

Flood Protection Manager's report for period ending 31 January 2005

1. Manager's comments

1.1 Flood Event 5/6 January 2005

The January 5/6 flood was a bumpy way to start 2005, and affected quite a few residents and landowners. Overall we are very pleased with the way the protection systems worked, excluding the new Otaihangā floodwall! Unfortunately, the floodwall also suffered minor damage in the recent earthquake. We hope to have it repaired shortly.

The floods were a major test of our systems and there a large number of items that will needed to be attended to, including the flood damage repairs, to ensure we are in a better position to handle a similar size event in the future. These items will be addressed in the separate flood report. Inevitably the additional work from the flood will impact on other work programmes.

2. Waikanae River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Jim Cooke Park

A draft resource consent application and design plans have been prepared. Work is now concentrating on finalising the design ready for tendering of the works by March 2005. Consents applications are also expected to be lodged by mid February 2005.

2.2 Mouth cut

The cutting of the mouth is currently being reconsidered as the January 2005 floods appear to have partially cut the mouth naturally. A decision on whether to proceed with the mouth cut will be made in early February 2005.

3. Otaki River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

3.1 Capital works

The extension of the Winstones Rock line contract has been let and the contractor is preparing to start the delivery of rock. Rock is to be trucked in from Ohakune for this work as the Linton Quarry is fully committed supplying rock to the Ava to Ewen Project and to Horizons Regional Council work.

The work (prior to the 5/6 January flood) was forecast to cost \$40,000 over the \$206,000 budget (additional length of work plus rock costs) and approval to bring expenditure forward from next financial year was planned to be sought as part of the 6 month review. The total extent of work required will now be covered in the flood report.

4. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]

4.1 Ava to Ewen project

Cashmore Contracting Ltd (CCL) continues to make good progress with the river realignment contract. The channel realignment earthworks are now substantially complete. More than 50% of the rock protection works have been completed.

At mid-January 2005, CCL had placed about 17,000 tonnes in the rock lining and had about 4,000 tonnes in stockpile. The total required for the job is about 30,000 tonnes. However about 3000 tonnes of very large rock is required for the four groynes. None of this grade has been supplied to date and we will need to monitor carefully to ensure that the quarry can keep to the programme with this rock.

As a pre-caution CCL has investigated alternative sources, including (South Island quarries) for supplying the 3000 tonnes of larger rock. During a visit to Linton Quarry in December 2004, Linton Quarry management assured us that all the required rock can be supplied to meet the programme.

The January 2005 floods caused only minor damages to the works. The flood damage repairs will not cause any significant delays to the works programme and the repair costs will be covered by the contractor/insurance.

Opus International Consultants Limited has completed the additional surveys and site investigations required for the detailed design of the Ava Rail and Strand Park stopbank upgrades. Opus has discussed design issues with New Zealand Rail Corporation and Truebridge Callendar Beach Limited (TCB). A workshop will be held in the first week of February 2005 to discuss design options for the stopbank upgrades.

TCB is progressing the detailed design of the Opahu Stream pump station. Construction of the pump station is scheduled for the 2005/06 financial year.

4.2 Belmont improvements

Good progress has been made in implementing the Belmont additional works programme. About 300 tonnes of rock have been procured for the additional rock protection works at Charles Street, and a contract was let to extend the Charles Street stormwater pipe.

Design of flood gates to close the gap in Norfolk Street stopbank has commenced. A proposal by residents to extend the stopbank across the road with a smaller gap was investigated and found not feasible. This will be reported to the Advisory Committee in February.

4.3 Whirinaki Crescent upgrade

Truebridge Callendar Beach Limited (TCB) has prepared a preliminary design for extending the stopbank within the grounds of the Wellington Golf Club (WGC). The proposed stopbank while providing protection to a new sub-division will replace the north eastern part of the existing stopbank. The WGC proposes to construct this part of the stopbank during the 2005/06 financial year.

The TCB proposal will form the basis for resource consents and a cost sharing arrangement between GWRC and WGC. The detailed design and construction of the main stopbank are programmed for 2005/06 and 2006/07 respectively.

4.4 District Plan measures

Hutt City Council officers will seek their Council approval to formally notify the proposed district plan changes in late February 2005. We have now supplied all the hazard information required for these changes. We will meet with Upper Hutt City Council

officers in early February 2005 to discuss a programme for implementing the proposed Upper Hutt City Council district plan changes.

5. Planning and development services [Phillip Purves]

The following table summarises the situation in regard to the number of formal, written requests that have been attended to during the months of November, December and January 2004/05:

	Nov/Dec/Jan (2004/05)	YTD
Requests brought forward	5	16
Additional requests received	20	81
Responses provided	23	95
Outstanding requests	2	2

The January 2005 floods has raised the public awareness in regard to flooding and this has resulted in an increased number of telephone enquiries on flood hazard matters.

6. Investigations [Phillip Purves]

6.1 Waiwhetu Stream floodplain management study

The Survey of the channel and adjacent floodplain is well underway. Local surveyors Cuttris Consultants are undertaking the channel survey. We have now received and checked the LiDAR data which provides a very accurate model of the Waiwhetu floodplain.

The Institute of Geological & Nuclear Sciences has prepared the survey forms which will shortly be sent to local businesses to assess the impacts of the February 2004 flood event. This will complement the survey which has already completed on residential disruption and losses.

6.2 Waitohu flood hazard assessment

Work is continuing on the preparation of the summary report with the intention of reporting to the Landcare and Environment Committees in May 2005.

6.3 Mangaroa River flood hazard assessment

Work has commenced on the hydrological component of this investigation project. This work is being undertaken in-house with the balance of the project to be completed by consultants. A professional services contract was forwarded to six consultants just before Christmas. Tenders close on 2 February 2005.

7. Operations

7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]

The period up to Christmas was a busy one for Wellington Operations staff. We managed to source 2,500 tonnes of rock rip rap from local quarries for ongoing maintenance of

existing assets. We also managed to complete all the programmed cross-blading work on the river prior to the Christmas period.

Layering of willows on the river was also completed by the Christmas break, and the spray round was well underway. All the access tracks were also graded and re-metalled. We also spent considerable time reshaping and improving the drains beside the roads.

The January 6th flood however was not a good start to the new year. The event caused significant damage to the berms, access tracks and the river trail and the focus since that date has been on assessing the damage and rebuilding work programmes to take into account the impact of the flood.

Hutt River trail

Maintenance work was undertaken on the trail at Melling and Block Road prior to Christmas. This included vegetation control and cut back. Further significant work will be required following the January flood.

A small section of metalled trail (funded by Rotary) was put in at Owen Street to provide a simple loop walk.

A day was spent with Robin Maud from the Rotary Club replacing and repairing damaged signs on the trail. It was disappointing to note that two trail signs at the estuary were completely missing, as these were the most recently installed signs and included the updated graphics.

Hutt River ranging services

December was officially the coldest in decades and this was reflected in fewer people out and about on the river and trails. Undesirable activities were low with only a few trail bikes and some minor rubbish dumping. Vehicle damage to berms was minimal over this period.

Watercourses

The Wainuiomata stream maintenance run is now complete. Staff spent several days trench planting willows with a 20 tonne digger and a new 15 metre rock line was installed opposite the Pool Crescent reserve to halt further erosion in the area.

A number of large trees were removed from the outlet face of Seton Nossiter dam. This work was done in conjunction with Transit NZ and necessitated the closing of one lane on State Highway 1 for approximately 10 hours so the trees could safely be removed.

Work for the other departments

Installation work is now complete on the air quality meteorological monitoring mast at Wainuiomata.

7.2 Kapiti [Garry Baker]

What a way to start the New Year - with a 40-year flood event in the Otaki River, only to be surpassed by a 80-year event in the Waikanae on 5th January. The only "saviour" from these events was the relatively short duration of the peaks of the floods.

However, not all the flooding problems were confined to the two major rivers and their environs. Rain gauges along the Kapiti “coastal strip” recorded 90 - 110 mm of rain over the night of the 5/6 January. All our minor watercourses experienced problems coping with the run off leading to extensive flooding of farmland adjacent to the Mangaone Stream. The huge volume of water caused some drains to back-flow, flooded at least one house and rendered a couple more “temporarily uninhabitable” due to water getting into septic tanks.

Otaki River

All major debris within the river channel was removed after the flood.

Staff continued on the catching up with weed spraying and mowing of stopbanks and berms after an unsettled spring. Work has also started on the location and clearing of survey marks, in preparation of next year’s full survey of the river channel.

Waikanae River

The 5-yearly cross section survey was completed before Christmas, and a selection of cross sections have since been re-surveyed, following the flood. These surveys allow us to measure the amount of gravel in the river.

Clearance of flood debris is underway, particularly at the end of Greenaway Road and in the adjacent Pukekawa Reserve.

Waimeha Stream

The debris arrestor in the Waimeha Stream was cleared of flood and storm debris.

The annual machine and hand-clearing stream run was carried out through the golf course and at the rear of the residential properties prior to Christmas.

Mangaone Stream/ Pahiko Drain

A machine-clearing run was carried out on the lower Mangaone Stream prior to Christmas.

Following the January flood the Pahiko and Swamp Road drains were cleared, and debris removed from the Mangaone Stream.

Waitohu Stream

Following the flood, the Waitohu Stream was re-diverted back into its original channel on the Askews’ property.

7.3 Operations Support [Steve Murphy]

Asset management

We are currently checking that the asset registers for the Hutt, Otaki and Waikanae schemes to ensure they are complete and accurate by comparing the register against recent aerial photography, previous asset inspections, and actual ground checks. A student has been employed to carry out the field work, and the work is progressing well.

Quarterly asset management meetings are held with operational staff, to ensure everyone involved in the asset management process is aware of what is happening, and also to ensure that any proposed changes or refinements to the system are well thought through. The

second of these meetings was held just prior to Christmas, where the conditions ratings were reviewed to make them more workable, and the layout of the field inspection sheets amended to simplify recording asset condition.

The earthquake risk assessment of Flood Protection assets is currently being prepared by consultants, and is on track for delivery by mid April.

Waiwhetu Stream

Excell Corporation Ltd currently hold the contract with Flood Protection to manually clear aquatic weed from the channel of the Waiwhetu Stream. This contract was initially for 12 months, but has been renegotiated for a further 6 months. The extension will allow us to collect further data so that a performance based contract can be let later in the year.

We reported to the previous committee meeting that a reduction in the current standard of clearing was necessary to avoid exceeding the annual budget. While the contractor (Excell Corporation Ltd) has been successfully clearing Cape Pondweed from the Waiwhetu Streambed within budget, they indicated that they would be unable to clear the willow weed from the bank edge through Te Whiti Park and other minor areas, prior to the Christmas break. With the cessation of regular spraying, this vigorous weed is becoming an increasing problem. It colonises the stream bed by trapping silts in its tangled roots and stems. The concern was that the contractor would return from holiday to find an unmanageable situation. Consequently the willow weed through the Te Whiti Park reach of the Waiwhetu Stream was sprayed with glyphosate on 23 December 2004 after consultation with Iwi and the Waiwhetu Stream Working Group.

Isolated works

The flood event of 5-6 January 2005, caused considerable damage to some rural properties. While damage was evident across the whole western area, the Akatarawa River valley, and the Reikorangi district suffered most but there was also damage in the Moonshine, Horokiri, and Whitemans valley areas.

A number of rural buildings were damaged when flood waters entered, and considerable damage was done to fences, and plantings by the debris carried down by the rivers. Paddocks were covered in silt, and some stock losses occurred.

Flood Protection offers a public service to rural property owners who are concerned about the effects of flooding on their property. The increasing numbers of rural lifestyle blocks has been increased in the demand for this service.

Over 80 requests have been received by Flood Protection for advice in relation the effects of the recent flooding. Some have been simply solved by a discussion over the phone, but the majority require a site visit to provide on the spot advice. A second follow up visit is sometimes required if further research or study is needed. Approximately one third of enquiries to date have been finalised.

Discussions with land owners, many of them new to the rural scene, reveals that the service is very much appreciated, and enhances Council's image in this area of our work.

7.4 Gravel extraction

Gravel extraction figures to the end of December 2004 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	Period Year 2004/05 (cubic metres)		Year 2003/04 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	3,528	24,864	40,698
	River	Horokiwi	609	3,617	10,380
Otaki	River	Winstones	3,188	12,100	28,088
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	0
	Below Greenaway Road	Gary Holland Earthmoving	230	230	7,310
TOTALS			7,555	40,811	86,476

Geoff Dick
Manager, Flood Protection

Parks and Forests Managers report for period ending 31 January 2005

8. Manager's comments (Murray Waititi)

The flooding that occurred in early January has caused some damage in the parks network, especially around Queen Elizabeth Park, but it was relatively minor in nature. The damage mainly involved a couple of bridges popping off their abutments (which they are designed to do in flood situations) and some surface damage to tracks and roads. Even though the floods caused only superficial damage, it has meant that our maintenance crews had to defer their normal summer work programme to focus on repairing flood damage. As a result, some jobs that were programmed are behind schedule. However, overall, the parks are in excellent condition and ready for the increase in visitors over summer.

The Regional Outdoor Programme has started really well and I am delighted with the attendance levels so far. Bookings are very strong for both established and new events and we have had record attendances for some that have been running for several years. Even though it is difficult to put my finger on exactly why attendance on the events has grown substantially at this point, I think that it has come about because of changes we have made to our marketing strategy. The promotional budget was largely spent to launch the programme then we rely on press releases to remind people of "non-booked" events. In addition, all households in the region received the programme as part of *Elements*, and we also mailed it to around 950 people and organisations together with our *Green Shoots* community newsletter. I think we can look forward to an extremely successful programme this year.

On a completely different note, Parks and Forests have been awarded EnviroMark "Gold" for their Environmental Management System after an audit was completed at Battle Hill. Parks and Forests have now held the Gold standard for this system for three years.

9. Planning and policy (Dr Philippa Crisp)

9.1 Pest animal control operations

Bait stations are currently being installed in Korokoro Valley in Belmont Regional Park to initiate an ongoing possum control operation in this valuable piece of native bush. This large-scale operation will assist in keeping possum numbers down in the whole 450ha block.

In East Harbour Regional Park, MIRO members are continuing to run traplines and fill bait stations to lower possum and rat numbers in the northern forest. A recent possum monitor has shown a trap catch rate of 2.9% RTC. The target is to keep it under 5%.

In December, a check of the Judas goats in the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area resulted in a cull of 24 goats, mainly near the boundaries of the catchment. Three pigs and two deer were also dispatched. A major goat control operation has begun in the Hutt water collection area. It may be possible to eradicate goats from some parts of the catchment and then Judas goats will be used to provide information about any goats left in an area after the intensive hunting effort is completed.

9.2 Pest plant control

The rainy and windy weather over the past two months has limited the number of spraying days available to complete some pest plant control work. However, other jobs have continued. Pest plants controlled over the past few months include:

- *Tradescantia* in Wainuiomata Recreation Area and at Queen Elizabeth Park
- Old man's beard, climbing asparagus and Japanese honeysuckle in Speedy's Reserve
- Climbing asparagus, banana passionfruit, Japanese honeysuckle, old man's beard and bomarea at East Harbour Regional Park
- German ivy in Korokoro Valley
- Ivy, hawthorn and Japanese honeysuckle in Battle Hill bush remnant.

9.3 Monitoring

The annual bird monitoring across all the parks and in both current water collection areas is now finished. While all the data has yet to be analysed, a marked increase in bird numbers was found in the Hutt water collection area. This boost in numbers is likely to have occurred because of decreased rat predation following the 1080 operation in 2002. Rifleman appear to have benefited the most, but there are also increases in densities of tomtits and tuis.

We have been liaising with members of the Ornithological Society to start a bird monitoring regime in the Lakes block of East Harbour Regional Park. A member of the Global Volunteers network has also started a project to study the dotterels that nest between the sea and the lakes. The Department of Conservation, bird scientists and the adjoining landowner have been consulted about this research.

The re-measurement of permanent vegetation plots in the Wainuiomata/ Orongorongo water collection area is underway. This monitoring provides information about the health of the forest. Tree growth rates and the survival of seedlings can be assessed through the collection of data from these plots.

9.4 Permits

Staff are processing a number of permits each month for the collection of natural materials from the parks and forests now that a system is up and running. Permits are requested for a range of purposes, e.g. identification of fungi in Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area, epiphytic studies in Kaitoke Regional Park and rata seed collection in Pakuratahi Forest. Iwi have requested that they be consulted on each application and this consultation is completed as part of the permit process.

9.5 Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area possum operation

Initial planning meetings have been held for the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo water collection area possum control operation planned for July to September 2005. This operation will also mark the start of the mainland island (Super Key Native Ecosystem) operation in the Wainuiomata catchment.

9.6 Management Planning

Progress on the management plans is being reported in papers at this committee meeting. In summary:

Management Plan Submissions	Closing date	No. submissions received
Forest Lands Park Draft (2 nd round)	30 September	51
Kaitoke Regional Park Draft (2 nd round)	31 December	9
Queen Elizabeth Park Original (1 st round)	31 December	304

A public meeting was held at Paraparaumu for the initial submission phase of the Queen Elizabeth Management Plan review. The meeting was well attended (64 people) and ran very successfully.

9.7 Capital works

Tenders for the new Ranger's office at Mackays Crossing, Queen Elizabeth Park have been received and are much higher than anticipated. As a consequence, the building design has been changed and construction costs are currently being reassessed. Construction is now planned to start in February 2005 with completion by June 2005.

10. Marketing and design (Amanda Cox)

10.1 Brochures

Local iwi are comfortable the draft of the new Battle Hill Farm Forest Park brochure and we expect to print this by the end of January. We have also commissioned reprints of the Kaitoke Regional Park and the Regional Parks and Forests brochures – both of which have proved very popular.

10.2 Parks research framework

The framework for developing a set of robust market research tools is now in its final draft stage, with good feedback to this point. Part of the development phase includes a peer review (by Rob Greenaway, a well known New Zealand parks consultant) so we can be reasonably certain of its robustness amongst current methodologies in the recreation industry in Australasia.

We are planning to test our "recalibration plan" for counting visitors, in Belmont Regional Park during February/March. The calibrations in the remaining parks will be done in the next financial year.

10.3 Regional outdoors programme

We are delighted with the attendance levels so far in the summer programme; a high point being the 350 people coming along to the 4WD Back Country Akatarawa event on 15 January. Bookings are very strong for both established and new events (especially Walk Transmission Gully!) and we have had record attendances for some that have been running for several years (Beginners Guide to the Rainforest – 50+; Ridge Track Adventure – 42).

10.4 Website development

Parks and Forests staff are now reviewing pages of the new website, checking the finer details to ensure we are ready to “go live” on 1 February.

10.5 Community Liaison

Ross Jackson has attended monthly meetings of the Friends of Belmont Regional Park and Queen Elizabeth Park.

The QE Park group have been focussing on preparing their submission for the Park Management Plan and planning for the Whareroa Stream restoration project. A concept plan for the entire restoration project has been done and it will be presented at the Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park meeting in February. The plan outlines what is to be achieved by the project and estimated costs of implementing it i.e. fencing, minor earthworks and planting.

At Belmont the Friends have been planning for three events they are running as part of the Council’s Regional Outdoors Programme.

10.6 MacKay’s Crossing -- SH 1 Upgrade

Staff have been working closely with Transit NZ consultants and Fulton and Hogan, the contractors on this project. The key development tasks include:

- An overall landscape concept plan for the MacKay’s Entrance zone of the park
- A wetland development plan which includes the various streams and drains in the area;
- A plan for the relocated stable building and environs with provision for vehicle access, parking for horse floats and holding corrals for horses;
- Modified entrance design for entry into the park including relocating the memorial gates
- Replacement tree planting plan
- Liaising with Transit’s consultants on the highway planting design and pedestrian access details.

The overall project provides an excellent opportunity to create a greatly enhanced entrance to the park both functionally and aesthetically.

10.7 State of the environment landscape report

Over the last few months Ross Jackson has been helping John Holmes from the Environment Division prepare this report. We held an evening workshop in December with several experienced landscape architects, where they debated a series of set questions on the region’s landscapes. This proved to be very informative and a similar workshop with a wider group may be held in the future.

10.8 Queen Elizabeth Park notice boards

New notice boards have been installed in the kiosks at the Raumati South, Paekakariki and Whareroa Beach carpark areas. The MacKays Crossing Information Panel has also been installed next to the new toilets near the entrance.

10.9 Battle Hill interpretation project

We have been working with Ngati Toa representatives to develop new interpretation panels of the battle site between government forces and Te Rangihaeata. This is a significant site for both Maori and Paheka. An initial project plan was presented at Ara Tahī in November 2004. So far we have completed joint brief, drafted initial ideas and had a site visit in late January.

10.10 Belmont information panels

We have just started the planning and development of new entrance information panels at the main entrances to Belmont Regional Park on both the Hutt and Porirua sides. These will provide an initial introduction to the park, updated maps, track information and how to care for the park.

11. Western sector (Matt Ballantine)

11.1 Battle Hill Farm Forest Park

Preparing for summer

A lot of time has been spent getting the park ready for the summer holiday season. Preparation was not helped by the constant wet weather which made it very hard to schedule contractors etc. The tracks around the farm have been given a spruce up and water tables cleaned out. A number of fallen trees have been tidied up and several potentially dangerous trees were removed.

The front paddocks were given their annual pre-Christmas mow and on the farm the tractor mowed a number of areas of rushes and Californian thistles.

A fencer has been busy carrying out general maintenance and fencing off a gully that is to be incorporated into the bush reserve. There are some nice mature native trees in this gully, and over the last couple of years, we have been working on eliminating the weeds. The fencing will stop stock having access to the area.

Education programmes

The number of education programmes held in the park before Christmas were steady with a number of school groups visiting. The children enjoy feeding the pet sheep and chooks, and watching some of the farm activities that happen at this time of year. As always, the “shearing and crutching” demonstrations prove to be very popular, as was feeding the pet lamb.

Equestrian Activities

The equestrian season is in full swing with a number of events and this year one event hosted 170 riders which is a record for the Park. There floats everywhere. Some keen souls even held a cross country event on the 27th of December! About sixty riders showed which proves not everyone goes north.

Camping

The rain managed to put a bit of a dampener on the camping this year, with numbers being down on previous years over the Christmas period. But once people returned to work and the sun came out, the park has been very busy particularly during evenings and weekends.

Country festival

Preparation is in full swing for the approaching Country Festival in March. A professional event manager has been brought in by the Rotary Club this year to give the already successful event a boost. Boasting a number of celebrities and hosting some of Wellington's top restaurants and wineries, things are looking good for an eventful, not to mention well attended event.

11.2 Belmont Regional Park

Pine tree removal

We have been working with the Plantation Forestry Department to assess suitable ways to clear windfall pine trees that currently block a track and the stream in the upper Korokoro Valley. It is a fairly remote and inaccessible site and we need to find a way of getting heavy logging machinery in to clear trees from the track and stream. Meanwhile we have put a detour in place to allow park users to continue using the area. The January 2005 storms caused moderate flooding in the lower Korokoro Valley and we have been busy repairing track and minor bridge damage in the area (the third time in the last twelve months!).

Dry Creek entrance

At Dry Creek, contractors have been demolishing the fire damaged ACTS Institute building located on the valley floor, and recycling as much timber from the structure as possible.

A new landscape plan has been prepared for the area which we will implement once the building and site has been cleaned up, making this entrance a much more attractive one for park visitors. Also, as several car break-ins have occurred at the Dry Creek entrance over the period, we are investigating ways to make this area more secure for park visitors as part of landscape redevelopment work.

Things don't always run smoothly

Two instances of dogs worrying stock at Stratton Street occurred over the period and these attacks resulted in a number of dead or injured sheep. Hutt City Council dog control officers were informed of these incidents and were helpful in follow up action with the owners of the offending dogs.

A horse rider also broke her arm riding in the Park in early January. The rider managed to get assistance and was taken to hospital.

Events

The "Haywards to Haywards" fun run/walk was held on Boxing Day and utilised part of Belmont Regional Park through Belmont Road and out Hill Road. The Ixion Motorcycle Trials club held a successful evening trial at the Stratton Street entrance to the Park.

11.3 Queen Elizabeth Park

Prior to the flooding in early January our major focus during summer has been on the presentation of the recreation areas.

We have recently landscaped around the new toilet blocks at MacKay's crossing and Whareroa beach. These gardens have eco-sourced plants which help to integrate the buildings into the natural environment. Replacement of the old post and rail style bollards at Whareroa beach has been completed. This has significantly upgraded the presentation of

the area and increased the car parking to meet growing visitor demands on the Whareroa beach picnic sites.

Flooding

The recent flooding at MacKay's crossing and Paekakariki not only interrupted thousands of motorists who were stranded when the Whareroa and Wainui streams burst their banks twice in one week, they also diverted our focus onto repairing the flood damage.

These floods sent a deluge of muddy water through the tramway barn as well as our maintenance shed and nursery area. Other damage included scouring of tracks, silt deposited on tracks, ponding of water in the farmland and inland track and one bridge coming off its foundation to allow flood waters to flow freely.

Events Held

For the second year in a row the pre-Christmas period proved to be a disappointing one for end of year functions at the park. Although most of the sites were booked out, the majority of groups cancelled due to the weather conditions.

12. Eastern sector (Fraser Oliver)

12.1 Akatarawa / Pakuratahi Forest

Flooding

During this period we have unfortunately received four significant rain events. The damage we received has been relatively minor in nature i.e. scour to road surfaces, build up of debris at culvert and ford entrances, but we have also had a large number of windthrow trees. Most of the trees affected have been exotic or plantation pine trees and it would appear that many of these trees have been toppled as a result of logging operations in the immediate area making the trees more prone to wind damage.

Prison Crews

The prison crews continue to be a great help assisting with many of the labour intensive jobs i.e removing vegetation from walking tracks, filling potholes, clearing culverts and waterways, and maintaining riparian vegetation plots. They have also assisted at Kaitoke Regional Park removing unwanted vegetation in planted areas.

Events

Due to the high number of events that occur around the Christmas/ New Year period, a fair bit of ranger's time is required liaising with the clubs holding the events. The main objective of this is to avoid clashes with other users and I am pleased to report that all events have run well with positive feedback from the clubs involved.

To date we have had 46 events in both forests for this period, the range of events includes; four wheel drive club events, motorcycle events, mountain bike events, Army exercises, Police Search and Rescue exercises and visits by a local historical society.

12.2 Kaitoke Regional Park

Campers

Considering the unsettled nature of the weather over the holidays, the campground has been well patronised and numbers are rivalling those experienced last year. Campers have generally been well behaved family groups, except for New Years Eve when groups of drunken youths became difficult to control. We will look to institute some form of liquor ban next year.

A spate of car burglaries

Regular police patrols have been occurring throughout the period, however, a spate of vehicle robberies in late December and early January has meant ranger patrols of car parks have had to be increased. An observant member of the public lead to the police apprehending one offender.

Things are never dull

- There have been two first aid situations resulting in hospitalisation
- several vehicle recovery operations of four wheel dives suck in the farm creek area.
- A group of campers spent the night in the Rangers' residence after having their tents flooded out.
- The park was busy before Christmas with corporate BBQ's and several school camps and tours.
- There has been ongoing running repairs to BBQs, water infrastructure and the toilet system.
- There has also been the odd incident of vandalism to repair.

12.3 Wainuiomata

Fence construction continues

Bulldozing for the third section of boundary fence has been completed down the Moores Valley ridge. This section extends over 4 km from the top gate and ensures the fence and access road is solely on GWRC land. This will eliminate any disputes over access or construction with neighbouring landowners. The track has come up well with minimal damage to existing vegetation. The bulldozer continued to the bottom gate tidying up the track as it went.

Working with DoC

Work has begun on clearing and marking the old Whakanui track with the assistance of DOC staff from Rimutaka Forest Park. This track is on GWRC land, starting on the Nikau Track in the recreation area and joins with an existing DOC track at the top of the ridge. GWRC and DOC will maintain the track in a joint effort. This is the fourth time in recent months that we have worked with DOC in partnership. It is creating a valuable relationship with our neighbour.

Weed control

Weed control continues within the catchments. Foxglove, thistle and ragwort have been sprayed along the catchment access road. This is a follow up to weed control from earlier in 2004, targeting germinating plants. Numbers of weeds are well down on previous jobs indicating progress in eradicating the weeds from the catchment. Spraying has also focused

on any buddleia that is sprouting. This is concentrated on the Morton Dam and Georges Creek area.

Flooding

Heavy rain occurred the night of the 5th of January. The following day staff checked all roads and infrastructure. Debris was cleared from the Orongorongo weir and a small slip cleared from the start of the Pack Track. The minimal damage that occurred is a credit to the repairs completed after the February floods last year.

People bring rubbish

Although the recreation area was quiet over the Christmas period, fine weather in January has brought the visitors out in numbers. In turn there has been an increase in rubbish left around the car park and swimming holes. Graffiti has also been a problem with fences, the new sign and even trees being targets. The rubbish and graffiti is cleaned up promptly to keep the area attractive to other users.

Walking tours

Walking tours of Wainuiomata and Orongorongo were held on the 28th of November, 12th of December and 23rd of January. Fine weather came out for all three tours and all participants enjoyed the walks. Although the tours are regular events now each tour is different with participants not only learning about the area but also teaching the rangers a thing or two. This information is valued and is a great learning process.

12.4 East Harbour

Track upgrades

Over the past 2-3 months there has been some significant improvements to key tracks in the northern block. The key routes into Butterfly Creek, Kowhai Street and Bus Barn tracks, have been re-graded and in places, re-routed. Open runoffs have been installed at numerous points along both tracks, which will evenly disperse run-off water from the tracks.

Small 1.5 ton diggers were used to carry out much of the work. Because of lack of access to work sites, the diggers had to be flown in by a heavy-lift helicopter which meant a fair bit of organizing by all staff concerned.

The other main area of trackwork has been concentrated on the lower Mackenzie track in the Butterfly Creek Valley. Around 100 metres of boardwalks have been installed on what was a deeply eroded track. This has made the walking on this section a much more enjoyable experience.

Staff are currently working on installing a new 12m bridge and four picnic tables at the Butterfly Creek picnic site.

Pencarrow Lakes planning

Staff have meet with members of Forest and Bird and MIRO on site at Lakes Kohangapiripiri and Kohangatera to discuss long term management of the block. Proposals are being considered to involve the community groups and interested members of the public in the revegetation and development of tracks and key facilities in the area. These will be reported to the Landcare committee in due course. Ranger staff have also been looking at an appropriate track network for the area and discussing the conservation and recreation issues. Meetings regarding the block have been held with public conservation organisations, adjoining landowners and DOC.

Events

Two summer events were held at the park during early January. This is the first time the summer event programme has been extended into the EHRP northern block. Both events took the form of guided walks and were well attended.

One of these events, Gollans Valley Adventure, was a bit of a first being basically an off track tramp. The 3-4 hour walk gave participants a chance to explore a part of the park which would generally only be seen by more experienced trampers.

The feedback was very positive and we would certainly look at re-running both events again next year. Three other events will take place at EHRP this summer, these being the Lighthouse and Lakes tour and two events run by local community organisations.

Murray Waititi
Manager, Parks and Forest

Landcare Support, Divisional Accountant's report for period ending 14 January 2005

Year to date funding position

With the first 6 months of this financial year gone, Landcare is showing a favourable variance in net funds position of \$599,000. The key drivers of this are:

Landcare Division				
Financial Summary Statement				
For the 6 months ending 31 December 2004				
\$000				
	Year to Date			Full Year
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Budget
External Revenue	7,138	7,000	137 F	14,133
Internal Revenue	464	539	(75) U	1,077
TOTAL REVENUE	7,601	7,539	62 F	15,210
Direct Expenditure	4,118	4,249	131 F	9,271
Indirect Expenditure	(1,238)	1,941	3,179 F	3,955
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	2,880	6,190	3,310 F	13,225
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	4,721	1,349	3,372 F	1,985
Add back non cash items	(2,609)	448	(3,057) U	969
Net Asset Acquisitions	(3,431)	224	3,655 F	250
Capital Projects (loan funded)	1,810	1,995	185 F	4,647
Net Reserve/Investment Transfers	211	97	(113) U	354
Internal Debt Repayment	4,433	1,175	(3,258) U	2,350
NET FUNDING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	899	301	599 F	0

- Revenue from the sale of Mabey Rd and early repayment of debt \$225,000
- Net asset acquisitions planned that have not yet occurred \$148,000
- Savings in debt servicing costs resulting from the timing of the Flood Protection capex programme \$121,000
- Programme expenditure timing variances \$131,000

Of these variances, the only one expected to have a permanent effect at year end is the savings from the Mabey Rd sale. There are, however, unbudgeted expenses that we will be requesting as part of the 6 month forecast that will offset this to some degree in both Parks and Forests and Flood Protection. (e.g. Flood damage repairs).

Flood Protection reserves

In December, we received the funds promised from Central Government for damages caused during the February 04 floods. Flood Protection received \$138,000 and Parks and Forests \$16,800. The

Flood Protection money for the most part is going back against the reserves that were used to fund the flood repairs. These reserves are looking very depleted, in particular the Flood Contingency reserve which we share with the Wairarapa Division. Given the damages we have recently sustained in the January 2005 floods, these reserves are set to take another substantial hit and we expect several of them to be well overdrawn by year end.

Tina Walker
Divisional Accountant, Landcare