



Report **05.184**
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Committee **Rural Services and Wairarapa**
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Divisional Manager's Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of current activities and provide information of interest since the previous meeting held on 17 March 2005.

2. Divisional Matters

2.1 Tours

It seems to be the tour season of late in the Wairarapa. The Councillors two day tour last month was preceded by a day tour for secretaries and other administration staff. This day was aimed at informing these key Wellington staff of some Council activities that they are not normally involved with.

We then have a short tour in a couple of week's time for a number of Auckland Regional Councillors who are meeting for discussion on common topics with our Councillors.

2.2 Stopbank Relocation Consent

One long running issue for the Division may hopefully have been resolved by the decision of the Hearings Commissioner to grant a consent for the relocation of the Scadden's stopbank in the Lower Valley Scheme. This matter has been very complicated over a long period because of the ongoing desire of the adjacent farmer to have milk tanker access along a paper road on the very edge of the river in this locality. There is, however, the possibility of an appeal against this consent decision.

2.3 Staffing Issues

Tony Siemonek has retired after 29 years working primarily with the Southern River Gang. Tony was known for his expertise in fencing, spraying and chainsaw use.

Stephen Orr has been appointed as Resource Advisor in the Consents and Compliance Section, filling Harvey Collerton's vacancy. He has experience in quality systems management and recently worked at Juken Nissho.

Roger Wood, Paula Pickford, and Dave Cameron are all off on extended sick leave resulting in significant pressure on other staff.

3. Land & River Operations Department: (Ian Gunn)

3.1 Tauanui Harvesting

Despite the recent wet conditions logging is progressing steadily. The high lead hauler operation had been producing a steady two loads a day until a breakdown at the beginning of the week. This machine is working a difficult setting on a steep face to a small landing to protect a native bush remnant.

The road lining crew has been producing four loads a day as it continues to extend the road line into the next sale area.

A third crew with a much larger hauler is due within the next two weeks and will work until the end of June producing 6 – 8 loads per day. This machine is unable to continue working in its current private location due to wet conditions and is required to achieve budgeted volumes and cash flows.

3.2 Tauanui Log Sale

Tenders for the 2005 – 2009 Log Sale at Tauanui close on Friday 29th April. Considerable interest has been shown with seven different firms carrying out ground inspections.

The quality and grade of sawlog available from Tauanui is highly sought after due to a higher than normally available density. This is because of their age and the small branch size caused by the high number of stems per hectare.

3.3 Taskforce Green

Greater Wellington agreed to be the employer for a Taskforce Green project after the 30-31 March flood. Arrangements were agreed with Federated Farmers and Work and Income, and four workers plus a supervisor commenced cleaning up flood debris on 18th April. There has been a general reluctance to engage the crew as this time works are not fully subsidised. Therefore there is a cost to the landowner. Those landowners who have engaged the crew have been very pleased with the efficiency of the crew as the works have been completed in a far shorter time than estimated.

As a result of the lack of work the crew is being wound up on Wednesday 4th May.

3.4 Flood Damage Repairs

Repair work continues for previous floods and the flood event of 31 March.

Work on upgrading the Ashton Herrick stopbank is now completed following delays due to damage from the flood of 31 March. The upgrade on the opposite bank of the Huangarua River has been postponed and will now be commenced early in 2006.

A bulldozer has been ripping and planning high beaches in the Te Ore Ore section of the Upper Ruamahanga River. The Tinui boulders that protect Henley Lake are now onsite and currently being placed.

Following the 31 March flood event, Cr Buchanan, Colin Wright and Ian Gunn attended a meeting at the South Wairarapa District Council to discuss flood damage in the following areas –

- Abbots Creek
- Donalds Creek
- Lower Tauherenikau River
- Turanganui River
- Awhea and Opouawe Catchments

Those landowners present were keen to see repairs commence.

Repairs have already been completed at the following areas –

- Tauherenikau River. Stopbanks at Jane Gillett's and Vollebregt's have been rebuilt.
- Abbots Creek
- Turanganui River. Bulldozer currently operating. The channel capacity of this river has decreased significantly in the mid-section of the river due to increased gravel movement following the floods of the last two years.

3.5 Variation to Gravel Consent WAR 9900026 – Ruamahanga River System

The Land & River Operations Dept holds this consent to extract gravel from the Ruamahanga River system. The consent has been operating for three years and is being reviewed.

Both Iwi groups have approved the suggested modifications to the consent. This will increase the volume of gravel permitted to be abstracted, rationalise some reaches and attend to "house keeping" matters.

The variation is with the Consents Section for processing.

3.6 Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Review

The Tawaha lagoon area has been surveyed. This is necessary to gain an understanding of the Whakawiriwiri Stream. Once a proposal has been developed and costed the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Review Committee

will consider administering this stream as part of the Scheme. Drainage water from Backwater Road is routed down this stream every time the floodways operate.

Good progress is now being made with the modelling of the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme. The size of the data file has been a problem. It takes ten days of continuous computer time to model one scenario.

3.7 Kopuaranga River Enhancement Project

The first meeting of the sub-committee has been held. There was a wide ranging discussion and an inspection up the length of the river is proposed in the middle of May.

3.8 Ballance Farm Environment Awards

Trevor and Jo Lucas, Kenmore, approximately 15 minutes drive east of Masterton, were the Wellington Region's Supreme winners of the Balance Farm Environment Awards. They also won the Richmond Best Livestock, ANZ Grow and Balance Farm Environment Heritage Restoration Awards. An extremely successful field day was held on 27 April at Kenmore Station. Approximately 100 people attended, primarily farmers. There was considerable and positive comment expressed on both the state of Kenmore Station and the field day. It is perhaps our most successful field day yet.

Other winners included –

- Peter and Penny Gawith, David Gawith - Ballance Agri-Nutrients Management Award.
- Miles and Janet King, who milk sheep - Livestock Improvement Best Dairy Farm Entrant.
- Bill Benfield and Sue Delaware, wine growers - Hill Laboratories Best Harvest Award Entrant.
- Howard Egan, wetland and small farm - Akura Conservation Centre Lifestyle/Small Farm Award

It is expected that a field day involving three lifestyle/small farms will be organised shortly.

3.9 Catchment Scheme Damage – 29 March 2005

Pockets of torrential rainfall occurred over a 24-36 hour period along the Wairarapa coast. The highest 24 hour total was 400 millimetres at Te Kopi on the Polisher Bay coast. At Castle point approximately 120 millimetres fell in 3 hours. Where high intensity rainfall events occurred there has been significant damage, as follows:

- Land slipping in the vicinity of batches at Mataikona and Tora.
- Extensive forest debris blocking bridges and destroying fences in the upper Kaiwhata River. Juken Nissho Ltd and Forest Enterprises funded extensive clean up work.
- A new river channel in the lower Kaiwhata River has been created.
- Bridges at Glenburn have been destroyed.

- Extensive slip damage and flooding in and around Castle point.
- Widespread fencing damage in the Awhea and Home River Catchments.
- Drop structure and road under mining at Whakapuni.

Given the scale and intensity of the event the damage is considered to be minimal and is an endorsement of GW's approach to catchment schemes.

4. Planning & Resources Department: (Steve Blakemore)

4.1 Environmental Incidents

Date	Incident	Outcome
8 March	Dairy effluent in stream, rural Masterton	Farmer has been required to make changes to his effluent system.
11 March	Fire in Carterton, hazardous substances involved.	Council attended, fire brought under control by Fire Service, no significant environmental hazard.
18 March	Report of water pollution caused by Sand Blasting operation, Masterton	Found not to be causing water pollution.
31 March	Large amount of rubbish dumped on river bed, rural Carterton.	Unable to trace offender. Council contracted rubbish removal firm to dispose. Paid for by ratepayers.
5 April	Large volume of dirty stormwater pumped onto land and consequently into stream, urban Masterton.	Under investigation.
13 April	Vehicle in Waipoua River, Masterton	Had to be pulled out by contracted crane. Council pursuing cost recovery from owner of vehicle.
19 April	Complaint of foul smoke from backyard fire, urban Masterton.	Offenders have been spoken to and agreed not to burn toxic materials in future.
22 April	Water pollution in rural Carterton, suspected to be dairy effluent.	Found to be caused by stock crossing. Council currently working on project under Clean Streams Accord with Fonterra to clean up crossings.
22 April	Toxic smoke coming from domestic premises, urban Masterton	Unable to trace source.
23 April	Dairy effluent in stream, rural Carterton	Found to be overflowing dairy effluent. Still under investigation.
29 April	Fire in urban Masterton causing smoke pollution.	Council asked person responsible to put fire out. They did so.

4.2 Alleged Spray Drift Damage - Pirinoa

A management review of staff activities and responses in this matter has been completed and provided to Mr and Mrs Buchanan. It concluded that staff actions in the matter were appropriate and that a range of environmental stresses needed to be taken into account. Copies were also provided to the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and ERMA.

4.3 Notified Consents

<i>Consent Application</i>	<i>Status</i>
Water Races - Carterton District (2)	Working group formed with CDC to identify and confirm scheme layout, take, and discharge points. Carrington consent will be processed first, once Mangatarere Water Allocation Plan in place.
Water Races - South Wairarapa District (2)	Consents granted.
Featherston Sewage – discharge	New application for land based trial lodged. Decision to be made as to requirement to notify.
East Leigh Ltd – Riversdale. 140 lot subdivision. Land Use Consents (3), Water Permit, Discharge Permits (3)	Consents granted. Appeal period still operative.
Coastal protection works - Castlepoint - Masterton District (5)	Consent granted for Stage 1. Appeal to be lodged by MDC.
Sewage discharge. – Lake Ferry settlement – South Wairarapa District (3)	Hearing held 4 May. Decision awaited.
Resited stopbank – Land and River Operations Department - Greater Wellington.	Consent granted. Appeal period still operative.
Underground Water Take – AE & SW Benton Partnership.	Hearing to be held on 18 May 2005.
Martinborough Coastal Developments Ltd – Tora. Wastewater disposal for 31 lot coastal subdivision.	Application jointly notified on 20 April 2005. SWDC lead agency. Submissions close 19 May 2005.
Surface water take - JA Bicknell-Papawai.	Likely to be notified in May.

4.4 Enforcement

Abatement Notices

- A notice was issued requiring prevention of odour from pāua processing waste and for the composting activity to cease.

- A notice was issued to a property owner on Makoura Stream, requiring the removal of truck tyres from the stream. These have been satisfactorily removed.
- The Wairarapa Sandblasting Ltd operation has been moved to industrial premises in Masterton.

4.5 Appeals

Castlepoint Seawall

Masterton District have advised their intention to appeal the consent decision and formal advice is awaited. Advice will be taken as to the required procedure for Stage 1 construction to proceed whilst the decision is subject to appeal.

I Alexander

The High Court struck out this appeal on 18 April 2005. Decisions on costs are now awaited from the High Court and the Environment Court.

4.6 Clean Streams Accord

A review of progress with the dairy farm compliance inspections and the assessment of stream crossings/bridges/culverts has indicated that this will be completed as planned. This has been assisted by the favourable autumn extending the season and the assistance from additional staff assigned to the task. A total of 215 properties have to be inspected, with 189 of these in the Wairarapa and 29 in the west of the Region.

4.7 Unwanted Chemicals

Ministry for Environment have met the \$2207 costs on disposing of the intractables from the accumulated chemicals received by the Council in the Wairarapa.

Further joint publicity from Federated Farmers, ERMA and the Ministry is about to be made that is likely to result in further such chemicals being brought to Greater Wellington and accumulated for disposal. This is expected to happen well before the commencement of the new LTCCP and the 2005/06 Annual Plan. It is also expected to take up considerable staff time with enquiries.

The matter of domestic chemical collection has been placed on the agenda for the next meeting of Waste Wairarapa Committee and will be explained by staff. Photos have been obtained to illustrate the operation of Greater Wellington's collection set up.

4.8 Stock Truck Effluent Disposal

A meeting with representatives from interested groups is being arranged to develop the issues discussed at the March Committee meeting.

4.9 Hydrology

Rainfall

From the middle of the month there were a number of rainfall events right across the Wairarapa from the Tararuas to the eastern hills culminating in a significant easterly storm event at the end of the month. Rainfall in this event was widespread across the Wairarapa with various areas receiving extremely high intensity rainfall.

The following table compares February and March 2005 rainfalls for three representative sites:

Site	Location	March		February		March	February
		mm	Average	mm	Average	% of average	
Angle Knob	Tararua Ranges	654	446	368	399	147	92
Alloa	Middle Valley	248	81	26	68	305	39
Tanawa Hut	Eastern Hills	182	101	38	79	180	48

Maximum rainfall intensities for a range of Wairarapa sites are given in the following table. It shows Masterton's 24 hour rainfall total of 82 mm had a 65 year return period. Data from farmers rain gauges is being processed to produce an isohyetal map.

Site	1hr	2hr	3hr	6hr	12hr	24hr
Angle Knob	12	23	33	54.5	87	163
Return Period	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2
Carkeek	7.5	14.5	20	34	49.5	77
Return Period	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2
Bull Mound	16.5	26	36.5	62.5	95	178
Return Period	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2
Mt Bruce	12	23	28	43	57.5	88
Return Period	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2	< 2
Waingawa	17	26.5	32	54	77.5	130.5
Return Period	< 2	< 2	< 2	2	2	4
Mangatarere¹	17	25.5	33	58	90.5	163.5
Masterton	18.2	26.2	32.4	51.4	82	135.4
Return Period ²	5	5		12	30	65
Wai Coll	19.6	29.4	35.8	56	88.2	143.4
Return Period ²	8	12		20	40	80
Alloa	14.4	24.8	34.8	56.8	88.6	148.8
Tanawa	14.5	22	32.5	37	51.5	68.5
Return Period	< 2	< 2	2.3	< 2	< 2	< 2
Castle Hill	9	15.5	22	26.5	35.5	52
Ngaumu	19	25.8	29.2	47.4	77.4	132.2
Stoney creek	17	27.4	43.8	78	101.8	142.8
Taueru	25.6	33.6	44	64	103.6	157.2

¹ Return periods for Mangatarere are not available as the record is too short

² From HIRDS program. These return periods seem a bit high and should be treated with some scepticism

Rivers

Average river flows for March are shown below to be well above average. However this reflects the high rainfall event that commenced on the evening of 29 March and went through to 31 March. It is worth noting that up until that rainfall event, both the Waiohine and Ruamahanga rivers were at only 75% of mean flows.

The following table gives flow statistics for two representative sites and their comparative previous month's data.

Site	March		February		March	February
	<i>cumecs</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>cumecs</i>	<i>Average</i>	% of average	
Waiohine	21.3	17.5	9.4	15.4	121	61
Waihenga	81.7	48	20.3	39.2	170	52

Flood statistics for the 29-31 March event are as follows:

Site	Peak Stage metres	Peak flow m ³ /sec	Peak Time	Peak Date	Return Period ³
Ruamahanga at Waihenga	5076	1530	07:00	31-Mar	11
Ruamahanga at Wardells	3320	274	22:00	30-Mar	< 2
Ruamahanga at Gladstone	3211	782	24:00	30-Mar	3.7
Ruamahanga at Mt Bruce	1683	91	18:15	30-Mar	< 2
Waingawa at Gorge	1901	112	19:30	30-Mar	< 2
Waiohine at Gorge	2506	388	19:45	30-Mar	< 2
Mangatarere at Gorge	2145	80	18:00	30-Mar	4
Waipoua at Mikimiki	1646	127	19:00	30-Mar	3.5
Kopuaranga at Palmers	2130	14.2	23:45	30-Mar	< 2
Tauherenikau at Gorge	3376	407	19:30	30-Mar	5
Huangularua at Hautotara	4648	325	03:15	31-Mar	n/a
Taueru at Te Weraiti	9716	165	22:45	30-Mar	< 2

A significant flood occurred once more in the Huangularua River catchment, although this was not as large as in February 2004.

A separate flood report will be written later giving more detailed aspects of this storm. At this time data is still being compiled.

Floodwarning

Floodwarnings	March	Financial Year to date	Previous Year to Date
No. of events	1	15	19
No of Lists Issued	13	69	104

In the significant easterly event during the two days of March, all warnings were issued in a timely manner. As usual a number of enquiries were subsequently are to be made to update warning lists.

³ Return Periods are provisional and may be subject to change.

Before this event there had been only one rainfall/river alarm triggered during March. That was at Tanawa Hut with a rainfall burst of 16mm in one hour. However the 24 hour total was only 29mm.

Lake Onoke mouth stayed open during March.

A floodwarning newsletter is being printed and will soon be distributed. It sets out the basis for the Council's service to landowners and includes prepaid response form for all recipients to confirm/update their floodwarning requirements.

Groundwater

Consultant work is being undertaken as part of the development of a Groundwater Conceptual Model for the Ruamahanga Catchment. Dating of water from 20 aquifers is also proceeding. Some of these aquifers were dated in 1980 and it is envisaged that the re-dating will give a clearer picture of aquifer recharge rates and origins of the water. Progress with this project will be reported to the Committee at a future meeting.

5. Biosecurity Department: (Wayne O'Donnell)

Pest Animals

5.1 Notice of Draft Animal Welfare (Cats) Code of Welfare 2005

The National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) is calling for submissions on the draft code. Submissions close on 16 May 2005. The code is intended for all persons responsible for the welfare of domestic cats, including breeders of cats and carers of stray-cat colonies. NAWAC is constituted under the aegis of Biosecurity New Zealand. Cats are categorised as either owned cats, stray/unowned cats or feral cats.

In relation to breeding, the draft code states that unplanned breeding of cats is not recommended! Further, that owned cats and where possible stray/unowned cats in managed colonies should be desexed. It recommends the best practice for owned cats not kept by a registered breeder for breeding should be desexing at or before puberty. Further, it states that veterinarians, pet shops, cat breeders, local councils and animal welfare organisations should continually encourage the cat-owning public to have their cats desexed.

In regard to cats and wildlife, the draft code says that cats are predators by nature and that failure to recognise this may result, over time, in a backlash against them. Wildlife warning devices, such as electronic warners and bells, are not as effective as might be hoped in reducing predation.

5.2 Best Practice Guidelines for Vertebrate Pest Control

There is a need to review and re-establish best practice guidelines that fulfil national standards for vertebrate pest control other than possums. Since local government re-organisation in 1989 the need to maintain national standards lost impetus as regional councils and unitary authorities tended to focus on effecting and maintaining standards sufficient for their own purposes. Some councils took more responsibility to remain current than others

National standards for possum control have been well maintained through the Animal Health Board (AHB) Bovine Tb programmes as well as the Department of Conservations (DoC) and regional council possum management programmes. Much of the literature review, technology transfer, staff training and establishment of protocols have been managed by the National Possum Control Agencies (NPCA) which was established for that purpose. There is no other national agency established for other vertebrate pests hence the need for more self reliance by regional councils.

The NPCA is now considering it's 2005/06 Operations and Projects Programme and is prepared to facilitate best practice protocols for population monitoring and control guidelines for two pest species. There will be an expectation for regional councils to contribute to the cost of these protocols. Rabbits and rooks are the most prominent 'first up' candidates. Both species received their last major update reviews in the mid 1990's.

More and more vertebrate pest control is being undertaken by external contractors working to prescriptive contracts. The same contractors work for many different regional councils and unitary authorities. There is now more of a need than ever to be able to agree performance expectations to nationally agreed best practice protocols. Whilst there is proficiency in the market for possum control this is not now the case for many other vertebrate species.

5.3 Key Native Ecosystems and Territorial Reserves Predator Programmes

The Wairarapa KNE operations are on schedule and running to budget. A memorandum of understanding has been agreed with the owner of Sulphur Wells (which has seven QEII covenants) that allows for the use of a contractor to undertake the major share of the predator control programme. Sulphur Wells ranks in the top 30 key native ecosystem sites.

In the Western Zone, contracts have been let to GW's BioWorks for the second stage of the Wainuiomata Hill North – Parkway possum control operation. This operation will adjoin the proposed Moore's Valley Bovine Tb possum control operation and thus provide a wide band of ongoing possum control from Baring and Pencarrow Heads through Eastbourne and Wainuiomata to Kaitoke and beyond.

Other new possum/predator control programmes have been established at Seton-Nossiter Reserve (WCC – Grenada), Whareroa (near McKays Crossing), Pikarere Farm (adjoins Porirua Scenic Reserve), Carey's Gully (WCC – Happy Valley) and the Hutt Escarpment (Ngauranga to Horokiwi). The Hutt Escarpment operation is

being undertaken by BioWorks and will provide a wildlife corridor linking Wellington to the Hutt Valley.

Most of the maintenance for the KNE sites in the Kapiti, Porirua, and Wellington Districts is being undertaken by BioWorks. Maintenance in the Hutt Valley is undertaken by a mix of Biosecurity staff, BioWorks or Forest & Bird Society volunteers.

5.4 Predator Control Contracts for the Parks and Forest Department

The second phase of the Korokoro Valley (Belmont Regional Park) operation has been let to BioWorks. There has been concern expressed about the cutting of bait station service lines by a member of the Friends of Belmont. GW staff members will attend a meeting with the group on 9 May to explain the programme and the need for the service lines. This is the first complaint of this nature. Some 6,300ha at 46 different locations have been previously treated in this manner.

The East Harbour operation has entered a new phase with intensification of rat control now that possums are at very low levels. The Mainland Island Restoration Organisation group is keen to prepare a core area suitable for the future release of some native birds that once were common in the district. This predator programme is being undertaken by a mix of Biosecurity staff, Parks & Forests staff and Mainland Island Restoration Group volunteers. Whilst the East Harbour area is mostly regional park there is a significant portion of private land as well.

The planning for the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Catchments aerial operation is proceeding smoothly. Bait stations and 600 kill traps will be installed in the special project area during May in readiness to target remaining predators following the aerial operation.

5.5 Communications

A meeting was held on the evening of 6 April at Pukaha/Mount Bruce to discuss the ongoing predator control programme and related issues. Updates were provided by Greater Wellington, Horizons Regional Council and DoC. Several neighbours and members of the National Wildlife Trust were in attendance. An opportunity was provided for those attending to view some of the kiwi at large in the forest.

Ken Wright and Sara Moylan made presentations to Nigel Clarke and the 'Take Care Group' about the Pest Animals and Plants programmes. The group was taken through Keith George Scenic Reserve to demonstrate methods of baiting and monitoring and to observe the prolific native birdlife.

A meeting has been planned to meet with the Hongoeka Bay (Plimmerton) land owners with a view to establishing a possum control operation there. This would link to the Karehana Bay operation and add another piece in the 'jigsaw' to connect eventually with the Pukerua Bay operational area.

The Otaki Lifestyle Farmers Field Day will be held at the Otaki Racecourse on Saturday, 21 May.

The 13th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference is being held Monday 2nd to Friday 6th May at Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. This is the first time this conference has been held in NZ.

Pest Plants

5.6 Eradication Species

Several new infestations of Blue Passion flower have been located throughout the region. Indications from officers are that due to the extremely high numbers of seedlings and the germination rate, at least three inspections are required per season for each site.

New sites of Climbing Spindleberry have been located in Masterton and Kapiti, with one of the sites being located on the roadside at Mt Bruce.

New sites of Moth plant have been located in Masterton and Kapiti. All sites have been controlled.

Saffron thistle sites have been visited for the third time this season, with further plants being located. As with other species, this is a clear indication that many eradication and containment species will require three inspections per season.

A new Woolly Nightshade site has been located on the Haywards Hill Road. Plants have been discovered throughout a gully and are spread over about one hectare. A contractor has been engaged to undertake the work. A further survey is to be carried out to take in a wider area.

(a) Eelgrass

A joint exercise between the Biosecurity Department and DoC is currently being carried out in the Kapiti area to control both pest fish and pest plants. March was the preferred period for this work but administrative requirements have delayed commencement.

The Department of Conservation are supplying pumps to lower the water levels in order to make control of the fish and plants more manageable.

A new infestation has been located at Ngaio but is confined to a backyard pond.

With the exception of one large infestation in Lower Hutt, all other sites of eelgrass in Upper and Lower Hutt and Wellington have been controlled.

(b) Bathurst Bur

Inspections for this species have mainly focused on Landcorp property at Kahutara and Hungaroa. Inspections of the property to date have resulted in 600 plants being controlled. A letter has been forwarded to Landcorp Head Office outlining our concerns and the indifference shown by Landcorp staff. The remainder of the property will be inspected over the next couple of weeks.

5.7 Plant Outlet Inspections

Wayne Cowan, in conjunction with Murry Clark (Pest Animals), has been undertaking nursery inspections. A garden centre in Crofton Downs was reported as selling the NPPA species, African fountain grass. On inspection four plants were found.

Their supplier who came from Palmerston North had also supplied two other Wellington outlets. When questioned they were very co-operative and supplied a written list of the outlets they had supplied in the Wellington Region.

Horizons Regional Council were advised and an officer visited the outlets and 200 plants were removed and destroyed.

5.8 Raumati Escarpment

After a lengthy consultation period, the aerial work for the control of blackberry and Japanese honeysuckle on the Escarpment was completed on Friday, 22 April. The control went to plan and without incident. The work took about three hours to complete. No complaints were received by either Greater Wellington or Kapiti Coast District Council relating to the work.

5.9 Survey Work

A contractor has been engaged to undertake survey work in various areas of the Wairarapa over the next couple of months. The survey is for eradication and containment species. The survey which has begun in the Masterton Township has already turned up new infestations of blue passion flower, moth plant and smilax

The second phase of the control for wandering Jew and sycamore at Tauherenikau has been completed. No follow-up work was carried out on the initial wandering Jew contract as the leaf fall from the sycamore prevented sufficient coverage.

5.10 Publicity

An A5 flyer has been developed for Moth plant. This is to be used for letterbox drops in the vicinity where infestations have been recorded.

Flyers for other species are to be developed before the end of the financial year.

The Department of Conservation and Greater Wellington have been working on a new booklet, titled "Plant Me Instead". The booklet is nearing the printing stage. It will contain information on a number of weedy species and suitable replacements for replanting. The booklet is being supported by a number of TLAs.

Bovine Tb

5.11 2004/05 Control Hectares

To date the 2004/05 vector control programme has been spread amongst the following contractors:

	Possum (ha)	Ferret (ha)	Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	143,363	22,094	24,091	189,548
Professional Guiding	40,527	2,874	14,171	57,572
J McCaslin	35,271		8,376	43,647
Target Pest Control	2,519		11,174	13,693
Horizons Regional Council	10,912	5,068	4,114	20,094
Central Trappers				
Trappersnz	4,654			4,654
Others			6,483	6,483
To Determine	34,555			34,555
Sub Totals	271,801	30,036	68,409	370,246
Remove Control	87,620	5,431	18,967	112,018
Totals	359,421	35,467	87,376	482,264

5.12 Outstanding Issues

- **South East Wairarapa – Stage 3 (33,180 ha)**

AHB have been notified that this operation is highly unlikely to be started this financial year. The Minister of Conservation has approved the use of the deer repellent additive on 1080 bait in Gazetted Recreational Hunting Areas. However, a recent letter from the Wellington DoC Regional Conservator has made it clear that applications to apply 1080 carrot bait in the Aorangi RHA will not be favourably received. A letter seeking clarification has been sent. The VM was under the impression that DoC was to treat each application on its merits and could not pre-judge. The VM is aware that carrot / 1080 bait is extensively used on the DoC estate in other parts of the North Island.

- Control has not started in Homewood-Riversdale MR 4 (1,760 ha) and Stronvar MR1 pine block (1,375ha) due to issues associated with the use of aerial 1080 raised by the land occupier.

5.13 2004/05 Control Hectares Completed

Approved contractors have completed the following workload from their 2004/05 programme. These completed hectares have been successfully monitored. Many other contract areas are currently receiving vector control.

	Possum (ha)	Ferret (ha)	Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	63,261	16,278	16,445	95,984
Professional Guiding	17,044	2,874	14,171	34,089
J McCaslin	30,681		8,376	39,057
Target Pest Control	2,519			2,519
Horizons Regional Council	9,657	5,068	4,114	18,839
Central Trappers				
Trappersnz	4,654			4,654
Others			3,000	3,000
To Determine				
Totals	127,816	24,220	46,106	198,142

Progress

To date only 54% of the annual programme has been completed. This progress is lower than expected. However, 28,000 ha of ferret control or survey will be completed in the first week of May.

Recent monthly reports from all contractors detail that their programmes will be completed by 30 June. Confirmation of this progress is required on a monthly basis by all contractors.

All external contractors are on track to complete their possum control programme by 30 June. BioWorks still have 80,000 ha of possum control to complete in the final two months. This is a large task, but they have given assurance that all operations will be completed on time (including extensions where approved).

During April, approval was given to two contractors for extensions for four possum control operations.

5.14. Possum Control Post NPMS (Bovine Tb)

A meeting was held in Napier on the 15 April to discuss possum control options after the Bovine Tb vector control programme winds down. Attendees included Vector Managers and Regional Animal Health Committee Chairs from Wellington, Manawatu, Waikato and Hawkes Bay, and Animal Health Board Regional Co-ordinators for the North Island.

A number of recommendations were agreed. They were to be tabled for discussion at the recent Regional Animal Health Committee Chairs meeting in Wellington.

This issue is of considerable importance to Regional Councils. There is an expectation amongst the farming community that possum control will continue after industry/Crown funded vector control ceases. However, there are major impacts for Councils, particularly for funding, and resourcing expansions to existing non-Bovine possum control programmes.

There are still many questions being raised by landowners about the technical 'soundness' of withdrawing vector control. Furthermore, there are concerns about what

actions will take place (and by whom) if a Tb outbreak occurs sometime after vector control has been withdrawn.

Clearly, there are still many issues for the AHB to work through. Throughout this transition period, it will be very important that the AHB ensures landowners are kept informed and have opportunities for input in the decision making.

6. Recommendation

That the report be received and its contents noted.



Colin Wright
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa