



Report 06.266
Date 12 June 2006
File WS/08/05/01

Committee Rural Services and Wairarapa
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Nigel Corry, Divisional Manager, Environment Management
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Divisional Managers' Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about the activities and progress and any matters that have arisen since the Committee's previous meeting held in May 2006.

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. Managers' reports

The Departmental Managers' reports and the Catchment Division's financial report until the end of May are attached.

4. Divisional Matters

4.1 Geoff Dick – Catchment Management

Sam Priestley

The sudden and tragic death of Sam Priestley was a huge shock to the Bioworks team, and made a significant impact on the work programme during the following week. Scott Forbes and his team put a very big effort into supporting each other, and Sam's family, including the funeral arrangements. All staff are now back at work.

Michael Hewison's Resignation

Michael Hewison, Investigations and Design Engineer in the River Management section has resigned with his last day at work being Friday, 2 June. Michael has joined Opus International Consultants based at their Carterton office.

Work is underway on a job description for Michael's replacement which will not be an easy task given the current scarcity of engineers. As a first step I am

working with the River Management section to see how it will fit in with the proposed single Flood Protection team with responsibility for flood protection and river management work across the whole region. In the interim we have negotiated an arrangement with Opus to buy back Michael's services at a discounted rate.

Catchment Management Restructure

I have confirmed my proposed structure changes to the Division with staff, following constructive and useful feedback.

The changes align the Department structure with the Division's responsibilities and effectively create two new Departments with region wide responsibilities – Flood Protection and Land Management. I also received strong support for the new position to help the Division implement the integrated catchment management approach. The role has now been confirmed as a permanent position.

Bioworks

I am continuing to work with Scott Forbes to finish implementation of his new structure, and ensure the unit is as well prepared as possible for the fully contestable environment it will be working in from July 2006.

The current priority for the unit is however on completing the work it has to 30 June. The lost time (over a fine week) following Sam Priestley's death has not helped with the work programme. The team did however get the toxic bait flown on to the Bideford contract area.

Bioworks has been invited to tender for work in the Horizons area of operations. Scott and I have selected the jobs which we proposed to tender for. We also have the tender documents for the first four jobs to be let in our own region.

We will shortly be advertising some additional permanent field operator positions. Most of Scott's field operators are on fixed term contracts to reflect the historically seasonal and fluctuating demand nature of the pest control work. However, for the business to be successful we need to invest in the skills and qualifications of our staff, and hence the desire to have a greater percentage of the field operators in permanent positions.

Pauatahanui and Waikanae Vegetation Projects

I attended the meeting organised by Peter Handford to discuss the implementation of this Ministry for the Environment funded (Sustainable Management Fund) project. Peter Handford and Clive Anstey have undertaken a useful exercise with landowners to show the value of vegetation to individual properties and wider values such as water quality, stream stability and biodiversity.

The thrust of the project (see Report 06.276) is strongly supported by Catchment Division staff although we are having to take a cautious approach to the resources available to help implement the various elements of the vegetation framework.

The upper Waikanae catchment was heavily hit by the January 2005 storm and Western Flood Protection staff worked closely with a significant number of landowners on stream repair and stabilisation works following the flood event. In addition Stan Braaksma from the Land Management team inspected a number of sites to assess the potential for stabilisation planting. The vegetation framework project really is just an expansion and refinement of these initiatives which resulted from last year's storm.

4.3 Nigel Corry – Environment Management

We have now commenced the first stages in our consultation with the public in relation to the review of our Regional Policy Statement (RPS) with the release of *Our Region - their future*, a discussion document for the RPS. This document was sent to over 200 people and organisations on our mailing list in late May, with feedback closing on 30 June. We have also been going around all the local authorities meeting with politicians to present this document and engage with them around the review processing general. We are hopeful that feedback and response to the questions raised in *Our region - their future* will form a valuable part of the broader RPS review process.

The last meeting of the Environment Committee recommended that an Ara Tahī representative become a formal member of the Environment Committee, with full voting rights. This recommendation was passed onto the Policy finance and Strategy Committee, and subsequently endorsed. As a result, Jack Rikihana has become Ara Tahī's representative on the Environment Committee from this point forward. Ted Taylor also continues to attend Environment Committee meetings. At their last meeting, the Environment Committee received the same presentation as the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee on progress around developing the Wairarapa conceptual groundwater model.

In an interesting development in Harbour management matters, we will be initiating a Bylaw review around the future of the Lyall Bay reserved area. Over time, there has been an increasing conflict in use between the jet skiers, for whom the area is reserved, and surfers and other users of Loyal Bay in relation to this reserved area. This bylaw review is in part a response to a petition (signed by over 900 people) which had previously been presented to Council, and will look to manage future use in the area. We hope to initiate a public consultation process as part of reviewing the Lyall Bay reserved area provisions of the Navigational and Safety Bylaws within the next 4-6 weeks.

Finally, consultation with staff in relation to the structure of the Environment Management Division has now been completed, with some good feedback being received. I am now in the process of assimilating the information that came back from staff and hope to have a confirmed divisional structure in place in time to take effect as of 1 July.

Lynley Hamilton has joined the Consents and Compliance section as a fixed term replacement for Susannah Guscott who is on parental leave.

4.4 Murray Kennedy – Water Supply, Parks & Forests

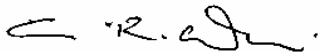
I will be attending the June meeting of the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee to support the two attached reports (06.239 and 06.240) on the possibility of a wind farm at Stoney Creek.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

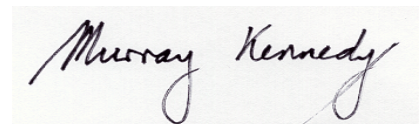
1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.

Report prepared by:



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Attachments 1, 2 & 3: