



REGIONAL COAST, LAND AND NURSERY MANAGEMENT

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Council on activities carried out under the Annual Plan 2019-20 and the Regional Coast and Land Operational Plan 2019-20. The report is presented in four sections: activity undertaken, progress against Annual Plan outputs, progress against Operational Plan outputs, and Environmental Grant expenditure.
- 1.1.2 Land Management activities included in this report focus on the delivery of the Whanganui Catchment Strategy, soil health, industry partnerships and nursery management. Also included are activities relating to advice and support for soil conservation and good management practice. Delivery of the Sustainable Land Use Initiative is not included.
- 1.1.3 The Land Management activities link to Horizons' Long-term Plan 2018-28 and to the non-regulatory methods of the One Plan (Chapter 5, Policies 5-1 and 5-5). The Operational Plan targets for 2019-20 have yet to be approved.

2 ACTIVITY

2.1 GENERAL

- 2.1.1 This report focusses on the work carried out within the current financial year from 1 July–15 August 2019.
- 2.1.2 The winter period has been relatively mild. July was unseasonably warm and dry, but August has seen a return to more normal rainfall patterns.
- 2.1.3 June, July and August is traditionally a busy time for land staff. Time is spent coordinating planting programmes including afforestation and space planting. Poplar and willow pole distribution began in June and continued through to early August. Poles are delivered to farmers or available for pick-up from depots. Staff provided advice, coordinated contractors and demonstrated pole siting and planting techniques.
- 2.1.4 Access onto properties has been good and tree planting activities have proceeded to plan.

2.2 SOIL HEALTH

- 2.2.1 There was no soil health activity during this period.

2.3 INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

BALLANCE FARM ENVIRONMENT AWARDS (BFEA)

- 2.3.1 The BFEA regional committee met in July. Entries are now open for this year's awards programme.

POPLAR AND WILLOW RESEARCH TRUST (P&WRT)

- 2.3.2 The Trust circulated its Poplar and Willow Breeding Programme report for June 2019. This was published through Plant and Food Research.

OTHER

- 2.3.3 Staff attended a number of field days and meetings including:
- A deer industry expo at Manfeild;
 - Four community catchment group meetings;
 - A project completion meeting for aerial/hill country cropping. This was a joint-funded project between the Ministry for the Environment, Environment Canterbury and Horizons. The project delivered a sediment loss and mitigation calculator tool for proposed hill country cropping projects;
 - Agricultural Communities Respecting the Environment (ACRE) meeting to discuss partnership opportunities;
 - Liaison with Manawatū District Council regarding dune erosion at Himatangi Beach;
 - Collaboration meeting with other North Island regional councils; and
 - Hosted and presented to Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) forest policy staff at the Woodville office.
- 2.3.4 Work with the Land Managers' Special Interest Group (SIG), which coordinates land management activities across the regional sector, has included:
- Planning a SIG meeting in Wellington in September; and
 - Input into a proposed Farm Environment Plan framework through MPI.

WHANGANUI CATCHMENT STRATEGY (WCS) AND WHANGANUI RIVER ENHANCEMENT TRUST (WRET)

- 2.3.5 Staff formally reported to WRET in June, resulting in WRET resolving to approve funding for the 2019-20 financial year.
- 2.3.6 The annual report to WRET will be completed in time for their AGM in October.

2.4 NURSERIES

2.4.1 Harvesting of Horizons' nursery sites was completed in mid-August.

2.5 STAFF TRAINING

2.5.1 Staff training has included health and safety training relating to 4WDs and trailers, motorcycles and ATVs.

2.6 THE NEXT THREE MONTHS (AUGUST–OCTOBER)

2.6.1 This is traditionally the busy period for the team and will include:

- Completing pole deliveries for Environmental Grant projects;
- Liaising with landowners, many of whom will be new clients that require more input to ensure works are carried out to the appropriate standard;
- Commencing nursery clean-up post-harvest, mulching waste material and prunings; and
- Commencing a spray programme in the nursery. Giant willow aphid is present this year and a spray programme may be implemented to manage it.

3 REPORT ON PROGRESS – OUTPUTS FOR ANNUAL PLAN 2019-20

3.1.1 The Annual Plan 2019-20 outputs are noted in Table 1. At this stage of the year, no reporting of these targets is proposed. The table is included to provide overview of the work programme.

Table 1: Annual Plan 2019-20 targets and progress for the year to date (YTD)

MEASURE	PROGRESS FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD				YTD	TARGET	% YTD	Predicted Result
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th				
Regional Land and Coastal, Industry, WCS and Nursery								
Manage Environmental Grant programmes to deliver erosion reduction works (hectares)						175		
Support for at least five industry initiatives that promote sustainable land use via partnership initiatives						5		
Operate Council nursery and source additional poles to deliver for erosion control programmes						30,000		

4 REPORT ON PROGRESS – OUTPUTS FOR OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019-20

4.1.1 The Land Management activities and projects during 2019-20 are set out below. These programmes may be modified in the final Operational Plan. At this stage of the year, only limited reporting is possible. The table is included to provide overview of the work programme.

Table 2: Operational Plan 2019-20 targets and progress for the year to date (YTD)

MEASURE	PROGRESS FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD				YTD	TARGET	% YTD	Predicted Result
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th				
Regional Land and Coastal								
Provide advice to ratepayers and support applications to Environmental Grant projects (# projects)	59					50		
Whanganui Catchment Strategy								
Provide advice to ratepayers and support applications to Environmental Grant projects (# projects)	19					40		
Maintain funding partnership with WRET; complete annual report (# reports)						1		
WRET supported demonstration sites (3 sites)						2		
Maintain relationship with Taumarunui Sustainable Land Management Group (# meetings)						2		
Soil Health								
Promote and demonstrate soil health through Visual Soil Assessment (# demonstrations)						2		
Maintain regional SOE soil quality monitoring and complete report (# reports)						1		
Industry Partnerships								
Support BFEA programme within our region, including entrants, judging, awards night and field day. Maintain Council presence on Horizons Region committee (# awards)						1		
Support PWRT in delivery of advice to regional councils and farmers through TAG, nursery managers and finance admin. (# annual reports received)						1		
Nurseries								
Support wider collaboration with other regional councils, farmers and commercial nurseries (# meetings with each supplier)						1		



Photo 1: Delivery of Dynex sleeves to Whanganui office in readiness for the winter 2019 planting season.
Photo courtesy of John Jamieson.

5 REPORT ON EXPENDITURE – ENVIRONMENTAL GRANT FUNDING

- 5.1.1 Environmental Grant funding is in place to support landowners to undertake works that will reduce erosion and protect the environment. This funding is targeted slightly differently between the Regional Land and Coast (RL&C) environment grant and the WCS grant. Under the WCS, support from WRET enables a greater variety of work to be funded and at higher grant rates in some areas.

Table 3: Work area and budget expenditure for the year to date

Grant Type	WORK AREA (ha)				BUDGET (\$)			
	AP Target	Complete	Allocated	AP % Complete	AP Budget	Complete	Allocated	AP % Complete
WCS	75				113,000*1		57,354	
RL&C	100				80,000		88,847	
Total	175				193,000		146,201	

Note *1 this is \$50,000 Horizons and \$63,000 WRET

- 5.1.2 Fifty-nine regional Environmental Grant projects and 19 WCS grant projects have been allocated.
- 5.1.3 WRET has signaled an increase in allocation from \$53,000 to \$63,000 with more funding available on further application. They have also allocated \$12,000 to demonstration projects.
- 5.1.4 Some of the projects may be re-allocated to SLUI paddock works. These will be assessed over the next month.