
Stronvar	MR 1	8,192	2.1	Trappersnz Ltd
Taueru-Maungaraki	HR 1	4,308	1.8	Bovine Unit
Te Wharau	HR 4	1,610	2.0	Bovine Unit
Te Wharau	MR 1	4,043	2.5	Bovine Unit
Te Wharau	MR 7	474	5.1	<i>Trend Monitor</i>
Tinui	MR 2	10,714	1.1	Bovine Unit
Waiorongomai	MR 3a	453	1.4	<i>Trend Monitor</i>
Whangaehu	MR 4	4,693	1.7	J McCaslin
Woodside	HR 2	774	1.6	Bovine Unit (line failure)

### 3.10 Operational Failures

To date nine failures have occurred during the 2002/03 year, as follows:

- WRC Bovine Unit - 1 failure at Homewood – Riversdale
- Trappersnz Ltd - 4 failures at Mangaroa – Kaitoke
- WRC Bovine Unit - 1 failure at Woodside
- WRC Bovine Unit - 1 failure at Kahutara-Pirinoa
- Professional Guiding Services - 1 failure at Pakowhai
- Trappersnz Ltd - 1 failure at Stronvar

### 3.11 Aerial 1080 Pellet Control

- The Featherston-Waiorongomai Crown (5,400 hectares) operation has been completed. We are currently awaiting monitoring results for this operation.
- The Holdsworth-Woodside Crown (9,300 hectares) operation is still in the planning stage. Significant delays have been experienced due to Department of Conservation procedures delaying the issuing of their approval for this operation. Approval was finally received on 27 June. The application was forwarded in late March.

### 3.12 Surveys

- All possum and ferret surveys have been completed for the year.
- Pig surveys in the Otaki and Tinui areas will continue into the 2003/04 year.

### 3.13 Current Infected Herd Status

- As at 30 June 2002 there were 62 infected cattle herds within the region. At the end of May 2003 the infected number of herds reduced to 45.
- There are two infected deer herds as opposed to one infected herd as at 30 June 2002.

## **4. Operations Department: (Ian Gunn)**

### **4.1 Assessment of Planting Conditions**

Rainfall for the first six months of 2003 has been 70% of normal (figures recorded at Tanawa, north of Tinui). Rainfall throughout the Wairarapa varies from district to district, and some districts are as low as 50% of normal. Soil moisture levels are extremely low, except for soils with a southerly aspect. The three month outlook is for a continuation of below average rainfall.

A start has been made on seedling planting south of Castlepoint where soil moisture levels are satisfactory. All other sites are on hold at present. Pole planting programmes are also on hold. Decisions will need to be made by the end of July on a site by site basis as to the merits of further planting. Work will not progress unless significant rain arrives.

### **4.2 Akura Conservation Centre**

The Centre has been open since early June. Sales are relatively slow at present because of the dry conditions. A limited number of poles have been cut to supply the lifestyle market and any hill country sites where soil moisture levels are adequate.

The shade areas have been remodelled to improve handling facilities and to provide more frost-free shelter. The seedling bays have been painted and a general tidy up carried out.

### **4.3 Coastal Land Protection**

As part of the Biodiversity Strategy a fund has been established to protect areas of coastal duneland in private ownership. Guidance is being sought from DOC staff to assist in identifying areas of significance, particularly where threatened flora and fauna are to be found.

Two sites at Owahanga and Uriti Point have been selected at this stage. In the coming months staff from the Land Management Section will be approaching the landowners concerned to ascertain the degree of willingness to participate and to explore opportunities of a partnership approach. Potential agency involvement will include Greater Wellington, DoC and the QE II National Trust.

### **4.4 Tauanui Access**

Conservation Forestry staff have been working with South Wairarapa District staff to resolve a number of issues that have arisen as a result of local reaction to the proposed use of Whakatotomo Road by logging trucks. This unsealed road services a small number of farms and lifestyle blocks in the upper Turanganui River valley and joins the sealed Lake Ferry Road just south of Pirinoa.

South Wairarapa District Council was provided with a background to the Tauanui Block access problems and the offer (as is common in these situations and as we did while logging Hiwinui) to avoid using the road during school bus times, impose a voluntary speed restriction on the logging trucks, and erect approved warning signage.

Subsequent joint inspections have identified areas where visibility can be improved, a culvert widened, pull over areas installed and the pavement strengthened. South Wairarapa staff are quantifying and costing these works out with a view to seeking a contribution from the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

South Wairarapa District Council has undertaken to organise a meeting with concerned locals and Greater Wellington Regional Council so that views can be aired.

#### **4.5 Technical Services Section -**

Activities completed include -

- Castlepoint 6 monthly survey and compilation of digital database containing all Castlepoint images for future use
- Preparation work for the replacement of Graham Reidy.
- Purchase of new digital camera and development of new flying technique to capture digital images faster and cheaper.
- Sort out of printer problems and development of new charging system for next year
- Collection of flood levels after 9 June flood
- Posters for BvTb operations Holdsworth/Carterton and Featherston/Wairongomai
- Lower Valley reclassification work, undertaken gravel bed sampling and supplying information to Gary Williams and Andy Duncan.
- Scanning of Wairarapa Division plans project.
- Computer draughting work on soil conservation farm and sustainability plans.
- Large number of external customer enquires for maps and information.
- Gravel Licence System – processing of gravel returns and new licences.
- GIS and mapping work completed for Coastal Strategy project.
- Work on Lower Valley control project, GPS survey work completed for remaining Bench Markers from Tuhitarata Bridge to Pukio.

A selection of the long term records from the beach surveys at Riversdale will be presented at the meeting.

#### **4.6 10 June Flood Event**

Significant rainfall dumps occurred in the headwaters of the Tauherenikau and Huangarua Rivers. There was also widespread surface flooding in the Masterton-Carterton areas.



Flood damage totalling \$95,000 occurred in the Tauherenikau, Ruamahanga and Waiorongomai Rivers. This is currently being repaired. The Council's contribution to the flood damage is coming from savings within the River Management Programme.

The high river levels at Waihenga (4.8m) on the lower Ruamahanga River exposed a leak in the recently upgraded stopbank at the Mahaki Culvert. It appears that following the extremely dry summer the upgraded stopbank had cracked and settled differentially. The high river levels flowed along the cracks and water cascaded as a waterfall on the landward side of the bank. Remedial repairs have been completed. Grout has been pumped into the voids in the stopbank and a reinforced concrete wall using shot-crete has been constructed on the river side of the stopbank. Total cost of the remedial works is \$15,000. A total review of the upgrade will be completed by an independent engineer.

#### **4.7 Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Review**

The consultant, Gary Williams, is designing river management options.

At the most recent meeting of the Review Taskforce Group it was agreed that it may be necessary to build a 'digital terrain' model to assess the 'banks down' scenario. Staff are investigating the options.

The first meeting of the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Review Committee is planned for July.

#### **4.8 Sustainable Drains Management Project**

The New Zealand Water Environment Research Foundation is co-ordinating the above project. It aims to improve management and maintenance practices of large drainage networks through the development and promotion of best management practices. Funding has been requested from a wide variety of agencies. The project will be supported by Greater Wellington.

#### **4.9 Asset Management Plans**

Staff are busy completing their first 5 year review of the Asset Management Plans. They will be placed in front of the Committee at its August meeting.

## 5. Planning & Resources Department: (Steve Blakemore)

### 5.1 Environmental Incidents

<i>Date</i>	<i>Incident</i>
21 May	Complaint of no flow in Waipipi Stream, Masterton. Found to be caused by consented dam works. Temporary nature. No further action taken.
22 May	Piggery effluent alleged to be flowing to stream. On arrival at site, effluent system had been moved, no evidence found of effluent in water.
22 May	Waipipi stream had wall of rocks placed across it, creating damming effect. Person responsible was asked to remove it, which he did.
24 May	Drainage complaint, South Wairarapa. Site inspected, considered by staff to be a civil matter between neighbouring properties.
26 May	Abandoned vehicle in Turanganui River, currently being removed
26 May	Abandoned vehicle in Ruamahanga River, currently being removed
26 May	Concern about works in bed of Waipipi Stream, complainant advised that GWRC has spoken to landowner about these works.
27 May	Illegal dam reported to GWRC, landowner advised to apply for resource consent.
28 May	Effluent from truckwash alleged to be discharging to water, Carterton. Abatement notice served, still under investigation.
3 June	Low flow in Waipipi Stream. Found to be on-going problem area, as a result of artificial diversion. Parties have been written to, advising that some formal agreement between property owners needs to be put in place.
5 June	Report of 4 x 20 litre drums of waste oil dumped at Mt Dick. On investigation, someone else had removed them.
6 June	Complaint of water pollution being caused by duck pond. To be fully investigated.
19 June	MDC reported flooding problems in Waipipi Stream. Complaint logged only, due to other investigations being undertaken in this watercourse.
20 June	Complaint of dumping of cleanfill causing access and pollution problems on a paper road, Martinborough. Under investigation.
21 June	Complaint of severe pollution in Atiwhakatu caused by logging in the catchment. Pollution confirmed, contractors have subsequently installed a culvert where machinery crossed. Enforcement action being considered.
22 June	Complaint of odour from industrial site, Masterton. Under investigation.
23 June	Complaint of odour from industrial site, Masterton. Under investigation.
23 June	Complaint of pollution from truckwash, Carterton. Site currently has an abatement notice in place, given until 18 July to comply.
24 June	Concern expressed about safety of two dams built in rural Masterton. Landowner has been asked to apply for consent for the dams.
24 June	Concern expressed about amount of gravel being extracted from the Waipoua River. Under investigation.

### 5.2 Enforcement

#### *Abatement Notices*

One notice has been issued requiring:

- Application for consent for a truck wash facility

### 5.3 Notified Consents

<i>Consent Application</i>	<i>Status</i>
Opaki and Te Ore Ore Water Races – Masterton District	Submissions closed 12/2/03. On hold at applicants request to allow negotiation with submitters.
Henley Lake take and discharge – Masterton District	Notified.
Sewage discharge. Application for variation – Carterton District	Submissions closed on 19/12/02. Application on hold at applicants request.
Water Races -Carterton District (2)	Awaiting further information from applicant’s consultant.
Water Races - South Wairarapa District (2)	Notified.
Featherston Sewage – discharge	Advice received that application is imminent.
Water Take – Waingawa River – Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre.	Granted subject to appeal.

### 5.4 Appeals

<i>Appellant</i>	<i>Nature of Appeal</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Current Status</i>
J Barton	Additional charges on withdrawn stopbank access application.	Mediation declined.	Hearing awaited.
J Barton	Requirement for ‘up front’ payment of estimated consent processing costs.		Hearing awaited.
I Alexander	Appeal of abatement notice requiring irrigation to cease.	Interest registered with Court.	Evidence prepared. Hearing awaited.

### 5.5 Motuwaireka Lagoon

The cleaning and widening of the lagoon has been completed to a good standard.

### 5.6 Eastleigh Subdivision – Riversdale

Staff attended a “pre application” meeting, which set out a planned landward expansion of the Riversdale settlement. The previously approved subdivision has been withdrawn and a 144 lot subdivision is now proposed incorporating a nine hole extension to the golf course and sewage disposal. At this stage the draft proposal appears to recognise the concerns raised in Greater Wellington’s objections to the previous consent.

### 5.7 Recreational Access over Private Land

The Chairman of the Coastal Strategy Group and staff attended a meeting of coastal landowners at Castlepoint. The meeting was addressed by John Acland who is heading a Ministerial Review of issues relating to public access over private land.

### 5.8 Iwi

- The project to record Ngati Hamua sites of importance in Masterton District has been completed by Rangitaane o Wairarapa. Protocols for the use of the database

have been signed off and the information is now available on a restricted limited basis under an initial one year trial. A contract has been signed for extending the database to the rest of the Wairarapa and work is underway.

- Assistance in developing a long term management plan for the Okautete Bush is proceeding. This will then set the work programme for ensuring the survival and enhancement of the bush and the priorities for achieving this. A carved entranceway to the reserve was recently unveiled.
- Good progress has been made in enhancing the small Punaraku Lagoon at Ngawi that is part of the legend of Kupe.

## 5.9 Hydrology

### *Rainfall*

May rainfall was normal for the Tararuas at Angle Knob, whilst in the valley at Alloa and in the hill country at Tanawa, monthly totals were at 60 to 70% of normal.

The following table gives rainfalls for both April and May.

Site	Location	May		April		May	April
		mm	Average	mm	Average	% of Average	
Angle Knob	Tararua Ranges	648	599	157	490	108	32
Alloa	Middle Valley	58	96	33	80	60	41
Tanawa Hut	Eastern Hills	90	131	49.5	104	69	47

Rainfalls at Alloa for January to May were the lowest since records began in 1964. For the Eastern hill country the January to May rainfall total for 1998 is still the lowest recorded (187mm). This year the total was 317mm.

### *Rivers*

Mean river flows for the May were below average in the Tararuas and lower valley, continuing the pattern recorded since February. The flows however were still greater than those recorded for April.

The Waiohine River was up from the mean flow in April of 6.7m<sup>3</sup>/s to 18.2m<sup>3</sup>/s, increasing from 33% to 78% of the long-term mean for each month. This reflects the rainfall figures shown above. Waihenga also showed an improvement, with flows increasing to 52% of normal. Flows for Waiohine Gorge and Waihenga are given below:

Site	May		April		May	April
	Cumecs	Average	Cumecs	Average	% of Average	
Waiohine	18.2	23.2	6.7	20.5	78	33
Waihenga	41.7	79.7	19	60.4	52	31

### *Floodwarning*

	<b>May</b>	<b>Financial Year to Date</b>	<b>Previous Year to Date</b>
No. of Events	0	8	6
No of Lists Issued	0	33	27

The only “flood Alarm” activated during May was once again for rainfall at Angle Knob. The highest hourly amount of rainfall recorded was 23mm between 0700 - 0800 on 20 May. High seas blocked Lake Onoke once during the month.

### *Groundwater*

Bore permit applications continued on a par with last year.

	<b>May</b>	<b>Financial Year to Date</b>	<b>Previous Year to Date</b>
Applications Received	5	75	72
Consents Issued	12	73	77
Consents on Hold	1		

Monitoring of the Baring bore at Parkvale shows that the current groundwater level in Parkvale No.3 aquifer is now at the level of the Long Term Minimum. This area is under moratorium and the aquifer characteristics are currently being reviewed.

## **6. Recommendation**

*That the report be received and its contents noted.*



Colin Wright  
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa