

Environment Management Division update

For period ending 31 August 2006

1. Environmental Monitoring and Investigations (Ted Taylor)

1.1 Floodwarning

Flood events were recorded on 7-8 September and 26 September. The Ruamahanga River at Waihenga reached a peak of 4.21m on 26 September.

Warning statistics:

	August	Financial Year to Date	Previous Year to Date
No. of events	3	7	2
No of Lists Issued	12	53	8

The level of Lake Wairarapa dropped by 0.85m over the month. At the end of August the lake level was 0.22m above the winter target level of 9.95m.

1.2 Groundwater

Confined groundwater levels are recovering but still below the long term mean. However, as a result of the July rainfall unconfined/semi-confined aquifers are above the long term mean and in some case at the long term maximum.

1.3 Air quality

The concentrations of fine particles (PM₁₀) in ambient air were just over the limit set by the National Environmental Standard for Air Quality (NESAQ) on three nights this winter as recorded by our monitoring station at Wairarapa College, Cornwall Street, Masterton.

Fine particles are produced when wood or other fuel is burnt in wood burners or open fires. Fine particles are also produced by car exhausts and some industrial discharges, and are present in natural sources, such as wind-blown dust and sea spray.

The NESAQ sets an upper limit of 50 µg/m³ for PM₁₀ in outdoor air, measured as a 24-hour average (calculated from midnight to midnight). This limit is allowed to be exceeded on one day in any given 12-month period. Since the standard came into force on 1 September 2005, we have recorded three exceedences as follows:

- 52 µg/m³ on 9 June 2006;
- 52 µg/m³ on 2 July 2006; and
- 54 µg/m³ on 29 July 2006.

As required by the NESAQ, breaches of the PM₁₀ standard were publicly notified in the Wairarapa Times Age on 22 July 2006 and 2 September 2006.

1.4 Rainfall

Rainfall in August was above average in the Tararua Ranges and in the Wairarapa Valley, but below average for the Eastern hill country. This follows on from a very wet July.

The table below shows rainfall statistics for 3 representative rainfall sites.

1.4.1 Rainfall Totals

	August		Year to Date (Jan – Aug)	
	mm	% of average	mm	% of average
Angle Knob (Tararuas)	729	109	4707	108
Alloa (middle valley)	125	120	983	136
Tanawa Hut (eastern hills)	110	80	1202	129

1.5 Rivers

River flows in August were above average following on from the high flows in July and above average rainfall in the catchments.

The table below shows river flow statistics for the two representative sites.

1.5.1 River Flows

	August	
	m ³ /s	% of average
Waiohine	24.4	106
Waihenga	86.9	110

2. Environmental Regulation (AI Cross)

2.1 Consent Statistics

In the period from 1 July 2006 to 31 July 2006 we have received 23 Wairarapa-based applications. This compares with 15 in the same period last year.

In this period we have processed 21 consents compared with 5 last year.

Our median processing time (excluding s37 extensions) for non notified consents across the region was 14 working days.

Details of non-notified consents approved in the period are provided in report 06.397 to the Environment Committee.

2.2 Key Notified Consents Update

N & E Reid¹

We have assessed the report from Aqualinc Consultants, evaluating the capacity of the soils within the proposed effluent irrigation areas to receive wastewater effluent, and recently met with the applicant to discuss the report's recommendations.

The applicant is currently considering options including increasing the area of effluent disposal, and a decision on how the processing of the applications will be progressed will be made once the applicant responds to us.

Masterton District Council

Application for managing the closure of the Masterton Landfill and provide for ongoing waste management related activities has been placed on hold for further information. Once information is received, the applications will be notified which we expect will occur in October 2006.

Prema Investments Ltd

This is an application for discharging communal wastewater to land arising from a 6 lot subdivision at Whangaimoana. We are waiting for clarification from the applicant regarding off-site discharge effects, before we notify the applications².

M S Creary, MacLand Farms, E P M Handyside, Rotopai Farms:

These are applications for taking water from the Ruamahanga River being processed on a limited notified basis. Draft consent conditions have been approved by NZ Fish and Game Council and the Department of Conservation, and the majority of the applicants. As such, we anticipate that the applications will be processed without going to a full hearing.

Rathkeale College

Rathkeale College has applied to replace their existing permit to discharge primary treated sewage to a tributary of the Ruamahanga River. The application is to use the current system over the next two years until investigations into a new land-based system have been completed and new applications can be made. The application is being processed on a limited notified, however it still possible that in the interim the applicant may eventually gain approvals from the affected parties.

M B & H F Herrick

These are applications for replacement of existing permits to take groundwater from two existing bores at Taumata Island for irrigation purposes, being processed on a limited notified basis. Submissions have been received from Department of Conservation, QE2 Trust, and neighbouring land owners, who have raised concerns regarding the potential impacts on the Taumata Ox-bow reserve area. We anticipate a pre-hearing will be held in early October.

¹ These are applications to replace and extend on existing consents for the discharge of piggery effluent to land and odours to air.

² Expected to be notified jointly with South Wairarapa District Council.

2.3 Appeals and Objections

Masterton District Council

No progress has been made on the appeal by Masterton District Council against the decision on stage two the Castlepoint sea wall. The onus is on Masterton District Council to come up with an integrated foreshore management plan.

Martinborough Coastal Developments Ltd (MCDL):

This is an appeal by D T S Riddiford and the applicant on a joint decision that granted consent to MCDL³. Mediation will commence on 14th September, and is likely to focus on duration of consent and infrastructural issues.

A E & S W Benton Partnership:

This relates to an appeal by the applicant on a decision which declined consent to take groundwater from two bores for irrigation near Kahutara. GW Environmental Regulation staff have agreed to undertake further work which will be progressively submitted to all parties prior to the next mediation set down for 10 October.

2.4 Compliance and Enforcement

2.4.1 General

We recently have had discussions with Masterton District Council (MDC) regarding the future management of discharges from the old Masterton Gasworks site. MDC are working towards lodging an application next year, and in the meantime are looking into developing a groundwater monitoring programme to gather information on groundwater movement off-site.

2.4.2 Abatement Notices

No abatement notices were served in period since the last Committee meeting.

2.4.3 Infringement notices

No infringement notices were served in the period since the last Committee meeting.

2.4.4 Prosecution and Enforcement Orders

We have met on site with Lansdowne Developments Ltd and Bruce Buchanan Ltd⁴ following the resolution of the prosecution case. We now expect to see progress regarding revising existing on-site stormwater management practices.

³ Consent was granted for a 30 lot subdivision near Tora which included a communal wastewater system.

⁴ Regarding two unauthorised discharges of sediment laden water in March 2005.

2.5 Pollution Control

There have been four Wairarapa-related incidents reported to Greater Wellington staff since the last Committee meeting. None of those incidents have been significant and/or required enforcement action.

2.6 Department integration

Now that I have been appointed permanently to the Manager's position we are now able to increase efforts to integrate our department across the region. While we continue to develop shared documents and streamline administrative support, I intend to commence work with the Department to determine options for refining our roles and responsibilities within the new structure and ensuring we are able to continue to deliver a quality product and service to our customers.

3. Environmental Policy (Murray McLea)

3.1 Regional Policy Statement Review

The main areas of work on this project since the last meeting of the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee have been:

- Meetings with staff in the Wairarapa and Wellington office to discuss, and obtain feedback on, draft significant resource management issues for the region that are being developed.
- Meetings with territorial authorities from the western part of the region (7 August) and the Wairarapa (8 August) to discuss comments received on the discussion document "*Our Region – their future*", the draft significant resource management issues, and to provide further input to the process.
- A Councillor workshop on 15 August. The purpose of the workshop was to provide the Council with a summary of comments received on the discussion document and an opportunity to discuss the draft significant resource management issues recommended for inclusion in the next RPS.

3.2 Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan

The Wairarapa policy team attended the launch of the Proposed Wairarapa District Plan on 25 August 2006. The Proposed Plan was publicly notified on 26 August 2006. This is an important statutory document that sets out objectives, policies and rules that will guide and control how land is used in the Wairarapa. We now have the opportunity to make submissions on the Proposed Plan and the closing date is 30 October 2006.

The Wairarapa policy team is co-ordinating Greater Wellington's submission. Once submissions are made, there is a process that provides for further submissions, hearings, decisions by the district councils on the Proposed Plan and appeals to the Environment Court. You will be given regular updates as we go through this process.

3.3 Regional Plan Changes

Plan Change 2 to the Regional Freshwater Plan went to the 12 September meeting of the Policy Finance and Strategy Committee to be made operative. This will complete the plan change process. The plan change sets minimum flows and allocation limits for the Mangatarere Stream and its tributaries. This change to the Regional Freshwater Plan is based on the *Water Allocation Plan for the Mangatarere Catchment*, which was adopted by the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee in 2004.

Draft Plan Change 3 to the Regional Freshwater Plan has been approved by the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee for public consultation. The closing date for receiving comments on the draft plan change is Friday, 13 October. The draft plan change limits the taking of additional water from the following water bodies:

- Parkvale, Kahutara and eastern Martinborough Terraces aquifers
- Otukura Stream, Parkvale Stream, Papawai Stream, Makoura Stream, Stonestead (Dock) Creek and Tauweru River.

Once this round of consultation is complete, the contents of the plan change will be reviewed and the Council will decide whether to notify it as a statutory plan change. People will have the opportunity to make formal submissions on the plan change if it proceeds. The plan change will give statutory weight to policies (moratoria) the Rural Services Committee adopted in 2002 that additional water should not be allowed by resource consents to be taken from the water bodies identified.

3.4 Non-notified and notified submissions

3.4.1 Carterton District Council

Notified	Action
JK Stokes	2 lot subdivision, Main Road, Clareville. In progress.
JS McGovern	3 lot subdivision, Norfolk Road, Carterton. In progress.
Non Notified	Action
JA Henson	2 lot subdivision, SH2 and Waihekeke Road, Carterton. No comment.
JG Moorhead	2 lot subdivision, Brooklands Road, Carterton. In progress
Kakara Partnership Ltd.	10 lot subdivision, Chester Road, Carterton. In progress.
Leydon Downs Ltd.	5 lot subdivision, SH2, Carterton. Comment made on effluent disposal and increased pressure on urban fringe. Also surface flooding, groundwater/surface water moratorium and rail corridor development.
M Van Hulsel	Second dwelling, Main Road, Carterton. No comment.
RG Parker	3 lot subdivision, Waiohine Gorge Road, Carterton. Commented on effluent disposal and supporting aerobic treatment system.

3.4.2 Masterton District Council

Notified

Chopsticks Partnerships Ltd

Mr Golf Ltd.

Action

16 lot subdivision, Riversdale Road, Riversdale. In progress.

7 lot subdivision, Masterton-Martinborough Road, Masterton. In progress.

3.4.3 South Wairarapa District Council

Notified

Awaiti Land Co.

DK & B Thomson
Pinehaven Orchards Ltd.

VH Read

W&J Hayles

Action

2 lot subdivision, Regent Street, Martinborough. Submission on effluent disposal, supporting connection to urban system for lot 1 and aerobic treatment system for lot 2.

2 lot subdivision, SH2, Greytown. No comment.

8 lot subdivision, Wood Street, Greytown. Submission on effluent disposal, potential contamination of town water supply and potential flooding issue.

2 lot subdivision, Weld Street, Martinborough. Submission on nearby potentially contaminated site and possible contamination of groundwater.

3 lot subdivision, Woodside & Humphries Road, Greytown. No comment.