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Report to the Landcare Committee
from Andrew Annakin, Divisional Manager, Landcare

Divisional Manager's Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Landcare Committee about activities and matters of interest within the Landcare Division since the last Landcare Committee meeting, 23 November 1999. Departmental activity reports are also attached.

2. Long-term Financial Strategy : Business Plans

Following Councillor consideration of the various Long-term Financial Strategy scenarios, and the subsequent Policy and Finance Committee resolutions, 9 December 1999, the Landcare Managers have been flat-out drafting the new ten-year Business Plans.

The first way-point is the Management Review with the General Manager and Chief Financial Officer, 11 February. We will then present the proposed Business Plans to the Landcare Committee on 23 February. The Landcare Managers have worked hard to place our Business Plans within an acceptable start-up range of Councillor expectations. A strict hierarchy of project inclusion means that any changes can be made in a considered manner. Our Business Plans certainly look different to what we prepared three years ago.

3. Out and About

My thanks to Alan Ross and his team for the **Whitireia Park site visit**, 13 December. At the second attempt, the weather was only slightly improved. Hopefully Councillors gained a useful impression of the Park, particularly the future possibilities as a Regional Park.

I caught up with **John Bissell, Ranger, Battle Hill Regional Park**, 14 December. It's a year since I had a good look over this hidden treasure and there are many improvements. I encourage you to take an easy stroll through the Bush Reserve, along the refurbished track, and take in the peace at one of the stream-side picnic spots. John has also done much to build relationship with the local horse riding community - heavy users of the Park. The wetland restoration project (a joint exercise with Environment Division), extra tree plantings, and additional protection for growing specimen trees have really lifted the grounds.

The festive season was the usual blur of social events. A particular highlight was Chairman Werry taking the Landcare Managers and me **out to dinner**; really appreciated. Dick and I reminisced about the old Public Service and mused on the long-term repercussions of Samuelson economics. However, I'm still struggling with his theory linking the origins of rock music with the mating rites of goats!

I had hoped to catch up with the **Kapiti Coast Flood Protection staff** who put in a huge effort across the Christmas break shoring up recent flood damage in the lower Otaki River and overseeing the permanent works approved from the 1998 floods! I will be visiting the area soon.

This year's **Landcare staff barbecue** was at Queen Elisabeth Park. The best parts for me were handing out the Andy Cap awards, celebrating the funny side of our otherwise serious business, and riding Dean Hearfield's Suzuki 900. **Nola Urquhart** is the new Queen Elisabeth Park Ranger and enjoying the role as the first women ranger in Regional Parks. The Park's staff all look great in their new Landcare uniforms. Flood Protection insist on threadbare blue jerseys before they change over!

The **Millennium celebrations** turned out not to be the fearful prospect we had carefully prepared for. The dull weather, and many people choosing to come into Wellington, saw the Parks remain relatively quiet. Though Bruce and his team stayed on duty well into the early hours. Low cloud and drizzle were a dream for the Rural Fire team (Geoff Cameron in attendance). Thankfully too, there was no prospect of flooding. Armageddon will have to wait another thousand years!

4. **Recommendation**

That the Divisional and Departmental reports be received and the contents noted.

ANDREW ANNAKIN
Divisional Manager, Landcare