

Flood Protection Manager's report for period ending 8 September 2006

1. Manager's comments

1.1 General

We are now well into the work programme for the 2006/07 year. This includes progressing major projects such as the Chrystalls Extended stopbank, Phase 2 for the Waiwhetu project and Hutt/Boulcott stopbank works. We are also ready to move with the weather dependent parts of our maintenance works programme, and are looking forward to beginning wet extraction of the Hutt River gravels when we receive resource consent for these works. Additionally, we are counting on some fine weather to reduce the 'mud pie factor' to allow completion of tidying up works on capital projects carried over from last year.

Capital works projects on the Hutt River are making good progress and are on programme. The Opahu Stream pumping station works are going well, as is the Boulcott/Hutt stopbank feasibility study. We are currently finalising land negotiations for the Whirinaki Crescent stopbank works prior to calling for tenders for the construction works.

In Kapiti we are still trying to resolve issues with the Otaki and Porirua Trust Board to allow construction of the South Waitohu stopbank.

A preferred structural option has been found, but not finally decided on, for the Waiwhetu Stream flood protection works. We need the results of the Phase 2 investigations of non-structural alternatives (just kicking off) before the decision-making process really gets underway.

1.2 Staffing

Applications close on 18 September for the position of Area Engineer (Kapiti), which is the replacement for Garry Baker. As Garry is retiring on 29 September 2006, interim coverage for his position will be through Jeff Evans (Area Engineer) at Mabey Road and Graham Winterburn (Field Leader) at the Otaki Depot. A remaining priority is to replace Wayne Angus from the Mabey Road Depot team, who resigned on 10 May 2006.

On 25 August 2006, Sharyn Westlake was appointed by the Governor-General, on the recommendation of the Minister of Commerce, to the Chartered Professional Engineers Council (CPEC). The CPEC is a statutory body established under the Chartered Professional Engineers Act 2002. It has three roles – to ensure that the competence and ethical standards are properly prepared, to hear appeals against decisions of the Registration Authority (IPENZ is the Registration Authority), and to audit an annual report to the relevant Minister of the Crown on the performance of the Registration Authority.

2. Waikanae River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

2.1 Jim Cooke Park

All possible work has been completed within the maintenance period. Some of the final berm works will not be able to be undertaken until the ground conditions suit, which is likely to be November 2006.

The flood hazard maps have been redrawn for the Waikanae/Waimeha/Ngarara area of the floodplain and this information will be forwarded to KCDC shortly, for formal inclusion in

their District Plan. Any requests for flood information are being assessed on the basis of the new flood hazard maps.

2.2 Friends of the Waikanae River

The Friends have continued planting throughout this season, beginning with a school Arbor day planting at Pukekawa Reserve. They are now deciding areas to plant next year so that ground preparation can begin. At this stage the most likely substantive new area will be on the south bank adjacent to Jim Cooke Park.

We are still working on incorporating the GIS planting data collected by the Friends into GW's planning maps. KCDC and GW technical staff are working together to achieve this.

The annual Waikanae River walkover is to be held on Wednesday 20th September.

3. Otaki River floodplain management [Graeme Campbell]

3.1 Friends of the Otaki River

The Friends have had a number of planting days this season focusing on two areas. The first area was at the estuary where they have planted a range of coastal plants along with 100 swamp ribbonwood. The second effort was to revegetate a new area of ground next to the Waimanu Stream at Chrystalls Bend. There was a good turnout from the group over a one week planting period.

The nursery continues to operate well, and seedlings including Pingao have been purchased for growing on for next season.

The annual Otaki River walkover is to be held on Thursday 21st of September and the AGM is planned for November 2006.

3.2 Chrystalls extended stopbank

We are currently working with KCDC to finalise the financial contribution to the cost of bringing the work forward. KCDC have raised concerns with the increased budget cost and we are working to address those concerns. This matter is considered under a separate agenda item.

The Landward alignment has been agreed to by both KCDC and GW as the preferred alignment and we are progressing preparation of the consent and designation documentation with a view to submitting these applications in early November 2006, subject to finalising an agreed funding contribution from KCDC.

We have also started negotiations with Winstones about stockpiling on their lease land fine material for the construction of the stopbank. There is plenty of coarse material available but the finer material is needed to blend with it to make an impervious mix, and importing this fine material is a substantial part of the project cost. If we can locally source the fine material over a longer period of time we may be able to make savings on the estimated cost.

3.3 South Waitohu stopbank

We still have not made any progress with the Porirua Otaki Trust Board regarding a form of agreement for access to construct and maintain the new South Waitohu stopbank. We are currently sending them some further information and will then arrange a meeting between

the Trust Board and one or two Regional Councillors to see whether they are able to reach an overall agreement that officers can then finalise.

3.4 Cross Section analysis and gravel extraction

A technical report analysing the cross section survey data and gravel balance for the Otaki River is almost complete and will be reported to the next Landcare Committee. The initial assessment indicates that the historical gravel movement trends are continuing and that gravel extraction is likely to need to continue for the next 5 years at approximately the same levels (40,000m³/year) as they have for the past 5 years.

4. Hutt River floodplain management [Daya Atapattu]

4.1 Ava to Ewen project

The Opahu Stream pumping station works progress has picked up after the June/July rains. The contractor, Juno Civil, is now backfilling the extended culvert and rock lining the outlet channel. The foundation for the pumping station is complete, and the contractor is now working on the superstructure.

Barry Foster will commence the surface reinstatement works of the Alicetown stopbank in late September 2006. The contractor has already sprayed the weeds on the stopbank.

Registration of Interest for the next major contract, the 'Ava Rail left stopbank reconstruction and waterway upgrade' was advertised on 6 September 2006, with applications closing on 29 September 2006. Tenders will only be invited from pre-qualified contractors.

The detailed design and tender documents for this contract are now progressing well. Opus International Consultants are still working with OnTrack engineers to finalise the detailed design under the bridge.

4.2 Boulcott/Hutt stopbank

The feasibility study is on programme. The results of the Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA) of the stopbank alignment options were confirmed at a specialist workshop held on 5 September 2006. The MCA results will be presented to a special meeting of the Hutt River Advisory Committee on 28 September 2006, before commencing the Round 2 consultation in October 2006.

4.3 Whirinaki Crescent stopbank

James Flanagan is currently finalising the tender documents for the 'Whirinaki Crescent upgrade' contract. The St Patricks College representative has advised that our latest land purchase proposal is acceptable in principle. Peter O'Brien is currently drawing up an agreement to be entered into between St Patricks College and GWRC which details all of the issues agreed.

The Wellington Golf Club (WGC) has advised that it has no real issues with the stopbank proposal. However, the stopbank issues are now tied up with 'Right of Way' issues along the riverside boundary of the golf course. At this stage, the negotiations are progressing well and we expect good outcomes for both GWRC and the WGC.

4.4 Wet extraction of Hutt River gravel

We expect the resource consents for the wet extraction to be granted without a hearing. All submitters have withdrawn their right to be heard. We expect the consents be granted in early October 2006.

4.5 District plan measures

Upper Hutt City Council officers are committed to a district plan change to modify the Hutt River flood hazard shown on the current district plan. However, the process for the proposed plan change has slowed down because of UHCC resourcing issues.

5. Planning and development services [Phillip Purves]

The following table summarises the number of formal, written requests attended to during July and August 2006:

	July / August 2006	YTD
Requests brought forward	4	4
Additional requests received	35	35
Responses provided	29	29
Outstanding requests	10	10

The results of the Mangaroa River Flood Hazard Assessment (including the Summary Report, Hydraulic Modelling Report and Erosion Hazard Report) have been forwarded to the UHCC and a meeting was held in late August 2006, between UHCC staff and Flood Protection staff, to discuss the outcomes of the study. The UHCC is now assimilating that information, in relation to its planning and engineering needs, and UHCC staff are already using the information proactively in regard to current river related matters and development proposals. Flood Protection staff are currently assisting UHCC with the interpretation of the flood hazard results.

6. Investigations

6.1 Waiwhetu Stream floodplain management study [John Eyles]

The latest Waiwhetu Stream Advisory Committee meeting was held on 7 September. The Committee was asked to endorse preferred structural options for both the lower Waiwhetu and Awamutu Streams, noting that a final decision should be made at the conclusion of Phase 2 studies (to be completed in June 2007). This is so the mix of structural and non structural flood mitigation solutions can be considered as a whole, before completing the floodplain management plan. The Committee also requested that officers prepare and lodge an application to the Ministry for the Environment for financial assistance for the remediation of contaminated sediments in the lower Waiwhetu Stream.

Phase 2 of the project, which will examine non structural options available for the Waiwhetu catchment, is now underway. Phase 2 studies include: culvert outlet investigations, source control investigations, site development and planning controls, valuation of floodway easements, flood proofing properties, bridge and general waterway improvements, upper catchment protection and flood warning and evacuation measures.

Phase 2 also includes continuing the successful consultation strategy from Phase 1 and writing the floodplain management plan.

A workshop for the Committee was held on 15 August which gave members the opportunity to ask questions about the project in a less formal setting. Clearly the scheduling and affordability of the structural options are areas that need further discussion between both councils.

The community consultation programme is continuing. There is a public meeting scheduled for 7 October at Gracefield School which will update local residents about the progress of the study. The format will be similar to the successful public meeting that was held in November last year at the same venue.

The last WSAC meeting for 2006 is scheduled for 14 November.

6.2 Waitohu Stream Study [Phil Wallace]

Report 06.491 of this Order Paper provides an update on progress with the Waitohu Stream Study and includes a breakdown on progress with implementing the reports recommendations.

The Stream Study summary report has been finalised after consultation and now requires committee approval. Catchment Management staff have undertaken a walk-over of the stream and prepared a draft work programme for future stream management.

7. Operations

7.1 Wellington [Jeff Evans]

7.1.1 Hutt River

With spring here and the days starting to get longer the planting season on the Hutt River is in full swing. Staff have been busy preparing sites prior to planting, and to date 6,325 willows have been planted along the river edge.

We have also been kept busy with the native planting programme and have planted 2,200 native plants along the river berms.

Willow rejuvenation work is in progress and this forms part of an ongoing maintenance programme to keep the plantings healthy. A 20 tonne digger fitted with a mulching head is used to mulch the old and dying willows and the area is then re-planted with new hybrid stock.

7.1.2 Hutt River Trail

Maintenance of the trail over this period has largely consisted of debris clearing and drainage work for water run off. Tagging has been removed from a number of berm signs in the lower valley and infill planting has been undertaken at Belmont and Taita Gorge.

7.1.3 Hutt River ranging services

Patrols have continued over the last period. There has been extensive vehicle damage done to both the berms and stop banks in the Taita and Pomare areas and we have been working with the Lower Hutt Police to help us resolve this problem as most of the damage is occurring late at night.

There have been very few events held over the last period, with just a few casual walking groups holding informal walks in the weekends.

7.1.4 Watercourses

Willow planting in the Wainuiomata River is now underway, with machine work being required to prepare some of the sites prior to planting. The Wainuiomata River had a 15 year flood event on the 7 July, which caused extensive damage to the willow lines throughout the urban and rural reaches of the river. Also, there has been lateral erosion in a number of areas and some significant changes to the channel alignment throughout the river system.

Weed spraying has been undertaken in the Taupo Stream in an effort to kill the excessive weed growth in the channel. Water backing up has caused waterlogging in many places including the sports field at the Plimmerton Domain, which is causing concern for the local Council.

7.2 Kapiti [Garry Baker]

7.2.1 General

Weather conditions on the Kapiti Coast over the past 6 weeks have been a mixture of “very wet” and sunny warm days.

Heavy rain on 25 and 26 August raised all major watercourse levels, with both Otaki and Waikanae Rivers experiencing annual return period flood events. No serious damage was sustained in any of the lower reaches ‘managed’ by Council.

7.2.2 Otaki Depot

The implement shed for the depot is now virtually completed. We are still waiting for grouting of the expansion cuts in the concrete floor slab and completion of the electrical work. Trenching for cable-laying for power, telephone and security services is currently underway.

The depot grounds are currently being re-contoured and landscaped (including the clearing of old trees) to make way for upgraded fencing and planting of native trees and shrubs.

7.2.3 Waikanae River

The continuing wet weather has further delayed the reinstatement of the south bank haul access track.

7.2.4 Otaki River

The majority of willow and poplar planting along both banks of the Otaki River has been completed, with some 1,200 willow poles, 275 willow rooted-stock, and 100 poplars planted.

A small area of berm was cleared at the estuary, allowing the Otaki Friends group to plant another 90 native plants and grasses. These have since been 'blanketed' with mulch by staff.

The Waimanu Stream has had both banks cleared of old willows and scrubby trees to make way for planting of native plants and grasses. The Otaki Friends group assisted staff in the planting of another 2,700 native trees, shrubs and grasses on the berm at Chrystalls Bend, and along both banks of the Waimanu Stream.

7.2.5 Kapiti watercourses

Waimeha Stream

The Waimeha Stream mouth was realigned on the 8th of August, just prior to the whitebait season.

Waitohu Stream

The annual planting run was carried out down the Waitohu Stream along both banks, and included the planting of 100 willows, 30 poplars, and 'pockets' of willow layering.

7.3 Operations support [Jacky Cox]

7.3.1 Asset management

We have recently completed the annual peer review inspection of our infrastructural assets. This year's inspection concentrated on the Hutt River and the comments of our reviewers (our Wairarapa colleagues) were favourable. One of our key tasks this year will be progressing and completing a peer review between Horizons Regional Council and Greater Wellington.

We are also continuing with the review of our Division's base asset management plan. The aim is to produce a document that reflects the common asset management policies and procedures for both the Wairarapa and Western rivers, in line with the new Catchment Management Division's responsibilities.

John Eyles and Mike Longworth are also participating in an organisational review of asset management information needs on behalf of Catchment Management. This project aims to provide a consistent asset management information system across council.

7.3.2 Isolated works

Over the last few months, the number of isolated works visits to landowners who have suffered damage to their property has increased. Most are either a final inspection before a subsidy payment is made or a repeat visit following the recent flood events which have further exacerbated existing damage.

7.3.3 Gravel extraction

Gravel extraction figures to the end of August 2006 are set out below.

River	Area	Contractor	Period Year 2006/07 (cubic metres)		Year 2005/06 (cubic metres)
			Period	Year	Full Year
Hutt	Estuary	Winstones	7,154	7,154	49,154
	River	Horokiwi	0	0	60,680
Otaki	River	Winstones	14,739	14,739	41,442
Waikanae	Above Greenaway Road	Various	0	0	9,210
	Below Greenaway Road	Gary Holland Earthmoving	0	0	5,040
TOTALS			21,893	21,893	165,526

Sharyn Westlake
Acting Manager, Flood Protection