

**Flood Protection
Strategy and Assets
Manager : Brendan Paul**

Report for Period Ending 26 May 2000

1. Waikanae River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]

1.1 Flood Damage Work (State Highway 1 to Maple Lane)

The final tidy up works, identified at the Practical Completion inspection, have now been completed by the contractor, all that remains is the landscape planting. This planting is currently underway and due for completion by 30 June 2000. The project is now forecast to be completed \$76,000 under budget and to programme.

1.2 Waikanae – Friends of the River

The 'Friends of the River' have completed their Terms of Reference (TOR) defining the overall vision of the group. A Memorandum of Understanding has also been developed that defines the specific relationship between the WRC and the Friends. This document was required because the overall TOR went beyond the specific relationship required by the Flood Protection Group. While not wanting to restrict the group's vision for the Waikanae River, the TOR are needed to keep separate the Friends' wider vision from the Council's specific requirements.

The two documents are now being reviewed, before being reported to Landcare.

2. Otaki River Floodplain Management Plan [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Flood Damage Works

Final top-soiling and grassing of the Gas Crossing and Mangahanene sites is complete. The in-channel works on the Traceys and Stresscrete repair works are complete and all that remains to be done is threading the wire rope through the rail iron and willow planting. The works are programmed to be complete by the end of June 2000. This will complete all the Capital Improvement works on the Otaki River, being undertaken as part of the October 1998 Flood Damage Repairs.

2.2 Chrystalls Stopbank Upgrade [Malcolm Abernethy]

The principal construction works are now finished, with all fencing and grass seeding completed in the last period. The contractor has achieved a good grass strike and the works are looking well established.

Works that remain are the installation of a gangway and valve on the new culvert in E N Ramsbottom's property and planting shelter trees along the Williams' boundary. We are currently seeking the Williams' permission to plant a shelter using native species rather than pines. There is a \$3,000 increase in price for the native plants but they will provide a more aesthetic backdrop to the river. The additional costs will be funded from the budget for environmental enhancement, a combined budget set aside from the Chrystalls and Flood Damage projects. The aim was to provide one sizeable enhancement project, rather than a number of separate token efforts.

The valuer has completed "after construction" valuations for both the Williams and Ramsbottom properties. The surveyor has been instructed to prepare deposited plans for subdivision and purchase of the necessary land. Once the plans are complete we will conclude purchase and compensation negotiations with the landowners.

2.3 Environmental Enhancement

The Arbor Day planting event at Chrystalls Lagoon on 31 May 2000 attracted a good turnout from the local community, Friends of the River, three school groups and Councillors. Iwi were unable to attend due to a tangi. A landscape gardener has been commissioned to check plantings following the event and to complete any further planting. The planting was commissioned as part of the environmental enhancement project, noted above for the Chrystalls planting.

2.4 Otaki – Friends of the River

As for Waikanae, the Terms of Reference, for the 'Friends of the River' group are complete and are being reviewed, before reporting to Council.

2.5 Benchmark Survey

The sighting point benchmark checks on the Otaki River are complete. A total of 42 (out of 180) survey marks were not found during the walkover survey. A surveyor was commissioned to locate the missing benchmarks by survey, and to re-establish new ones if they cannot be found. New permanent marker posts are also being constructed at each benchmark to try and minimise future damage. A number of other benchmarks are being moved to more secure locations, again to reduce future damage to them. The work is being done in preparation for the full cross-section survey in the 2000/01 financial year.

3. Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (HRFMP) [Daya Atapattu]

3.1 Design Standard Implementation

The WRC's proposed 10 year 2000-2010 LTFS provides \$17 million for implementing the Hutt River Design Standard upgrade works. Issue 3 of "Elements" contained details of this option and the Advisory Committee preference for the "\$4 million" capital spend. The Advisory Committee members, and about 700 on the HRFMP mailing list, received further detailed information on the implementation options; their attention was drawn to the submission process noted in Elements.

Officers also explained the LTFS flood protection provisions at the “non-structural measures” public meetings in Belmont and Birchville. Residents at these meetings indicated that they preferred the structural works to be done earlier than currently programmed. They were encouraged to record their opinion through formal submissions. Implementation works will start in the 2000/01 financial year subject to WRC acceptance of the work plan.

3.2 Non-structural Measures

The non-structural measures are currently being revised to incorporate the Advisory Committee Workshop outcomes. Officers explained the proposed measures at public meetings held in Belmont and Birchville; the measures were generally acceptable to those present. WRC and City Council officers will jointly visit the Belmont, Birchville and Gemstone local areas, to consider the effects of the proposed measures. Officers have requested legal advice on the impact and legality of several land use restrictions. The Advisory Committee, at its meeting on 29 June 2000, will receive recommendations for non-structural measures appropriate to the Hutt Valley.

The programme for including land use controls in the relevant District Plans is June 2003. The public will have further opportunities to make submissions on non-structural measures in:

- April/May 2001 during Floodplain Management Plan consultation, and
- 2002/03 financial year during any recommended District Plan changes consultation.

3.3 Environmental Strategy

The draft Environmental Strategy for the Hutt River and its corridor was completed by the end of April 2000, and is now under detailed review. The Advisory Committee, at its 25 May meeting, received a detailed presentation on the proposed strategy. Alison Newell is keen to finalise the strategy by mid June, before she leaves for work with the United Nations in East Timor. The proposed 10 year LTFS provides \$1.86 million for Hutt River Environmental Strategy implementation.

3.4 Community Connection

The non-structural options public information programme is well underway. The tasks completed include:

- “Living with the River” Newsletter No.5
- Newspaper inserts in the Hutt News and Upper Hutt Leader
- Public meetings in Belmont and Birchville
- per Hutt City Councillors meeting

Other non-structural measures meetings planned are:

- Hutt City Councillors 13 June 2000
- Alicetown public meeting 11 July 2000

4. **Asset Management Plans [Malcolm Abernethy]**

The Consultant review of the Asset Management Base Plan and the Hutt River Asset Management Plan is nearing completion with final “polishing” work underway. Work on the Data Management System is continuing.

The Base Plan will be submitted to Audit New Zealand for comment and approval. The Hutt River Specific Plan, which is the template for the four remaining river plans (Waikanae, Otaki and Wainuiomata Rivers, and the Porirua Stream) is progressing well.

5. **Wainuiomata Flood Hazard Assessment [Phillip Purves]**

The hydraulic and channel management investigations for the Wainuiomata Flood Hazard Assessment are complete and flood extents and erosion risk areas have been mapped. The combined flood and erosion risk areas will define a flood hazard corridor. The Hutt City Council will advise on development and apply development controls, in relation to the identified hazards. The Flood Protection Group expects to assist the Hutt City Council to develop appropriate controls for the flood hazard area, as part of the 2000/01 Wainuiomata Ongoing Management project.

6. **Planning and Development Services [Phillip Purves]**

Written requests for information or advice attended to during April 2000:

	<u>April</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Requests brought forward	19	14
Additional requests received	12	191
Responses provided	10	184
Outstanding requests	21	21

The developer of the proposed ProMall regional shopping centre indicated a desire to resolve the Regional Council appeal on the standard of flood protection that the Upper Hutt City Council has required for the development. However, at a meeting on 5 May 2000 both the developer and the UHCC have stated that they will apply only the 100 year flood protection building level standard, as UHCC has previously required.

The issue is now one of a philosophical difference between the WRC and the UHCC as to what constitutes “the community” that is to be protected through the Hutt Floodplain Management Plan process. UHCC argue that the ProMall development is simply a commercial venture, whereas the WRC believe that the ProMall development will be a key community facility, with considerable community reliance. UHCC also believe they are constrained by the provisions of their proposed district plan. WRC believes the HRFMP 2300 cumec design standard should apply.

It is intended to continue discussions with UHCC and the developer, with the intention of finding a solution that will avoid the need for an Environment Court decision on the issue.

7. **Manager's Comment**

Our “planning” capacity will be considerably reduced with Alison Newell taking up a position with the United Nations from mid June, and Alistair Cross taking 14 weeks leave and leave without pay from early August. It is likely that Alison’s resignation will reluctantly be accepted – she has completed tremendous work over the last 18 months, particularly her work on the Hutt River Environmental Strategy. We will miss her skills, enthusiasm and good company. Recruitment to the vacant Engineering/Technical Officer position has commenced.

Construction work is drawing to a close with the onset of inclement weather and the imminent end to the financial year. Most major projects are in hand for completion as programmed. Investigation projects are generally on target.

BRENDAN PAUL
Manager, Flood Protection (Strategy and Assets)

**Flood Protection
Operations
Manager : Geoff Dick
Report for Period Ending 26 May 2000**

Flood Protection Operations and Maintenance [Geoff Dick]

1. **Hutt River**

Flood Damage Repairs

The planned repair work for the 1999/00 financial year at Avalon Berms is progressing well. The site has been cross-bladed and six rail iron and wire rope debris fences constructed. Willow planting will commence shortly. Supply of rip-rap for the rock heads on the end of the fences was programmed for delivery this year but has been affected by problems at the quarry. Funding for this has been re-budgeted into next financial year.

The supply of rock rip-rap for the proposed works at Owen Street is also still affected by delivery problems. This work has been re-budgeted and will now be completed in the 2000/01 financial year.

The remainder of the flood damage repairs on the Hutt River are complete.

Maintenance Work

Black Creek stopbank repairs are now complete with topsoiling and grass seeding carried out during the month. A tree removal programme on the Totara Park stopbank was also completed, with a high level of public contact involved. Low or damaged areas on the river road berms were topsoiled and seeded.

An inspection of the Marsden bend rockline revealed that some areas had slumped leaving it vulnerable to further damage. Maintenance rock was used to carry out repairs.

A contractor was engaged to carry out Old Man's Beard control along the length of the Hutt River. It is generally found that six weeks work is required annually to maintain control and deal with fresh outbreaks.

Staff replenished the stock of filled sandbags. Approximately 300 filled bags are kept on pallets ready for immediate use but they have a limited shelf life and need to be regularly replaced. Any dampness in the sand fill causes the bags to rot within a year.

Native planting was completed at the Nash Street erosion site to compliment the recent willow planting. Work has also started on the tidying of the former Firths site at Melling.

2. **Water Courses (Wellington)**

The annual clearing runs in the Waiwhetu Stream and Hulls Creek commenced during the month.

The armco culvert under State Highway 1 from the Seton Nossiter detention dam was inspected and loose fixings grouted in place.

Extensive repairs are being carried out to the Korokoro Stream debris arrester. A recent review indicated that the structure could potentially fail under large flood conditions. This driven rail iron structure captures debris during flood events and prevents it entering the culvert system under the Cornish Street industrial area where debris could cause a blockage.

3. **Kapiti Rivers**

Kapiti staff have been very busy during the period concentrating on completing all in-channel works prior to 31 May (commencement of trout-spawning period).

Work also included the completion of all but one flood damage repair downstream of State Highway 1 bridge, and capital improvement construction works prior to 31 May to allow for associated willow planting to be completed during June.

Otaki River

Flood Damage (Opex): At Upper Taylors, 200 tonnes of rock was used to top-up both the toe rock and Reichmuth barbs along the right bank. At Chrystalls Bend, three debris fences were installed behind the rock wall right bank, awaiting arrival of the wire cable to complete. (This repair work was initially forecast not to proceed this year, but due to an unexpected increase in gravel extraction income, the work will now be completed by the end of June.)

Flood Damage (Capex): At Traceys on the left bank, all 18 debris fences have now been installed. The upstream timber pole “warning” fence has been installed awaiting fixture of the timbers. Below the Gas Crossing on the left bank, the stopbank was sown with grass and fertiliser.

At Mangahanene on the right bank, the toe rock lining was extended a further 120 metres. The undulating stopbank crest was “levelled out” over 80 metres. The berm was reinstated with 8,000 cubic metres of river gravels and dressed with silts ready for grassing. Two debris fences were installed to protect the downstream end of the rock wall lining.

Two additional rail iron and wire cable debris fences were installed along the right bank at the Upper Rahui Capex project. Three additional fences were installed at Upper Hughes.

Further rail iron was received and cut into lengths for both the capital improvement and operational maintenance works.

A secondary braid adjacent to the left bank of Barretts fascine works was further developed following the extraction of gravels for the Chrystalls Stopbank Construction capex project.

3.5 kilometres of the left bank access road along the stopbank between State Highway 1 and the Katihiku Trust lands boundary was metalled and rolled.

Gravel extraction at Upper Rahui continued and, at the end of March, Winstone Aggregates had extracted 79,694 cubic metres of the proposed 120,000 cubic metres.

Waikanae River

There was a marked decrease in the operational maintenance work required this year in the Waikanae River due to the State Highway to Maple Lane Capex project works.

A 140 metre long diversion/cross blade channel was installed on the right bank, with further willow tethering work along the left bank adjacent to the Nimmo Ave East access.

Work commenced on the widening and reshaping of the right bank berm adjacent to Jim Cooke Park, with the excess topsoil utilised at repair works associated with right bank protection works upstream of the state highway for KCDC.

Some Otaki-sourced boulder protection works were carried out at eroded bank edges at the Gas Crossing left bank (80 cubic metres) and lower El Rancho right bank (30 cubic metres).

Extensive willow layering work was carried out along the left bank between Jim Cooke Park and Greenaway Road. Additional willow tethering was completed on the left bank adjacent to Lower El Rancho. The cape pond weed was removed from the ponds at Pukekawa Reserve.

4. Kapiti Water Courses

Excessive aquatic and noxious weed growth was machine-cleared from Kapiti watercourses including the Rangiuru Drain (northern only), Ngatoko Drain, Pukenu Stream, Walkers Drain, Powles Drain (part only) and Katihiku Drain (part only).

5. **Work for Others**

Mabey Road staff completed the construction of a river level recorder tower and associated access platform on the Waikanae River above the KCDC water treatment plant. This work was carried out for the Regional Council's hydrology section.

6. **Resource Consents**

Opus International Consultants Ltd are continuing work on a long term consent application for the Wainuiomata River. A river walkover was held with consent management staff in order to view the type of works already in place and to gain an appreciation of likely future work. We plan to lodge the application by 30 June 2000.

The Waitohu Stream long term consent application is basically on track for lodging by 30 June 2000, although some directional decisions will be required once the background reports are to hand. Work is progressing on a baseline environmental study and an iwi report. A review of our stream management approach is also in progress.

7. **Reach Mower Contract**

Tenders were recently advertised for the reach mowing of stopbank and berm areas. Three tenders were received, and these are currently being assessed in relation to our current in house operating costs.

The existing tractor and reach mower unit operated by the Mabey Road depot is due for replacement, and the high capital cost of replacing this unit prompted the question of whether it may be more economic to fully contract out this operation.

8. **Gravel Extraction**

Gravel extraction figures for the year to 30 April 2000 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	Period Year 1999/2000 (cubic metres)		Year 1998/1999 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	3,185	33,736	42,630
	River		Nil	Nil	2,967
Otaki	River	Winstones	Nil	27,622	15,854
	Upper Rahui	Winstones	4,290	34,350	20,454
	Lower Hughes For Chrystalls Stopbank	G Holland	43,870	43,870	Nil
Waikanae	River	Winstones	Nil	Nil	Nil
TOTALS			51,345	139,578	81,905

General Manager's Visit

Jeff Evans and I recently hosted Howard Stone for an afternoon 'inspection tour' of flood protection operational works on the Hutt River. A number of sites were visited, including Block Road, Bridge Road, and Avalon erosion where staff were busily constructing debris fences. The visit was an ideal opportunity for staff to 'chew the fat' with the General Manager, and for Howard to actually see some of the works he only reads about in reports.

9. **Acting Manager "Finishes Act"**

By now Geoff Dick will be 'back in the saddle' as Manager, Operations, after his period of extended leave. It will be good to have him back, and to return some of the paperwork and numerous meetings to his tender care. The last quarter has been a busy time. Numerous jobs are in the final stages of completion as the financial year wends its way to a close. The help and co-operation of fellow Flood Protection and Landcare support staff over the past two months while Geoff has been away, has made my acting role an easier one, and has been much appreciated.

GEOFF DICK
Manager, Flood Protection (Operations)

Regional Parks (Strategy & Marketing)

Manager : Susan Edwards

Report for Period Ending 26 May 2000

1. Manager's Comments (Susan Edwards)

Motorised Recreation Users Meeting

Rosemarie Thomas and I attended a motorised recreation users meeting in Wainuiomata on 24 May. Approximately 100 people were present. Since Hutt City closed the Eastern Hutt fire breaks about a year ago to motorised recreation, a subcommittee representing motorised recreational users has been working with Hutt City to find an alternative location for their activities. However, they have become frustrated that no acceptable site has been found.

Motorised recreation is a growing recreational activity. It is difficult to find sites where such activity will not cause environmental damage or noise disturbance to people living nearby.

The Regional Council permits motorised recreation in the Akatarawa Forest. This area is the only publicly owned land in the lower North Island available for motorised recreation and is well used. At the meeting, there were a number of positive comments about the Regional Council and the relationship that has developed with the Akatarawa Recreation Action Committee (ARAC) over the last two and a half years.

The core issue for the people at the Wainuiomata meeting was the need for similar access in the Lower Hutt or Wainuiomata areas. The feeling of those attending the meeting was that the Eastern Hutt firebreaks should be reopened (possibly subject to controls on hours of use and access points) and that a farm on the Wainuiomata Coast Road should be given approval to run motorised recreation events.

Hutt Valley Visitor Guide

Councillor Macaskill, Graham Laws and I attended the launch of the Hutt Valley Visitor Guide. The publication is a joint project between the Upper Hutt and Hutt City Councils. We supported the publication by extensively advertising the parks and forests in it. It is an excellent publication, which will be distributed widely.

2. **Resource Management and Planning Issues (Anne Manley, Graham Laws & Ross Jackson)**

State Highway 1 - MacKays Crossing

Transit New Zealand and its consultants have further refined the design for the proposed overbridge at Mackays Crossing. The proposal will leave the existing Park entrance intact. However, the new road will extend into the Park for a short distance north of the MacKays entrance. Approximately three hectares of land and all the trees along the road in this area will be affected. We are pleased with the final proposal as the impact is far less than under earlier proposals.

Community Tree Planting Project - Battle Hill Farm Forest Park

A working group, consisting of the Battle Hill Ranger, Ross Jackson, Porirua City Council Parks staff, and local residents Tony Jackman and Sam Rei, has met three times to discuss the community tree planting proposal for the Park. There are a number of details to work through prior to establishing a planting plan and recommendations for ongoing management of the community planting scheme. Valuable assistance and technical advice is being provided by Roger Wood, of the Wairarapa Division, who has extensive experience in planting trees on working farms. Half the millennium grant of \$3,000 for the community planting project was used for planting on Arbor Day (see below). The remainder will be used for trees around the homestead area.

Arbor Day Events

This year Regional Parks undertook an unprecedented number of Arbor Day projects; in total six planting projects were completed. The projects involved a tremendous amount of work by both the Operations and Strategy & Marketing teams. The projects were excellent Community Connections opportunities with school children and their parents, iwi and community groups being involved. Several Councillors attended each event, with many giving speeches and running the events on the day. We wish to extend our thanks for your support and for giving up your time attending and contributing to the activities. The specific Arbor Day events were:

Re-vegetation - Otaki River

This project was undertaken on 31 May by Flood Protection with the assistance of Regional Parks. It involved the re-vegetation of part of the Otaki River bank in association with Otaki, Waitohu and St Peters Chanel Schools.

Wetland Planting - Queen Elizabeth Park

Raumati South School children planted grasses in one of the wetlands at Queen Elizabeth Park. The same children, assisted by Councillor Turver, Ross Jackson and the Park Ranger Nola Urquhart, potted up the plants earlier in the year to celebrate World Wetlands Day. The School wants an ongoing role in re-establishing wetlands and undertaking re-vegetation on the Park.

Riparian Planting - Battle Hill Farm Forest Park

Children from Windley and Pauatahanui Schools undertook riparian planting at Battle Hill on 2 June for Arbor Day. This is an extension to the planting undertaken for last year's Arbor Day. The Honourable Sandra Lee, Minister of Conservation and Local Government attended the celebrations. The planting could be the start of a proposed community project jointly undertaken with Porirua City Council and Ngati Toa representatives.

Re-vegetation - Wainuiomata Recreation Area

Wainuiomata school children were to undertake the re-vegetation of an area in the Wainuiomata Recreation Area on 2 June. However, torrential rain and hail postponed the event. Hopefully it will proceed on the afternoon of 9 June. The area has been a trouble spot for vehicle "donuts" on the grass.

Re-vegetation - Cannons Creek, Belmont Regional Park

Chris Wootton, Belmont Regional Park Ranger, has been working with the Cannons Creek Valley Protection Group identifying re-vegetation and pest control projects for the Group to undertake as a result of their Annual Plan submission last year. They are commencing their work with an Arbor Day planting project undertaken jointly with the Regional Council and Porirua City Council. The project involved planting a Kowhai Grove and re-vegetating part of the Cannons Creek Lakes Reserve.

Millennium Totara Grove Planting - Te Marua, Kaitoke Regional Park

This is the Council's major Arbor Day project on 10 June, involving planting a Millennium Totara Grove to celebrate the millennium, Arbor Day and the twenty-year anniversary of the Regional Council. A tree will be planted for every Regional Councillor since the inception of the Council. It is also an opportunity for ex-Councillors to meet again and re-new old acquaintances while they plant their tree. Plateau School children and members from the Botanical Society and Forest & Bird Protection Society will be involved in the planting. Councillors will be welcomed to the site by representatives from the Wellington Tenth Trust.

Review of Concessions Policy & Charges

We have recently contracted Tourism Resource Consultants (TRC) to complete a review of the Council's Policy for Commercial Recreation & Related Services on Regional Council Lands ("Concessions Policy") and Charges for Services in Parks and Forests.

It is intended that at the end of the review, we will have a sound policy document to govern the processing and administration of concessions and an updated schedule of charges. (This will involve transferring relevant parts of the current policy to the new document.) The review relates to operational matters such as criteria for assessing concession applications, reducing Council risk from concessions, clarifying our legal obligations and the level and appropriateness of charges for services. This review will *not* identify future opportunities for concessions in Council Parks and Forests. Such opportunities will be addressed during the next financial year.

TRC has been chosen to undertake this review because of their experience and expertise in dealing with concessions. TRC has been involved in negotiating commercial concessions, event management and has had extensive input into the concessions and outdoor recreation policies of other public agencies. TRC has a sound understanding of the practical realities of managing commercial recreation on public land. During the review Ross Corbett and Susan Ladd of TRC will be working with Council staff and will seek comments from other “affected parties” (such as current concessionaires and Councillors) before formulating the policy.

TRC has been contracted to complete the review by the end of the financial year, when a draft policy and schedule of charges will be presented to the Landcare Committee for approval.

Green Pavlova Seminar

Ross Jackson, Graham Laws, and Anne Manley attended the annual Green Pavlova Seminar, organised by the New Zealand Recreation Association, on 24 – 26 May. Highlights of the Seminar included presentations on emerging employment issues, particularly volunteering partnerships in parks and open space management, and biodiversity (looking at what we can and should do). Other issues included the “best value” approach to parks and open space management; asset management, and a legislative overview of the Reserves and Resource Management Acts.

On Day 2, Bruce Andrell made an interesting and well-received presentation on the conflicts between different types of recreational users of Parks and Forests, and ways that these conflicts can be managed.

SUSAN EDWARDS
Manager, Regional Parks (Strategy & Marketing)

Regional Parks (Operations) Department

Manager: Bruce Andrell

Report for Period Ending 26 May 2000

1. Manager's Comments

Occupational Safety and Health Workshop

All Regional Parks Operations staff attended a two-day workshop on work place safety. All staff now have a common understanding on their responsibilities.

Resignation : Mark Watt

Mark Watt resigned as Assistant Ranger. The position will be left vacant until the restructuring is completed.

2. Battle Hill Farm Forest Park (John Bissell)

The Battle Hill Eventing Management Committee has completed building a new equipment storage shed. The shed is sited in the Dell car park and will act as a convenient focal point for event organisers and participants alike. Good design ensures the building fits in well with the surrounding farm environment.

3. Belmont Regional Park (Chris Wootton)

Cannons Creek (Porirua)

This year's Arbor Day celebrations are to be held at the Cannons Creek Lakes Reserve. Preparation is well underway, with site meetings held with Porirua City Council and Cannons Creek residents. Porirua City Council has organised for the site to be prepared for planting.

Dry Creek (Haywards)

We met with ACTS management to discuss future management of the Dry Creek area and the renewal of ACTS lease of the valley floor. ACTS is a Christian based training organisation, providing training to young disadvantaged youth in the Hutt Valley. ACTS occupy the buildings at the Dry Creek entrance and are keen to renew their lease.

Korokoro Valley (Lower Hutt)

A possum control contract is underway in the Korokoro Valley forest. Trapping and poisoning commenced in late May. Biosecurity staff are carrying out the pre and post operational monitoring. This is the first ground based contract to be let in the Regional Parks. The Korokoro Valley is the largest native forest remnant within Belmont Regional Park and is suffering from heavy possum browse. It is a fairly difficult area to control possums, containing rugged country and is close to urban areas of Maungaraki and Korokoro.

Mountain Bike Rider Injured

The Life Flight Trust rescue helicopter airlifted an injured mountain bike rider from the Korokoro Valley, on Sunday 21 May. The 32 year old male from Maoribank, Upper Hutt, broke his neck in a fall from his bicycle. This is the first recorded serious injury in this part of the park. The Korokoro Valley contains a popular multi-use track that is well used by mountain bikers, especially during weekends.

4. East Harbour Regional Park (Chris Wootton)

The Wainuiomata Bridge to the Baring Head block has been closed to users. An engineering report has confirmed the deck and handrails require renewing to bring the bridge up to a safe standard. The bridge closure affects the users who share the right of way access to Baring Head. The public are not permitted across the right of way. Chris is being pro-active to resolve the issue by commissioning the report and facilitating a meeting with the affected parties. The bridge was constructed in 1935 to service the Baring Head Light.

5. Kaitoke Regional Park (Matt Ballantine)

New Interpretation Signs for Millennium Totara Grove

The information kiosk at Te Marua has been moved to the Millennium Totara Grove site. The kiosk has new interpretation signage, informing visitors about the millennium site and Kaitoke Regional Park. The interpretation will help reduce confusion over the two park entry points (Te Marua and Waterworks Road).

Tenths Trust Visit Park

Matt met with the Wellington Tenths Trust to forge closer links between the park and Iwi. Trust members were given a tour of the park and discussed issues such as cultural harvesting, noxious animal control, environmental projects and park concept plans. Cultural harvesting was one topic that was identified as requiring policy development, to improve management of cultural resources within the park. Cultural harvesting may, for example, be the taking of flax for weaving purposes, or the use of foliage for medicinal purposes.

Benge Creek Bridge Replaced

Regional Parks staff installed the new Benge Creek Bridge this month. A falling tree destroyed the old bridge. The new bridge was constructed at the Upper Hutt depot and moved on site using a crane.

6. Queen Elizabeth Park (Nola Urquhart)

Boneseed Control Programme

Nola has instigated a control programme for the plant Boneseed, a particularly aggressive invader of coastal areas. Boneseed has the ability to colonise large coastal areas by producing masses of seed and smothering native vegetation. Nola has started informing locals about the potential for this plant to become a serious problem for the coastal areas of Queen Elizabeth Park.

Track Work Completed Inland and Coastal Tracks

The annual track maintenance program has been completed. The work repaired ruts and eroding sections of the track surface. We have received a mixed response from park users, ranging from compliments to concern about changing from grass to a gravel surface.

New Park Newsletter

A park newsletter has been produced to inform locals, community groups and park users about work in the park and up coming events. This will be distributed to local residents and handed out to park users by the Rangers (see attachment).

7. Wainuiomata Water Collection Area (Scott Farrell)

Orongorongo Boundary Signposted

Scott has improved the signposting of the Orongorongo catchment boundary. This helps to inform people travelling up-river from Department of Conservation land that the area is a closed catchment. Historically, trampers and hunters have travelled up the river unaware that they are entering a closed catchment.

Arbor Day Preparation

This year will see the first Arbor Day celebration in the Wainuiomata Recreation Area. Wainuiomata School will provide two classes of children for the occasion. The event was postponed to Friday, 9 June, due to bad weather.

8. **Forest Lands (Dean Hearfield)**

New Signs for Possum Control Work

Dean has been working with John Rodgers, of the Biosecurity Department, to develop improved signage for possum control work at Tunnel Gully. The new signs help inform people of the types of poisons and traps being used in the recreation area.

9. **Parks Maintenance Management (Dean Munn)**

Maintenance teams have been involved in Arbor Day site preparation, particularly at the Millennium Totara Grove location. Work includes installing a new information shelter, bollards and car parking.

The track maintenance team has been working on the Rimutaka Incline Walkway water tables and culvert clearance.

Construction team members have carried out structure monitoring during the period.

10. **Visitor Activities**

See attached visitor data schedule.

BRUCE ANDRELL
Manager, Regional Parks Operations

Natural Forestry Department
Manager : Geoff Cameron
Report for Period Ending 26 May 2000

1. Forest Operations (Robin Blake/Geoff Cameron)

Pest Plant Control

The Old Mans Beard control programme in the Bridge Road, Upper Hutt area continued. This operation is important because it is visible from a number of public roads, it is close to the Cannons Point walkway, and we, as responsible land managers, must be seen to be taking a thorough, long-term approach to a difficult environmental problem.

Animal Pest Control

The contract for possum control in part of Belmont Regional Park has been let. The cost of the land-based control contract is more than three times the cost of aerial poisoning. But as stated in my last report, aerial poison application is not appropriate in this case.

The project for possum control in the Akatarawa Saddle and Kaitoke Regional Park is progressing. The bait has been ordered, and a contract organised with the helicopter company which is the "preferred supplier" of this service to the Regional Council.

We have noticed an increase in the number of people who wish to take possums for their fur, which is blended with wool to produce a soft, lightweight fabric. The best fur is from a strip along the back from the neck to tail. The requirements of this trade mean that the fur plucking is best done when the animal is still warm, and so puts a premium on sites with good access. I'm reluctant to encourage this practice on Regional Council lands because it leads to trap and poison shyness, and once again encourages farming of possums in certain areas.

We have let a couple of permits and referred other contractors to private landowners adjacent to us.

Rubbish Dumping

Robin Blake reported the increased incidence of rubbish dumping on Council land in the Akatarawa Saddle area. Some of this rubbish has included *Tradescantia* in the past, and this plant pest has now gained a foothold in the area. Robin sprayed the infestation recently and will keep watch to ensure it hasn't spread.

The same area has been illegally cleared of ponga logs, much to the detriment of the site. Dean Hearfield, the Ranger responsible for the area, has been notified.

2. **Catchment Operations (Robin Blake/Geoff Cameron)**

Forest Health Survey

Robin Blake escorted the survey team into the Wainuiomata and Orongorongo Catchments during the period. This new survey format was mentioned in my last Manager's report.

Deer Population Monitoring

During 1999, the Animal Health Board funded the Biosecurity Department to investigate the effect of a 1080 poison operation on the deer population of the Wainuiomata Catchment, as part of last year's possum control operation. A series of pellet-count lines were established and measured before the operation, and they are being re-measured now. Robin Blake and two Assistant Rangers are working on this.

Vegetation Monitoring

The final work with the Sustainable Management Fund Project is the topic of a separate Committee report.

3. **Rural Fire Control (Geoff Cameron)**

WRC Rural Fire District

The National Rural Fire Authority finally heard submissions on the future of the Regional Council's Rural Fire District. In accordance with the Forest and Rural Fires Act, the submissions were presented to the National Rural Fire Officer (Murray Dudfield). I presented the Regional Council's submission which was based on the two papers approved by Council. Mayor Rex Kirton presented the Upper Hutt City Council's case opposing the proposal. He was accompanied by CEO Max Pederson, Director of Planning Graeme Millar and their PRFO David Etchells. Their case was based on a long history of not being involved in rural fire control and not having the resources to carry it out. I presented written submissions rebutting the UHCC case. An interesting period of questions and answers then followed, with Murray Dudfield testing the strength of both cases and looking for options or compromises which might suit both parties. He reserved his decision.

Hutt Valley Bush Fire Force Relocation - Again

I reported via my Manager's reports in March and April 1999 about the trials and tribulations of finding a suitable new home for "our" rural fire volunteer force. Peter O'Brien assisted, and we rented space in the former Ministry of Works depot at Messines Road, Trentham for a period of two years with rights of renewal. We have been informed that the site is required for a retirement village, and we need to find alternative accommodation within three months. The building owners have agreed to assist, but the site requirements are quite specific.

4. **Management Issues (Geoff Cameron)**

Rimutaka Incline Recreation Area

Following Plantation Forestry department's assumed acceptance of Clive Anstey's second logging guideline for the upper section of the walkway, Dean Hearfield and I worked with Barry Leonard and Walter Treviranus to identify areas of trees to be left by the harvesting crews around the Summit yard. Dean will monitor the harvesting progress on a regular basis.

Forest Health Collaborative Meeting

This is the subject of a separate Committee report.

GEOFF CAMERON
Manager, Natural Forestry