



Report 09.451
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Committee Catchment Management
Author David Cameron, Manager, Land Management

Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee - meeting updates

1. Purpose

To provide a summary of two Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee meetings held on 8 June and 6 August 2009.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee (WHCAC) met on 8 June and 6 August 2009 to consider matters relating to an expression of interest in nursery land at Homebush, an update on the Afforestation Grant Scheme and outcomes of the LTCCP hearings process, an update on 2009/10 funding discussions with the AHB, discussions on the draft supercatchment paper for the eastern catchments of the Wairarapa and draft guidelines for stock access to waterways.

Minutes from the meetings are attached.

4. Comment

Key outcomes from the 8 June meeting were:

- David Cameron presented the details of an Expression of Interest to Masterton District Council on the use of the Masterton waste water site at Homebush for a new poplar and willow pole nursery. Discussions centred on how much land was needed with one member suggesting that consolidation of all nurseries take place at Homebush, enabling the sale of Akura and Mangapakeha. This will be considered as part of future discussions with Masterton District Council.
- Wayne O'Donnell reported that Catchment Management had been very successful through the LTCCP submissions process as all the new

activities had remained in the budget unchanged. Additionally, the Stage II Akura development has been brought forward to 2009/10 with an additional \$15k of rates to meet the interest payments of a development loan.

- Discussions took place on the \$80k reduction in GW funding for AHB programmes. Members were very concerned that this would result in a reduction in operations within GW amounting to \$700k. Wayne undertook to find out what changes, if any, had been made to the initial programme for 2009/10.
- Ian Gunn tabled the draft supercatchment discussion paper, mainly for information but also to get initial reaction to the concept and to seek ongoing discussion opportunities with the Committee as the concept is developed. Members were very keen to be involved in the policy development stages and they noted the following points;
 - Community representation must be achieved
 - Economic prosperity is paramount
 - Development protection of infrastructure is necessary
 - Relationship of soil and water is vital
 - Need to engage with the District Councils
 - Land use and the relationship with erosion prone land needs to be demonstrated

Key outcomes from the 6 August meeting were:

- Melissa Jesson, GW Environment Policy presented draft guidelines on stock access to waterways. The Committee was against any public comment on regulations until the new Freshwater Plan has been drafted. In the interim, they strongly supported the guidelines with a focus on managing waterways without fencing. The following resolution was added that the Committee “supported the preparation of a set of guidelines to improve water quality through best practise farming methods”.
- Wayne O’Donnell indicated that the AHB had confirmed that \$520k was required from GW for the 2009/10 regional share. The \$80k reduction had not resulted in any operations being cancelled. However, there were a number of trend monitors that had either been cancelled or deferred. The overall budget for 2009/10 was not expected to be significantly different from the previous year.

5. Communication

Two communication issues were identified;

- A newspaper article reporting the outcome of the LTCCP with particular reference to programmes affecting the Wairarapa hill country.

- The September edition of 'Our Region' is to feature some of the work of the Land Management department.
- After the discussion around the bovine Tb programme for 2009/10 and the increasing Residual Trap Catch rates in parts of the region, GW will prepare a media release reminding landowners that GW staff can provide advice to landowners on individual or community control options following the withdrawal of Tb vector control. The release will spell out the many negative effects of the possum population building up again, particularly if bovine Tb somehow found its way back into the population. A member of WHCAC who has been affected by bovine TB will be quoted encouraging landowners to take action if possum numbers increase again.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

David Cameron
Manager, Land Management

Wayne O'Donnell
Divisional Manager, Catchment Management

Attachment 1 – WHCAC Minutes 8 June 2009
Attachment 2 – WHCAC Minutes 6 August 2009