

## **Catchment Management Division Update**

### **for period ending 2 March 2007**

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#### **Biosecurity (Wayne O'Donnell)**

##### **1. Pest Animals**

###### **1.1 Rabbits**

There are indications that the Rabbit Calicivirus Disease (RCD) is still cycling in the region in spite of the last formal survey indicating a 23% immunity level for the Western Zone and 48% for the Eastern Zone. Whilst there was concern in December and January from some landowners that 'the rabbits are getting away' the number of calls for assistance has slowed down. It is evident that the virus is still effectively culling to low population levels.

Confirmed sightings or samples of dead RCD rabbits have occurred at Riversdale Beach, Featherston, Makara and Granada North. No reports have been received from the Kapiti Coast but neither have there been any complaints. The effects of the virus can be quite innocuous and all that people notice is that the rabbits are gone or much reduced. This was the case with the rabbits at Nga Manu Sanctuary, Waikanae.

There is a 40 hectare property on the foothills of the Tararua Range west of Carterton that has had 685 rabbits shot on it by a GW employee in his own time over the past two months. This intensively farmed property has a long-term history of extensive predator control by the landowner. The predator control has created an ideal environment for rabbits to establish. Rabbits are also said to be plentiful within the Mt Bruce/Pukaha Buffer predator control area in spite of this being a high rainfall area with a history of low rabbit proneness. It is a well established fact that intensive long-term predator control for biodiversity benefits will result in rabbit increases. It is fortunate that RCD is still having a positive effect after establishing in the region 10 years ago.

###### **1.2 Rooks**

A meeting about rooks was held at Pahiatua in February 2007 between rook control staff from Hawkes Bay, Horizons and Greater Wellington Regional Councils. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a summary of each Councils control programme from last year, to discuss proposed works for the coming year, changes in bird behaviour, operational issues (poison strengths, bait types, population trends), and to discuss any other issues. It would be fair to say that the meeting was represented by some of the best rook experts in NZ.

All three Councils utilise helicopter nest baiting as their main control method supplemented by ground baiting during periods of crop protection or mob flocking of the birds during the summer moult.

The prevailing weather conditions dictate when effective nest baiting control can commence in the spring when the birds commence breeding. The Hawkes Bay programme was able to start by 12 September and finish by 12 October 2007. Due to persistent westerly winds and rain the Horizons and Greater Wellington operations were not able to start until mid October. Each region made an endeavour to treat all known rookeries.

This was a major task for Horizons as rook colonies exist from north of Taihape to the Wairarapa East Coast. They treated 1,419 nests which was major reduction to the 2,942 treated the previous year. They also reported that they have had a big drop in reports of crop damage and there was none in the Manawatu for the first time ever. They visited 210 rookery sites in the Tararua District of which 135 were active.

Hawkes Bay treated 118 rookeries including two they serviced on behalf of Gisborne District Council. They have both an Eradication Zone and a Control Zone with the demarcation line being approximately the Napier/Taupo State Highway. The Eradication Zone of about 36 rookeries is to the north of their region.

In comparison, GW treated 18 breeding rookeries. All were located in the Wairarapa. For the third year no crop damage has occurred. Rooks have been reported on newly cultivated areas but the rooks were only eating invertebrates.

It is pleasing to see the continued commitment to rook control by both Hawkes Bay and Horizons. This reduces the incidence of migration into our region.

Some observations reported at the meeting included;

- The older adults are breeding first
- The nest baiting method destroys the females but leaves a proportion of males
- Male birds will make nests even if they have no partner
- Rooks will make 'practise' nests (i.e. unused)
- Helicopter and aerial topdressing pilots are being encouraged to report rookeries
- The annual publicity campaign during August via the media should continue.
- The need for Public Health approvals for aerial control needs to be ascertained.

### **1.3 Cats**

#### **Desexing Campaign**

The Biosecurity Department is planning to support another cat desexing campaign in the Wairarapa during April and May. The format is similar to the past two year's successful programmes when some 300 domestic cats were either spayed or neutered on each occasion. The overall aim for GW's involvement is to encourage families to be responsible cat owners, to enjoy having a pet, to reduce neighbourhood problems and to reduce the number of cats that are abandoned. Abandoned cats are a threat to our native birds and lizards and left

uncontrolled impact adversely on GW's biodiversity enhancement programmes. They also spread disease.

### **Cat Colony – Crofton Downs, Wellington City**

Another cat colony is being fostered at Crofton Downs. This is the second time this has occurred at this site. The first colony was disestablished in 2004 and a similar colony was disestablished on the outskirts of Chartwell last year. The person who is fostering these colonies has been served with a trespass notice for each site but continues to breach the conditions. The police will be approached for advice. The cats are being removed from each site on a systematic basis. Both sites are adjacent to the WCC Native Bush Reserves and key native ecosystems of Otari/Wiltons Bush and Huntleigh Park.

## **1.4 Wasps**

The Biosecurity Department in both Masterton and Upper Hutt regularly gets calls from the public seeking advice and assistance about a wasp nuisance or a wasp nest. Most callers are referred to a registered insect pest control company but the calls are logged for a client response database. In spite of some high profile media reports about wasp attacks, Biosecurity staff are of the opinion that at the moment, the wasp nuisance is no worse throughout the region than the last two years. Registers of wasp nuisance calls are kept at most city and district council and DoC call centres which allows compilation of a trend analysis.

## **1.5 KNE Contracting**

There are over 30 KNE sites under service contract. These will be audited during the next service rounds between now and the end of June. Generally the contractors are doing well and have a better understanding of what is required.

Discussions are occurring with contractors regarding contracts for the 2007/08 year. Some changes will be made to improve administrative efficiencies, including reporting and invoicing requirements.

## **1.6 Works for Parks & Forests**

The Pest Animals Section is either managing contracts or conducting predator control at several GW reserve areas.

**Pakuratahi Forest** – A possum trapping programme is underway at Tunnel Gully utilising the part time services of a local Forest & Bird Society member. Rat trapping will be introduced over the next few weeks.

**Speedy's Reserve** – this is serviced by BioWorks and generally has a very low possum population now.

**Korokoro Valley** (Belmont RP) – This is a BioWorks contract area with difficult terrain in parts and has proved difficult to reduce possum numbers to a desirable level. A revised baiting strategy is in place to effect a quicker knockdown. Reinvasion of possums from the Horokiwi area is considered to be problem that needs addressing.

**East Harbour RP** – Hutt Valley Contracting Services are conducting rodent control in this area in conjunction with volunteers from MIRO. MIRO is also undertaking extensive possum control.

**Whitereia Park** – A recent night shoot resulted in 12 rabbits being destroyed. No hares or possums were observed. It is considered that both hares and possums are now at zero density. There are still possum/rat bait stations in position and they will be refilled on the 12th March.

**Wainuiomata Mainland Island** – Bait stations were refilled over 3 days in late January. Very few possums are evident and any reinvasion will be curbed from Moore's Valley now that the Bovine Tb programme is well advanced. Biosecurity New Zealand issued a 'Notice of Direction' for GW to retrieve and destroy all Ditrac rodenticide baits used in the baiting the area in August 2006. There was concern that the seed germinating within the bait posed a threat to the environment by the possible release of invasive plant pests or pathogens. A compensation claim has been lodged with Biosecurity NZ to recoup the costs associated with the Notice of Direction.

**Queen Elizabeth Park** – Advice and assistance has been provided on a regular basis for control of rabbits.

**Cannons Point** – The reinstating of a bait station network commenced on 7 March. This area was treated several years ago and was serviced by P&F staff but had lapsed. Possums from this area have been a nuisance to residents of the suburb of Totara Park.

## **1.7 Rewanui Trust Reserve**

A meeting was held in January with representatives of the Rewanui Trust Reserve situated at Blairlogie on the Masterton – Castlepoint Road. They were seeking advice about intensifying the predator control regime installed by Biosecurity staff to effect better rat control. The rat population was expected to reduce over time along with other predators. The control regime at Rewanui was similar to the Mt Bruce/Pukaha Buffer which has proven so successful.

Information has been provided on a preparing a more comprehensive baiting/trapping matrix, estimated costs for route preparation, costs for additional hardware and costs of native bird monitoring. The expectation is that the Trust will fund the additional works.

## **2. Pest Plants**

### **2.1 Eradication species**

#### **African feathergrass**

There is difficulty identifying and controlling this species in the farming environment if it is not in the seeding stage as it blends in readily with grasses. The dry season has exacerbated the problem. The plant is being left to reach a stage where it is visible. As timing will be variable, control work is now being undertaken by staff rather than contractors.

#### **Eelgrass**

The infestation in the Makora stream, Masterton, has been controlled under contract. Staff will now manage ongoing infestations as they appear.

The trial in Kapiti using weedmatting to smother the eelgrass has proven to be very successful. Of the 24 sites in Kapiti 67% were clear on recent inspection.

#### **Perennial nettle**

A new site has been located in South Wairarapa and another at the old Wingate tip. Both infestations have been controlled.

The infestation on Somes Island was controlled by GW and DoC staff during January with good results.

#### **Woolly nightshade**

Two new sites have been recorded - one in South Wairarapa and the other at Pauatahanui.

#### **Bathurst bur**

A new site was located at Gladstone on the opposite side of the river to the existing site. This is not unexpected but raises concern about how widespread the plant actually is. A survey is required downstream of these sites. The recent cultivation of land on these properties may have resulted in new infestations.

#### **Saffron thistle**

Some sites have received four inspections this year with plants being found on each occasion. This has mainly been due to the wet weather prior to the end of December which has promoted good growth.

### **2.2 Containment species**

A contract has been let to Abseil Access for the control of Boneseed on the escarpment at Porirua. This work is expected to be completed prior to the end of March.

## **Cape tulip**

On 22 February Julie Collins, a senior assessor with the Compliance and Enforcement Group, Biosecurity NZ, conducted an audit of our Notifiable Organisms Cape Tulip service delivery contract with AgriQuality.

There was particular interest in the processes used for visiting sites and recording information. The audit included a number of field visits. Preliminary audit feedback indicates that our systems are very good.

## **Unwanted Organisms – Application for Display**

An application has been made to Biosecurity NZ to permit GW to keep and maintain a number of unwanted organisms for display and education purposes. It is very important to have live plants for displays as photographs are not useful to capture seasonal variations in plant growth, particularly size and colour variation.

Similar applications are being forwarded by other regional councils.

## **2.3 KNE**

**Tauherenikau:** Staff have been release spraying around last years plantings. The 2006 native plantings have been a success with approximately 98% of the 700+ plants establishing. The local schools are very interested in continuing to assist with future plantings.

A maintenance contract for the climbers; german ivy, ivy, jasmine, blackberry and old man's beard was completed to standard in January, as was a large sycamore drill and poison contract in the buffer zone. A contract to control the groundcovers, Tradescantia and montbretia, has also been completed. Already large numbers of native seedlings are visible.

## **3. Bovine Tb**

### **3.1 2006/07 programme**

- Originally the AHB approved a control programme for the 2006/07 year, with an approximate value of \$5.22M which included the following:
  - 280,651 ha possum control
  - possum, ferret and pig surveys
  - trend and performance monitoring
- The programme was reviewed in the second quarter of 2006 to determine if the programme remained suitable to achieve Bovine Tb targets. This review identified that a number of operations did not require control due to low monitoring results, and that some unplanned work needed to be implemented due to higher than expected

trend monitoring results. AHB approved changes made to the plan by Greater Wellington.

- Following the mid-year review, the revised area to be treated for possum control included 258,496 hectares.
- All surveys were reviewed and boundaries redesigned where necessary. The following surveys will be completed this year.
  - 10,144ha of possum surveys
  - 15,998ha of ferret surveys
  - 144,661ha of pig surveys

### 3.2 The table below summarises the areas contracted to date for the 2006/07 year

	Possum (ha)	Ferret & Possum Surveys (ha)	Pig Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	121,317	10,156		131,473
Target Pest Control	50,247	11,174		61,421
Professional Guiding	53,969		6,781	60,750
J G McCaslin	11,545	860		12,405
EPRO Ltd	14,455			14,455
KBES	5,972			5,972
L Bowring	0		37,362	37,362
T Oakly	0		100,518	100,518
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>257,505</b>	<b>22,190</b>	<b>144,661</b>	<b>424,356</b>
To Determine (parcel 6)	991	3,952	0	4,943
<b>Totals</b>	<b>258,496</b>	<b>26,142</b>	<b>144,661</b>	<b>429,299</b>

### 3.3 The following table details areas of the 2006/07 possum control programme which have been completed as at the end of February. Of the programme already let, 109,021 ha has been completed and assessed by performance monitor or audit. Contractors have notified in their monthly reports that they consider they have completed 118,340 ha of their 2006/07 possum control programme.

All pig surveys have a completion date of 30 June.

	Possum (ha)	Ferret & Possum Surveys (ha)	Pig Survey (ha)	Total
GWRC BioWorks	52,831	9,776	0	62,607
Target Pest Contracting	23,142	0	0	23,142
Professional Guiding	13,051	0	0	13,051

J McCaslin	5,542	0	0	5,542
EPRO Ltd	14,455	0	0	14,455
KBES	0	0	0	0
L Bowring	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>109,021</b>	<b>9,776</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>118,797</b>

### 3.4 Tendering 2006/07 programme

The fifth and final parcel of vector control and survey tenders was issued to contractors in December 2006. Winning tenders exceeded budgets by approximately \$270,000. A request was made to the AHB for additional funding. This was subsequently approved and contractors notified.

The additional expenditure should be offset by the \$200,000 which was identified as not being required for vector control following the second quarter review.

One non-conforming tender was received in Parcel five. This control and survey project has been re tendered (Parcel 6) and a contractor selected (Professional Guiding) in early March.

### 3.5 Monitoring

A request for pre-qualifiers for possum monitoring services for 2006/07 was undertaken at the end of the last financial year. Seven contractors provided details for pre-qualification. Subsequently, Tender Round 1 and 2 for Bovine Tb possum monitoring services has been completed and assessed. Only 2 tenders were received for Round 1 and 5 for Round 2. Contractor capacity remains an issue for the Bovine Tb control programme.

AHB have recently advised that AgriQuality should not be supplied any monitoring contracts, given their recent investment in Target Pest Contracting Ltd (TPL). It is important to note that all monitoring is completed to a set national protocol. Auditing by the Vector Manager ensures that compliance is very high. AgriQuality had recently indicated a desire to work in this region after successfully registering.

### 3.6 South East Wairarapa – Stage 3 (33,180 ha)

Progress in this operation has been satisfactory. However, two strata failures have been disappointing.

The area has been divided into the following contract strata:

Strata	Contractor	Area (ha)	Comments	Completion Date
HR1	BioWorks	2,726	Ground control, Year 2	Failed monitor. Extend to 22/6/07
HR 2 (G)	Target Pest Contracting	827	Ground control	Completed
HR 3 (G)	Professional Guiding Services	292	Ground control	Completed
HR 4 (G1)	Professional Guiding Services	1,757	Ground control	Completed



HR 4 (G2)	Professional Guiding Services	379	Ground control	Completed
HR 5	BioWorks	3,658	Ground control, Year 2	23 March 2007
HR 6	BioWorks	2,268	Ground control, Year 2	Monitoring underway
HR 7	EPRO Ltd	14,455	Aerial 1080 carrot baits	Completed
HR 7 (G)	Target Pest Contracting	294	Ground control	Completed
HR 7 (A3)	BioWorks	2,154	Aerial 1080 pellet baits	Completed
HR 8 (G)	BioWorks	719	Ground control	10 March 2007
HR 8 (A)	BioWorks	849	Aerial 1080 pellet baits	Completed

### 3.7 Three year vector control plans

The Vector Management team is currently reviewing the three year Management Plans. These plans detail where vector control or surveys will be implemented in the region over the next three years. The plans also consider contractor capacity and management, and regional communication programmes.

The AHB has recently advised of an expenditure reduction. The following details the new expenditure limits with the previous totals included in brackets. The third column indicates what the proposed expenditure limits were for 2007/08 when a review of the Plans were completed in March 2005:

-	2007/08	\$4,400,000	(\$4,500,000)	(\$8,190,700)
-	2008/09	\$4,450,000	(\$4,750,000)	
-	2009/10	\$4,450,000		

The March 2005 proposed budget for 2006/07 was \$7,200,000 compared to the AHB approved budget of \$4,850,000. Clearly, the Wellington region has taken a major reduction in AHB funding in recent years.

With the review of the RPMS underway, it is timely to include a provision for community focused possum control programmes in the Proposed Strategy. Criteria will be included to ensure any Council funding is fully supported by community contributions before a scheme can commence. Public feedback on these suggested criteria will be available through the RPMS submission process.

### 3.8 Feral cattle

The Vector Management team has implemented a feral cattle control operation in the South East Wairarapa - Stage 2 operation. Local farmers had commenced control before an AHB/Greater Wellington funded operation commenced.

Thirty-five cattle were shot in December 2006. Six of these cattle were buried because they had suspicious Tb lesions. A further animal was confirmed Tb positive at the abattoir.

Further control will continue once cooler climatic conditions arrive.

## **Flood Protection (Graeme Campbell)**

### **1. Manager's comments**

#### **1.1 General**

Excellent progress is being made on all of the major works programmes as detailed below. The good weather over the last month has allowed the physical works to progress well and they are now all on or ahead of schedule. Work on the repair of the Hikunui spillway is progressing well with the new stopbank almost complete.

Preparatory design and consents work for the Kapiti capital projects have also progressed well with a number of major milestones reached. Risks still exist on the Waitohu Stopbank and Chrystalls extended stopbank but progress with landowner negotiations and planning applications means we are confident of achieving the June 2008 completion date.

Work has started on the Waingawa scheme review with cross section surveys completed and gravel and hydraulic analysis underway.

### **2. Kapiti floodplain management [Kees Nauta]**

#### **2.1 Friends of the Waikanae River**

An on site meeting was held with John Topliff of the Friends group and Mike Urlich of Biosecurity on 7 February 2007 to look at weed control and planting options for the Weggery sand dunes area. Weed control has commenced and the first stage of the dunes is to be planted this winter (500 plants). Weed control will be continued over the remainder of the dune area with the objective being to plant that out in 2008. Following this site meeting a walkover of the lower reaches of the north bank was undertaken to discuss issues and enable John Bissell to get familiar with the area.

A Friends executive committee meeting was held on 20 February. John Bissell attended and took the opportunity to inform the committee of progress on the Waikanae River planting plan and to discuss any issues regarding this. A site meeting involving staff from Greater Wellington and KCDC along with representatives of the Friends will be held in early March to go over each proposed planting site, map it and discuss any issues.

#### **2.2 Friends of the Otaki River**

John Bissell attended a tour of the Otaki River from Chrystalls Bend to the coast with representatives of the Friends Executive to gain familiarity with the area and discuss any issues. It was an informal visit and a chance to meet a number of people who John will be working closely with in the future.

John also attended an executive committee meeting of the Otaki Friends on 21 February, and introduced himself to those he hadn't met on the tour.

### **2.3 Greater Otaki Project**

John attended a workshop hosted by KCDC on the Greater Otaki project on 21 February. Progress is being made and another update meeting is scheduled for April 2007.

### **2.4 Otaki Lakes project**

John Bissell and Graeme Campbell attended a public meeting hosted by KCDC to inform the community on progress on the Otaki Lakes project. It was an informal meeting and a chance for people to ask questions and have input into the initial design options. Graeme also fielded a number of questions regarding the Chrystalls stop bank project.

### **2.5 Chrystalls extended stopbank**

The designation document was formally lodged with KCDC on 15 February, an application for a Resource Consent was also sent to Environmental Regulation, GWRC on 15 February. The application has been advertised and the submission period closes on 30 March.

We intend to commence final design of the western section of the stopbank located on land currently owned by GWRC. We are also investigating sources of suitable materials for the stopbank construction. This will enable us to decide whether it will be beneficial to commence stockpiling suitable materials on site prior to the onset of winter. The bulk of the works will commence later in the year after the Resource Consents and Designation have been granted and land negotiations have been concluded.

### **2.6 South Waitohu stopbank**

A partial Otaki Porirua Trust Board meeting occurred in late November 2006. At this meeting, the Board agreed in principle with the proposed stopbank but the form of agreement, which would allow Council access to construct and maintain the proposed stopbank still requires further discussion. We are in the process of arranging a meeting between Board members and Greater Wellington Councillors to progress this agreement.

## **3. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]**

### **3.1 Ava to Ewen project**

The Ava to Ewen project is currently on programme, under budget and is scheduled for completion by 2010.

Dixon & Dunlop Ltd is making good progress with the Ava Rail stopbank reconstruction contract. The contractor is currently forming the stopbank below the Ava Rail Bridge using materials excavated from the river berm capped with a thick layer of impermeable clay material supplied from local quarries. Rock supply from the Takaka quarry is on programme and about 2000 tonnes of rock are now on site.

The Opahu Pump station contractor has installed the pumps and is currently working on the control building and electrical works. The pump station site excluding the control building and the pump structure was handed over to the stopbank contractor on 1 March to complete the stopbank works.

The Alicetown stopbank contractor has now completed minor reshaping of the stopbank and the reinstatement of damaged areas.

### **3.2 Boulcott/Hutt stopbank**

We now propose to carry out further investigations on three alignment options to provide the information required by the Hutt River Advisory Committee (HRAC) to make a recommendation on a preferred stopbank alignment for the Boulcott/Hutt stopbank. On 1 March 2006, the HRAC endorsed the process and programme for this next stage of the study.

The process includes the refinement of the design and cost estimates, assessment of environmental and economic effects and consultation with the stakeholders and the community. The process also includes presentations to Hutt City Council to provide an opportunity for HCC to participate in the decision making process. The programme is for the HRAC to recommend an alignment to the Landcare Committee in early September 2007.

### **3.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank**

On 1 March, the HRAC considered the revised costs and a programme for implementing the Whirinaki Crescent stopbank reconstruction project. The HRAC noted that the increased project costs would result in an increased contribution from Upper Hutt ratepayers and requested officers to obtain Upper Hutt City Council endorsement before seeking GWRC approval of the revised budget. We are now in contact with UHCC officers to obtain the required endorsement.

### **3.4 Wet extraction of Hutt River gravel**

Hutt River gravel extraction is progressing with the target of removing about 60,000 m<sup>3</sup> by the end of June 2007. About 16,000 m<sup>3</sup> had been extracted by the end of February 2007.

## **4 Western Operations [Jeff Evans]**

All the programmed works in the western operations area are proceeding well. The settled weather and low river levels have allowed us to finish most of the planned construction works in the larger rivers. Gravel extraction is currently being undertaken on the Hutt, Waikanae and Otaki Rivers and staff have been kept busy ensuring the extraction contractors work within the consent conditions on each river system.

#### **4.1 Hutt River**

Stopbank maintenance is under way in the Upper Hutt area. Illegally planted trees are being removed and the areas are being stumped and re-instated. This work involves a lot of public consultation and lengthy discussions with adjoining land owners. The drainage channels have also been machine cleared in the Upper Hutt area.

New timber bollards have been installed on the Taita Berms and access track maintenance has been undertaken in the RWA area.

2,000 tonne of rock rip rap for maintenance work has been sourced and purchased from a local quarry at a very favourable rate and delivery is currently underway.

#### **4.2 Hutt River Trail**

Normal maintenance and sign repair has been carried out over the last period. The trail has received good visitor numbers over the last few months due to the fine weather and in many places the car parks are reaching capacity, with swimmers, picnickers and walkers all enjoying the river environment.

#### **4.3 Hutt River ranging services**

Ranging services have included the usual public enquiries. These have once again increased due to the toxic algae blooms in the area and there is a large numbers of public asking for information on what is happening.

There have been two very successful summer programme events over the last period. The “Great Gravel Grab” which was held on both the Hutt River and on the Otaki River, had large public turn outs and received good press for both Flood Protection and the Council.

#### **4.4 Watercourses**

A stream run is underway in the Porirua Stream and maintenance is being undertaken on both the Seton Nossiter and Stebbings Dams. An area of failed protection works in Glenside has been repaired. The works were part of the 1978 scheme under taken in the area and remain our responsibility.

#### **4.5 Waikanae River**

Rock groyne repairs have been carried out in a number of areas and the low level weir above Kebbells Corner has been topped up. Some areas of old willows on the berms have been removed and the Friends group will replant these areas with native trees.

#### **4.6 Otaki River**

A short section of rock wall has been repaired on Chrystalls bend. A dumper and digger was used to retrieve washed out rock from downstream to save costs on this repair. Beach

spraying to remove excess vegetation and stop islands building up on the gravel beaches is in progress and release cutting has been done on the Friends groups plantings.

#### 4.7 Isolated works

As we have previously advised the Committee, we have been approached by a number of residents in Maymorn Road, whose properties are suffering from severe lateral erosion. We are approaching a consultant to assess the current situation and propose a number of design solutions for this lateral erosion.

The design solutions will not be straight forward as the river channel at this location is very confined leaving little room for the construction of any works. Two earlier attempts to stabilise the erosion using planting have failed, and a more substantial work is required. The situation is further complicated by a new housing development on the opposite river terrace. Any proposed protection work must be carefully designed so as not to adversely affect these properties.

#### 4.8 Gravel extraction

Gravel extraction figures to the end of January 2007 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	Year 2006/07 (cubic metres)		Year 2005/06 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	3,283	25,529	49,154
	River	Horokiwi	3,532	11,941	60,680
Otaki	River	Winstones	4,592	27,193	41,442
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	9,210
	Below Greenaway Road	Gary Holland Earthmoving	0	0	5,040
TOTALS			11,407	64,663	165,526

## 5 Wairarapa Operations [Mike Longworth]

### 5.1 Study of Private Stopbanks and Other Structures around Lake Wairarapa

#### 5.1.1 Background

Over July 2006 Lake Wairarapa reached a record level of 12.22m. There was a significant period of very high lake levels which caused a number of private stopbank failures resulting in considerable distress for the affected farmers. Councillors and Council staff visited a

number of the affected farmers during the flooding and in discussions with the farmers undertook to look at what, if any, assistance the Council could offer. This study presents an opportunity to formulate a consistent policy for handling the issue of stopbanks and other structures which are currently outside the responsibility of the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme. Anecdotally these stopbanks are of varying standards of both workmanship and level of protection provided, but they do contribute significantly to the productive capacity of the farms involved.

### 5.1.2 Proposed Investigation

All property owners on the margins of Lake Wairarapa will be contacted to ascertain what issues are important to them in terms of lake flooding. Those properties that have private stopbanks and culverts/floodgates draining to the lake will be visited and an assessment made of the structures. The assessment will include the existing structural condition, level of protection provided, what if any work and cost is required to meet an agreed service level and ongoing maintenance required.

Once the assessment phase of the study is complete, options for the ongoing involvement of the Regional Council with these private structures will be developed and reported to Council. These options may range from no involvement to incorporating them into the LWVD Scheme, or some intermediate level of support. The result of this work and the Council's response will then be presented to the landowners.

### 5.1.3 Proposed Timeframe

The study is proposed to be carried out in three stages:

- Stage 1 Information gathering and assessment of existing structures by the 27 April.
- Stage 2 Develop options for Council involvement with these private structures by the end of June and report to Council by August.
- Stage 3 Present to and consult with the landowners on the Council endorsed option for the ongoing involvement of the Council with private stopbanks and culverts/floodgates.

## 6.2 Wairarapa River Schemes

### 6.2.1 Annual Works Programmes

The annual works programmes for the northern Wairarapa rivers are now largely complete and for the LWVD scheme the annual works programme is approximately 60% complete with the expectation that it will be complete by the year end. The northern river hands have been assisting with work in the lower valley, and will continue to do so until the southern work is complete.

### 6.2.2 Flood Damage Repairs

The flood damage repairs are now approximately 70% completed. Of the major work;

- Shelton and Guscott is largely completed with only some channel alignment to complete.
- Repairs to slumping in the Pukio area are now largely completed.
- Repairs to the Hikinui sill have commenced and are expected to be completed by the middle of April 2007.
- The extension of the Reno mattresses at Oporua will commence on 8 March 2007.

### 6.2.3 Drainage Schemes

The maintenance spraying of the drains is now largely complete. The north branch of the Longbush drain has now had the deferred maintenance carried out after the resolution of some issues with the landowner.

The pumped drainage schemes of Te Hopai, Moonmoot and Papatahi have adopted rate increases for the coming year.

## 6.3 Kopuaranga River Enhancement Project

In late January two public meetings were held to present the details of the project to the Kopuaranga community. Both meetings were in favour of a scheme on the Kopuaranga but there were some reservations expressed about aspects of the proposed scheme. Following the meetings officers have discussed the contentious aspects with those people that had expressed concerns at the meetings and have further refined the classification spreadsheet.

A final public meeting will now be held on 14 March to gauge the community's support for a scheme over the full length of the river up to Hastwell. If the community supports the scheme then a scheme advisory committee will be elected at the meeting. The committee will need to be comprised of members who will represent each area of the river.

## 6.4 LWVD Scheme Review

The LWVD scheme review work is now close to complete with the final committee meeting on 1 March and then, subject to the committee meeting outcome, a series of public meetings to be held in the last week of March. Following the public meetings the new classification will be recommended to the Council.

## 6.5 LWVD Scheme Global Consent

Work has continued on the LWVD Scheme Global Consent to the point where the AEE is now in its final form and consultation with affected parties is very nearly completed. The



aim is to have it lodged as a non notified consent with the Council's Consents Department within the next four weeks.

## 7. Planning and development services [Sharyn Westlake]

The following table summarises the number of formal, written requests attended to during January and February 2007:

	Jan/Feb 2007	YTD
Requests brought forward	7	7
Additional requests received	25	25
Responses provided	21	21
Outstanding requests	11	11

How flood risk management is being provided throughout New Zealand is currently receiving considerable attention. This Council is involved in three areas, firstly with the MfE initiated review, secondly through input into the local government initiatives and, thirdly through our own review of the Regional Policy Statement. Item 2.1 of Part 2 of Councillor Information Bulletin Issue No 2007/05 gives a good outline of the current status of this work. Specifically the Flood Protection Department is participating in;

1. The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) lead Government review of current approaches to flood risk management in New Zealand is progressing. A report has been prepared as part of the review, looking at whether the existing legislative framework provides central and local government with the means to effectively carry out their flood risk management responsibilities. Our views on the issues raised in the report were submitted to MfE at the end of February 2007.
2. The 10-year review of the Regional Policy Statement is being lead by Environmental Policy Department. Flood Protection officers are providing on ongoing contribution to the review, to ensure that the Wellington region has sustainable river and catchment management that achieves the particular level of flood hazard protection desired by each distinct community of interest.
3. Input into the Local Government lead initiatives on reviewing flood risk management is being provided as requested.

Sharyn Westlake attended the 8 February 2007 meeting of the Tawa Community Board, along with Mike Oates of the Wellington City Council. The Tawa Community Board requested Officers attendance to provide an update on the proposed works for the realignment of the Porirua Stream and house relocation at Findlay Street. The Tawa Community Board is very keen for the project to proceed, however it is not on the current

Flood Protection works programme due to the delays to date. Staff are currently assessing how to best proceed from this point.

## **8. Investigations and Assets [John Eyles]**

### **8.1 Waiwhetu Stream floodplain management study**

Work is continuing on Phase 2 of the Waiwhetu Stream study. The WSAC, at its last meeting, endorsed the approach of using source control as one method of minimising flood risks. There was also an acknowledgment that it may be some time before any major structural works were completed and officers were requested to consider the option of raising the worst affected houses.

Work has commenced on the assessment of the house raising option and this will be reported along with the other Phase 2 Options in June 2007.

### **8.2 Asset management**

The Flood Protection asset registers have been thoroughly checked in preparation for the asset revaluation due to be completed by the end of this financial year. This involved cross checking the registers with various documents (including the annual field inspection sheets, work records and contract documents), and field checking assets where the information did not exist to verify that asset's existence. Any new assets created since the registers were developed in 2002 were also added. Now that the registers are complete we are busy collating the information required for the unit rate review, the next step in the revaluation process.

An initial meeting has also been held with a possible 'peer reviewer' to ensure that we are following the correct process in terms of our asset revaluation.

## **Land Management (Dave Cameron)**

### **1.1 Akura Conservation Centre**

Akura nursery is exhibiting good growth through the recent period of hot settled weather. The nursery thrives during periods of warm weather, particularly when there is little or no wind. Irrigation and rust spraying have been part of regular activities to ensure that growth rates are maximised through the summer and early autumn months. Leaf fall at the end of March indicates that the growing season has more or less ceased.

Rainfall at Akura for January and February has totalled 44mm, against an historical average for those two months of 120mm. This represents 37% of normal rainfall. The irrigator has been used on a daily basis since the 11<sup>th</sup> January.

The advertising campaign to appoint a new Nursery Officer has resulted in 11 applications. A short list will be compiled and it is hopeful that the new appointee will begin duties in late April. This will allow a month of transition with the incumbent.

### **1.2 Farm Environment Awards**

The second round of judging for this competition has been completed. Six properties were selected as potential finalists and have been rejudged by a new group of judges. Results of the competition will be announced at the Awards ceremony to be held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2007.

Discussions have been held with the organisers of the Wairarapa Farm Business of the Year in order to ensure that the two competitions can meaningfully co-exist. For this year the two competitions will continue as planned with the field days to be held two weeks apart at the beginning of May.

### **1.3 Catchment Scheme Advisory Meetings**

A round of Catchment Scheme Advisory meetings will be held through March and April. Three of the six Schemes have increased their expenditure in the current financial year as a result of storm damage in July 2005. Advisory Committees in each instance have approved the increases in expenditure.

A ten year review of the Homewood Catchment Scheme will be put before a general meeting of the ratepayers. This Scheme has been operating since 1974.

### **1.4 Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Meetings**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests have recently concluded a road show of fourteen towns and cities throughout the country seeking feedback on their discussion document entitled Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change.

The Masterton meeting included a meeting with local government representatives and a separate public meeting. The first meeting reiterated much of what is contained in the Local Government NZ submission on the document. The key points are:

- ensure that the sector is clearly recognised as a partner/co-regulator, in the delivery of climate change policy and the proposed Plan of Action
- seek on-going close collaboration between central government agencies and their Ministers with those parts of the local government sector with a direct stake in delivering agreed policy, or whose work is affected by a policy options suggested
- ensure that the sector's views and interests are integrated with the final preferred policy options and resulting Plan of Action
- ensure that the expectations of local government regarding community-driven priorities and decision-making processes are understood by central government and any local government contribution to achieving national policy is well supported nationally
- any additional support needed to enable that local contribution to be made effectively

The public meeting was very well attended, especially by those with forestry interests. There has been national co-ordination of forest owner attendance at these meetings led by the Kyoto Forests Association and their spokesperson Roger Dickie. There was also a very good attendance of farmers.

There is widespread condemnation of many of the policy options contained in the discussion document. At the core of the argument is the nationalisation of the carbon credits of pre 1990 forests (non-Kyoto forests), the confiscation of carbon credits from post 1990 forests (Kyoto forests), and the charge against land owners of those non Kyoto forests should they change to a non forestry use.

The meeting unanimously rejected the nationalisation of carbon credits for non Kyoto forests and the confiscation of credits associated with Kyoto forests.

## **Integrated Catchment Management (Ian Gunn)**

### **1.1 Lake Wairarapa Regional Park Project**

Investigations and research continue. Wildlands NZ are completing a vegetation survey, primarily of the eastern lakeshore. A preliminary discussion on the findings is planned in late March. Interestingly the "rare native turfs" found on the eastern lakeshore appear to have adapted "to thrive" in this hostile environment. Contact has been made with the two local iwi about co-governing the regional park. Such a concept has been enthusiastically received by both iwi.

### **1.2 Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme Rating Review**

A meeting of the Advisory committee late in February endorsed the proposed rating classification with some minor amendments. These adjustments are being made. They include collecting a dwelling charge on dwellings situated on the Cape Palliser road. The ability to travel into the Wairarapa Valley is significantly improved by the "works" of the scheme. Minor adjustments have been made to the dredging layer with there just being one class rather than two, the diversion layer in the vicinity of the Tauherenikau River delta and on the flood protection layer specifically to do with the floodways. Staff will meet with Simpson and Grierson shortly to clarify the necessity to develop classes. The current proposal is to use a points system which then creates a specific charge for each property dependant on the points incurred. If classes are required then the average charge for the specific classes will be developed. A series of meetings is proposed after Easter to gain the endorsement of the ratepayers for the new rating classification.