

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

**Report for Period Ending 31 May 2002**

**1. Manager's Comments**

The recently completed third quarter review confirmed the excellent progress that has been achieved on the majority of our projects, and their overall financial conformity within budgets. These results indicate that the Flood Protection Group is leaving the long period where the October 1998 flood damage repairs and the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan's completion overwhelmed much of our thinking and other work. With a little luck (and no major flood events coming along) we can move into a managed and controlled period of development.

This is my last manager's report to the Landcare Committee before I leave the Flood Protection Group. I would like to take the opportunity to first thank the Committee and its Councillors for the very balanced, reasoned and reasonable approach they have taken in all matters that have involved our work. I have very much appreciated the fascinating field of work and wonderful opportunities that Flood Protection has afforded me. Finally a very sincere thank you to all my work colleagues in the Council over the last sixteen years; these competent and dedicated people make the Regional Council a special place to work. I wish the Council every success in maintaining its reputation for excellence and professionalism in all its responsibilities, and commit my continued support from outside the organisation.

**2. Waikanae River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]**

**2.1 Gravel Extraction Consent**

A report by Dr Jeremy Gibb on the potential affects of the gravel extraction from the Waikanae River on coastal processes has been completed. A copy of the report was sent to the two people who submitted on the Consent in relation to that issue. The report supports the Council's view that the extraction will not make the erosion on the coast any worse. The erosion episode that is currently occurring is a result of other factors. If the two submitters accept the findings of the report then all submissions in opposition to the consent will have been dealt with and we will be able to get a decision on the Consent without a hearing. If the two submitters do not withdraw their right to be heard then a hearing date will need to be set.

**2.2 Friends of the Waikanae River**

A meeting of the Friends was held on 1 May 2002. Their AGM is arranged for 19 June 2002 and a special invitation will be extended to Councillors.

### **3. Otaki River Floodplain Management [Graeme Campbell]**

#### **3.1 Otaki River Mouth Lagoon Enhancement Works**

A plan for the area has been finalised and work is proceeding with the purchase of materials to begin the physical work. A sign is also being designed explaining the objective of the work and to seek the active involvement of the Community in the enhancement work.

#### **3.2 Friends of the Otaki River**

A meeting of the Friends Executive Committee was held on 22 May 2002. The group are making good progress on a number of initiatives in the area. Following their heavy input last year to the Otaki water extraction, they can now take on the role originally envisaged by their own terms of reference and their understanding with the Regional Council. Their next meeting is 29 June 2002.

#### **3.3 Chrystalls Extended Stopbank**

A reassessment of the Chrystalls Extended stopbank has been undertaken to update the information included in the Otaki Floodplain Management Plan. The issues and discussion are contained in Report 02.296 in this order paper.

### **4. Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan (HRFMP) [Daya Atapattu]**

#### **4.1 Ava to Ewen Improvements: Consent Process**

A hearing on the Ava to Ewen consent application is scheduled for 4 June 2002. A total of four submissions to the application were received and after discussions only one submitter would like to be heard. A decision on the consent application is expected by the end of June 2002. Hutt City Council has granted a land-use consent for an Interpretation Platform and to relocate existing services.

#### **4.2 Ava to Ewen Improvements: Detailed Design**

The specialised design of the river realignment and stopbank heights is substantially complete and this information will be integrated in to the wider project design. Flood Protection staff have evaluated five tenders for the principal consultant who will complete the project design and manage the river realignment construction. The successful tenderer will be advised by 7 June 2002. The next step is to appoint a construction contractor, which should be completed by November 2002.

#### **4.3 Ava to Ewen Improvements: Strand Park**

Reasonable progress has been made on negotiations with the Ministry of Education for the purchase of Strand Park. The outcome of these negotiations is set out in Report PE-02.297.

#### 4.4 **Ava to Ewen Improvements: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tranz Rail**

The proposed MOU with Tranz Rail will record the improvements agreed for reducing the flood hazard at Ava Bridge and the programme and responsibilities for implementing the agreed improvements. We expect the MOU to be agreed by the end of June 2002.

#### 4.5 **Non-structural Measures**

At its May 2002 meeting, the Policy Committee of Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC) endorsed the scope and programme for implementing non-structural measures. Hutt City Council (HCC) is yet to consider the scope and programme. A draft set of generic district plan provisions are being considered by UHCC and HCC officers. These draft provisions will be presented to the Advisory Committee at the 27 June meeting.

### 5. **Planning and Development Services [Phillip Purves]**

The following summarises the formal, written requests for information or advice attended to during April 2002:

	<u>April</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Requests brought forward	13	5
Additional requests received	8	122
Responses provided	10	116
Outstanding requests	11	11

Reasonable progress continues to be made on the review of the Waikanae and Otaki River flood hazard maps, to be included in a proposed KCDC District Plan Change. Draft maps have been prepared for each river, but the delineation of residual (or indirect) flood risk areas has yet to be completed. The purpose behind the proposed identification of residual risk is to avoid, or limit, development in areas where significant flooding could occur in an event of greater magnitude than the current design standard for the flood protection system (100 year return period flood).

A second meeting of the joint KCDC / WRC officers working group was held on 16 May; the meeting was very successful in establishing a common understanding towards the goal of achieving clearer, and up to date, planning controls in relation to flood hazard on the Kapiti Coast. The overlap of major river flooding with stormwater and localised flooding is the issue that is currently being addressed and a further meeting is being planned for late June 2002.

**BRENDAN PAUL**  
 Manager, Flood Protection (Strategy and Assets)

**Flood Protection  
Operations  
Manager : Geoff Dick**

**Report for Period Ending 31 May 2002**

## **Flood Protection Operations and Maintenance [Geoff Dick]**

### **1. Hutt River**

As the colder weather closes in, and the willows along the river lose their leaves, work on the Hutt River is moving into winter mode. Routine work such as mowing the river berms slows down and the Mabey Road team is beginning to gear up for the coming willow planting and maintenance programme.

This winter we will be looking at ways to improve visibility at a number of locations for the increased security of people on the river. Accordingly we will shortly begin surveying the willow lines to establish where thinning the willows may be appropriate.

Work has commenced on the improvements to the river berm at Belmont. The first phase currently underway involves installation of timber bollards and gates south of the Kennedy-Good Bridge. The aim is to prevent vehicles from driving on most of the grassed berm areas during winter, when considerable damage is done. The area will be open during the drier months so people can drive their vehicles to the river edge.

We completed a major upgrade of the Hutt River Trail through the former Firths site at Melling. The track has been widened and re-metalled to cope with increasing use.

### **2. Kapiti Rivers**

The repair of the Otaki River south stopbank at Katihiku is complete. The repair was required following flood damage in October 2000 when a southward meander of the river eroded a large section of river berm and about 100m of stopbank, mainly within the Ferry Reserve.

The final stage of the Katihiku stopbank repair involved shifting 14,000m<sup>3</sup> of gravel and soil to complete reconstruction of the eroded berm and then rebuild the missing section of stopbank. This final stage of the repair work had been held up pending negotiations with the Logan Whanau over compensation for the original 1978 construction of the stopbank. However, permission to enter Mangahanene Nos 1 and 2 was granted immediately following Council agreement to purchase the land.

Other work completed on the Otaki River during the period included some berm improvements behind the new rock lining at Winstones, channel shaping works at Hughes and removal of a final small section of the old stopbank at Lutz's.

We have also undertaken further channel widening work adjacent to the Gold Coast Building Removals site at Waikanae. The channel width at this location is narrower than ideal but the widening work is complicated by a desire to preserve some established pohutukawa trees. Our aim is to progressively replace the trees on a set back location.

### 3. **Waiwhetu Stream**

The Waiwhetu Stream was sprayed with diquat on 8 May 2002 to control aquatic weed growth. The results of the spray run were excellent with an estimated 95 percent clearance of cape pondweed. The spray run was required because manual control over the summer had not reduced weed growth to acceptable levels.

Extensive mats of willow weed (*Polygonum Sp.*) were also sprayed using glyphosate (Roundup G2). Willow weed is a bank edge weed which gradually extends out into the stream proper by building islands of silt captured in its dense foliage. If uncontrolled it restricts the channel, raises bed levels and can exacerbate bank edge erosion.

The results of the glyphosate application were mixed, with some areas well controlled and others not so well. We will continue to manually clear remaining weed using periodic detention workers.

Our present consent to use diquat expires in February next year, and work has already started on a renewal application.

### 4. **Watercourses**

We have completed negotiations with a landowner to gain improved access to the Waitohu Stream downstream of the Old Coach Road bridge. Accordingly we will shortly commence a programme of clearing of trees, logs, vegetation etc. to open up the floodway. This should help to reduce the flooding risk to Convent and Bennetts Road residents.

The main annual drain and minor watercourse clearing run on the Mangaone Stream and Otaki River tributaries is underway. The aim of this work is to remove the summer build-up of aquatic weeds to ensure good drainage over the coming winter months.

Routine maintenance on the Stebbings detention dam is underway. The maintenance work includes some improvements to drainage in areas with surface seepage, raising of a guard fence on the outlet energy dissipater, repairs to rip-rap drains and general vegetation control. The work results from the annual inspection required under our asset management plan.

### 5. **Porirua Debris Arrestor**

The repairs to the Porirua debris arrestor are complete. The cost of the repairs was \$29,000, about \$4,000 over the original estimate.

A plan has also been developed, in association with the Glenside Progressive Association, to undertake some enhancement work at the debris arrestor site. The proposed enhancements include planting of natives, and construction of a vehicle barrier and gate to try and curb problems such as illegal rubbish dumping.

## 6. Native Planting Trials

The Hutt River native planting trial, in association with the Wellington Botanical Society is progressing well. Four sites have been chosen following a site visit with Barbara Mitcalfe and Ian Atkinson of the Society, and a set of protocols to govern the trial have been agreed. Plants have been ordered and planting will start in early July.

Tim Porteous of WRC Environment, and Tim Park of QE2 Trust have agreed to act as auditors for the trial.

## 7. Otaki Depot

Progress on the Otaki Depot refurbishment has been held up by delays in supply of roofing materials and the builders other work commitments. Work completed at the end of May includes construction of the floor slab and the wall framing. The builder however has allocated all of June to the contract, and this should see the completion of all the external work and a good start on the internal refurbishment.

## 8. Gravel Extraction

A revised draft of the proposed long-term licence for extraction from the Otaki River is being prepared following a meeting with Winstone Aggregates Ltd.

Extraction totals to the end of April are set out below:

River	Area	Contractor	Period Year 2001/2002 (cubic metres)		Year 2000/2001 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	2,772	27,930	41,797
	River		0	22,680	0
Otaki	River	Winstones	4,050	34,570	39,340
	Upper Rahui	Winstones	0	0	40,220
Waikanae	River		290	3,995	1,800
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>7,112</b>	<b>89,175</b>	<b>123,157</b>

GEOFF DICK  
Manager, Flood Protection (Operations)

**Parks and Forests  
Strategy & Marketing  
Manager : Murray Waititi  
Report for Period Ending 31 May 2002**

**1. Manager's Comments [Murray Waititi]**

Tihei Mauriora!

I write this report as the new Manager, Parks and Forests, although most of you will already know me from my previous role as Landcare's Divisional Accountant and existing member of the Landcare Management Team.

I have been with Landcare since 1995 and have always enjoyed the nature and diversity of the work within Parks and Forests. Parks and Forests is filled with talented and committed individuals who will make my transition from "beanie" to "greenie" an easy and pleasant one.

I look forward to the challenges ahead, and to working more closely with you.

**Parks and Forests Management Plan Review Workshop**

Thank you for your valuable input during the workshop on Wednesday 29 May. From the discussion at the workshop, I think it would be prudent to allow the officers time to take stock and revisit some of the base principles raised. To this end we will revise the timetable for producing the plans (that was provided to you in December 2001) and come back to you with a revised timetable during the next Landcare Committee meeting.

**2. Policy Development and Planning [Anne Manley, Victoria Owen]**

**Parks and Forests Management Plan Reviews**

During May, Victoria Owen and Anne Manley have concentrated on drafting the Parks and Forests management plans, drawing on information received from:

- Public submissions.
- Ara Tahi and Councillor workshops.
- reference groups dealing with recreation, environmental, heritage and commercial issues.
- the public telephone survey.
- an environmental scan and trends research.
- meetings held with iwi and territorial authorities.

A staff workshop involving rangers, field staff and Strategy & Marketing officers was held on 22 May at Battle Hill Farm Forest Park. A range of issues relating to the management plan reviews were identified and discussed. The workshop presented an opportunity to “tease out” some of the issues raised during the survey and reference group discussions from a land management perspective. Feedback from this workshop will be incorporated in future drafts of the plans.

### **Biennial Visitor Survey**

The annual visitor survey was conducted in February/March of this year. Results from the survey have been collated and a report is currently being completed.

## **3. Environmental Protection [Dr Philippa Crisp]**

The environmental planning projects have progressed well during May. Activities of note include:

### **Monitoring Program**

Philippa Crisp has been involved in organising staff and contractors to install ungulate browse plots in Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water catchment. She has also visited two wetland sites with Melanie Dixon from Environment Division. The two sites; Martins River Swamplands (Akatarawa Forest) and the Orongorongo montane wetland are being assessed as part of the Wetland Strategy. Philippa organised and participated in the audit of permanent vegetation plot work with Landcare Research scientist, Ian Payton.

### **Mainland Island Progress**

Philippa gave a presentation about mainland island possibilities to the Biodiversity Coordinating Group and is continuing to work on evaluating possible sites with the Mainland Island steering committee.

### **Weed Plans**

The five-year weed plan for Queen Elizabeth Park has been completed, while work is still underway for Battle Hill, Wainuiomata Water Catchment and Kaitoke Regional Park. As part of this process, it was realised that a more accurate mapping of “Buddleia” spread was required for the Wainuiomata Water Catchment. Two casual workers have been employed to walk the streams and rivers to enable us to gain a better picture of the spread of this weed.

## **4. Environmental Enhancement Projects [Ross Jackson]**

Work is progressing on a number of environmental projects. Ten separate community planting days are being held during May, June and July. Details of these events have been circulated in a Newsletter to interested individuals and groups and there has been a positive response.



Construction of stage one of the wetlands at Battle Hill is completed. Five ponds have been excavated and fencing and planting will begin during June. At this stage the focus has been on developing significant water bodies which have visual appeal and create a lot of interest whereas, further up the gully, the wetlands will be more ephemeral with less visible water.

Council staff co-hosted a successful restoration day at Battle Hill on Saturday April 20 with DOC. 80 members of various care groups attended, looking at various restoration projects at the Park. It was quite a crowded scene as a harrier race with 400 competitors took place at the same time as care group people wandered around the Park.

### **Arbor Day Planting**

The first and main Arbor Day planting event was held at Queen Elizabeth Park on 31 May. The Governor General, British High Commissioner and Council Chairperson Margaret Shields all spoke and planted three large Kahikateas in memory of the Queen Mother. A presentation was also made to retiring chairperson June Rowland for all her work in the Park over the past 20 years. This successful event was attended by 150 school children and 60 adults.

Students from Plateau school will plant up seedlings they potted up last year at Kaitoke Regional Park on 5 June.

The other major Arbor Day event will be at the Rimutaka Incline Summit Yards where riparian planting will take place on Saturday June 15. It will also be a celebration of the registration of the Rimutaka Rail Trail as a Nationally Significant Historic Area.

### **Conservation Week**

Matt Ballantine and Graham Laws have been liaising with Sally Airey (Programme Manager, Community Relations, Department of Conservation) and staff from the City Councils, to work together for Conservation Week 5-11 August. The theme this year is "Korero Maunga" – Talking Mountains. We jointly aim to open up some possibilities and inspire people to walk some of our 'peaks' and high places around the Wellington Region as well as the usual Conservation Week displays in Wellington Cathedral.

We (Parks and Forests) are investigating organising a 4 wheel drive/walking trip up Mt Climie to look at changes in vegetation with altitude, and also an interpreted walk up the Rimutaka Trig track from SH2.

All agencies have agreed to jointly promote the Conservation Week activities and events on websites, newsletters and media advertising.

### **Hutt River Trail**

A new footbridge has been constructed at Halls Creek jointly funded by Upper Hutt City Council and Rotary. Rotary are also negotiating a similar arrangement with Lower Hutt City for a footbridge at Stokes Valley and for an underpass at the Estuary Bridge. This is following on from the production and installation of 28 map boards and 12 seats over the past few months along the trail.

## 5. Planning [Graham Laws]

### SH1 Upgrade – MacKays Crossing

The planning commissioners decision to proceed with the State Highway One overbridge at Mackays Crossing has been appealed. This will likely create delays in this project and also the wetland restoration work at Mackays Crossing. The wetland is to be restored by Transit NZ as compensation for the environmental impacts they will have with the road construction.

MURRAY WAITITI  
Manager, Parks and Forests

**Parks and Forests  
Operations  
Acting Manager : Fraser Oliver  
Report for Period Ending 31 May 2002**

**1. Environmental Asset Management**

**Monitoring Programme**

The environmental programme is progressing well. Landcare Research scientist, Ian Payton has completed an audit of the permanent vegetation plots in the Hutt Catchment and at East Harbour Regional Park. Ungulate browse plots are currently being installed in the Wainuiomata Water Collection Area. Robin Blake has found a rare fungus in the Akatarawa Forest – it is only the second time it has been found in New Zealand and the first time with *Rubus cissoides* acting as the host plant. The Rangers and volunteers have completed their monthly flowering and fruiting recordings.

Gail Abel has been continuing her work on bird distance sampling in the Akatarawa Forest. She is recording bellbird, whitehead and tomtit number using this technique.

**Pest Control**

Dean Hearfield has killed a number of goats, possums and hares in the Akatarawa Forest. He has noted that possums are fewer in number reflecting the positive effects of recent 1080 operations. Possum bait stations have been placed at the weir picnic area in Kaitoke Regional Park by Steve Edwards as several nearby kamahi plants have been heavily browsed. Staff and volunteers have maintained possum bait stations in Dry Creek and Korokoro Valley.

Contract weed spraying has been carried out at Kaitoke Regional Park, as part of the Park's pest plant management strategy. Nola Urquhart and Chris Muller have been cutting blackberry in the remnant bush in Queen Elizabeth Park to make the area suitable for planting. Also in Queen Elizabeth Park, areas along Wainui Stream have been cleared of weeds and native trees have been planted to help to improve this area of the Park. Several species of rare fish inhabit Wainui Stream and efforts are being made to improve this environment for both park users and the freshwater fish.

## 2. **Western Sector [Matt Ballantine]**

### 2.1 **Battle Hill Farm Forest Park**

The formation of a wetland area is well underway with machinery working on site. The area the wetlands will occupy is opposite the deer paddocks and it will play an important role in providing important habitat for wetland species. The wetlands are a short walk from the Ken Gray Education Centre and will be a valuable study area for visiting school groups. The area is divided into five interlinked ponds with marsh areas and several islands. Half of the area is to be fenced to exclude stock.

The Park Ranger has moved office from his residence down to the homestead. The homestead is now housing the western work crew along with an information room and meeting rooms. This will also give the public a good opportunity to have a look around the house.

The Salvation Army Conservation Corps completed a months work on Battle Hill. The eight team members all got the chance to learn new skills. Their work was varied and ranged from grubbing thistles to assisting staff with the bush reserve recovery programme. The Conservation Corps last week on the Park was spent on a 'bush drop' where they camped out and were set tasks that they had to achieve without support from leaders. This is the fourth year the Salvation Army Conservation Corps have worked on Battle Hill and both the Park and the young people involved benefit from the programme.

### 2.2 **Belmont Regional Park**

Volunteers have carried out phenology recording and possum bait station filling in the Korokoro Valley over the period.

A work programme for flood damage repair and maintenance work in the Korokoro Valley has been developed and contractors have priced work to carry out. Regional Council staff have been assisting with track development work at Cannons Creek along with *Friends of Maara Roa*.

### 2.3 **Queen Elizabeth Park**

The Construction Team has removed the small footbridge over Wainui Stream. The existing foundations were retained and a new bridge built. A metalled path allowing gentler access to the bridge will replace the old concrete path to the bridge.

Gorse around the Arbor Day site was cut and some larger areas sprayed.

The footbridge over Whareroa Stream has been removed. This bridge was part of a closed section of track below Whareroa Pa that has eroded badly. Track users now walk along the re-routed section of the Inland track.

Several areas on the farmland in the Southern block have suffered erosion caused by horses and stock. Paddocks along MacKays Crossing Road have been refilled with metal, top-soiled, and resown.

Night shooting for rabbits, hares and possums was undertaken by Biosecurity successfully reducing their numbers.

## **Ranging Services**

Members of the public, Kapiti Environmental Action Group and Forest and Bird enjoyed the annual tree planting day at the remnant bush. Over 400 trees were planted in overcast, windy conditions. Over half of the participants had helped with last years planting. All involved were pleased at the progress in the remnant to date.

Several Regional Council staff attended an on-site meeting with the Equestrian Federation lessee representative. We wish to extend the remnant bush fence on the northern side of this area. This would allow a shelterbelt to be planted, which will protect existing kahikatea trees with in the remnant.

Shifting the fence out affects the equestrian cross-country circuit, and necessitates the re-routing of the course and removal of a horse jump. It was agreed to install a new section of track to join up the existing course away from the remnant. The Equestrian Federation will install another jump further away from the current one.

A recently rediscovered area of Manuka Wetland located within the northern block (adjacent to Popular Avenue) supports populations of several uncommon ferns, and is the locally significant Marsh Cress. The area requires fencing, weed control, and liaison with Kapiti Coast District Council to ensure fencing of their Reserve and the neighbours boundary. Garden dumping needs to be cleaned up and opportunities to interpret this interesting area will be explored. There may be an opportunity to extend tracks from the coastal dunes through to this wetland area and out to Popular Avenue.

### **2.4 Whitireia Park**

Possum control was started during the period. The operation is being undertaken by the Council's Biosecurity Department.

Fencing is due to be constructed to maintain the boundary between the grazing land and the Golf Club.

## **3. Eastern Sector [Fraser Oliver]**

### **3.1 Akatarawa / Pakuratahi Forest**

#### *Akatarawa Forest*

There have been a total of 22 events in the Akatarawa Block during this period. This involved:

- 17 x 4WD club events.
- 1 x mountain bike duathlon.
- 1 x search and rescue exercise.
- 3 x Army training exercises.

Due to good communication between Parks and Forests and the Plantation Forestry group, it is fair to say recreational access is not impacting plantation logging operations to any great degree.

The range of recreational activities available in the forest and the commercial opportunities these activities create mean the demand is increasing significantly. For example, there are demands for more commercially based events, events that include use of land after daylight hours (camping, barbecues etc), events that require total block closure, as well as extensive use by regulatory authorities for training purposes and the like.

Due to good weather the only requirements in regard to road maintenance have been routine water table and run-off maintenance and the removal of windthrow trees.

### ***Pakuratahi Forest***

There have been three consented events over this period and on-going demand from the horse fraternity for areas to exercise their animals on a daily basis. The events were one wedding, one school group and an orienteering event in Tunnel Gully and Station Drive.

Use of leased areas by several clubs is becoming more intense and can be expected to continue to increase. The issue is compounded by the gradual loss of historically available sites due to increased land value, noise limitations, and public concerns.

We are starting to notice an increase the pressure on the Regional Council to provide land for more diverse recreational pursuits that can cater for medium to large volumes of participants/spectators.

Maintenance included:

- Culvert and water table maintenance (Plantation logged areas).
- Culvert repair (replace concrete bed and form fish ladder).
- Installing access tracks to historic culverts for on-going maintenance.
- Removal of windthrow trees.
- Pest control, i.e. four deer, 40 hares and 25 possums.
- Supervise bridge upgrade programme.
- Maintain security and lock gates.

## **3.2 Kaitoke Regional Park**

Patrols into the Hutt Water Collection Area were increased during “the roar” in April. Several hunters were warned for non-compliance activities such as not having permits and illegal camping. A makeshift campsite was also found in the Eastern Hutt river valley. Patrols will continue.

The rangers continue to provide environmental education to school and conservation groups. Recent activities included a night tour for the Junior Conservation Club and a basic bushcraft day for Moriah College.

Maintenance included:

- Contract weed spraying was carried out around the campground area as part of the parks' pest plant management strategy.
- Planting and releasing continues at the restoration site along the Pakuratahi River.
- Possum bait stations have been placed at the weir picnic area to help protect several Kamahi that have been heavily browsed. The stations are removed during the day due to the current concern over the council's pest poisoning programme.
- A shade house has been built next to the rangers' workshop to protect potted natives from frost.
- Bollards have been replaced and a picnic table installed at the Pakuratahi swimming hole.
- Entranceways at the campground have had base coarse material applied and compacted to prevent potholing.
- The gardens surrounding the Ranger's residence have received a long overdue tidy up.
- The Water Group completed the demolition and site restoration of the old water treatment buildings adjacent to the strainer house.

### 3.3 Wainuiomata

General ranging duties have continued throughout the catchment and unauthorised public movement is minimal with no major issues. An odd incident occurred regarding the Moores Valley ridge access gate whereby an extra lock was attached and sealed next to the Regional Council lock. This effectively locked the gate to everyone, including staff, although the lock was soon removed.

No catchment tours were held during April because of the clash with the public balloted hunting programme. The 12 May tour was attended by Wellington Forest and Bird and the Wellington Catholic Tramping Club.

The public balloted hunting period went ahead successfully with no reported incidents or complaints. This reflects on the careful planning and organisation put in place by Scott Farrell and his support team. There were a total of 175 applicants for the 40 positions available. Hunting periods commenced on Easter weekend and ran through to ANZAC Day (25 April). The total numbers of kills were nine deer, 11 goats and two pigs. Comparisons show similar kill figures to the previous three years in spite of poor hunting conditions in the opening week.

The Wainuiomata catchment guide training programme kicked off with two evening sessions held at the Wainuiomata treatment plant. The training evenings covered a general introduction to the catchment and its use. Guest speakers included representatives from Regional Council's Water Group and Landcare Division; and the Mountain Safety Council. A newsletter has now been drafted to inform guides of upcoming training and events.

Track surfacing work at the approaches to the swingbridge and the Sledge Creek boardwalk have now been completed. Grading and drainage work on the bush section of Sledge Creek track has also taken place, resulting in much improved standards. This track is utilised by the Environment Division for educational purposes.

The repeater site, located on the ridge north of Sinclair Peak, is now ready for the electronic hardware installation. Once up and running, the improved communications system should benefit all Regional Council divisions working in the area.

**FRASER OLIVER**

Acting Manager, Parks and Forests (Operations)



# Parks and Forests Activities



Demolition/landscaping next to Strainer House.



Metalled entranceways to camping areas.

Landscaping around the Kaitoke Ranger's house.



Hunter camp - Hutt Catchment now removed.

New bollards and picnic table, next to Pakuratahi River.