

Report No.	20-170
Information Only - No Decision Required	

LOWER MANAWATU SCHEME (LMS) - RIVER MANAGEMENT UPDATE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this item is to inform members of the **Manawatu River Users' Advisory Group (MRUAG)** of **Lower Manawatu Scheme (LMS)** management issues that may have some impact on the recreational use of the river over the period December 2020 to June 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 20-170.

3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. There is no direct financial impact arising from matters discussed in this item.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. This is a public item and therefore Council may deem this sufficient to inform the public.

5. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 5.1. There is no significant business risk impact from matters discussed in this item.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1. It has been business as usual, with relatively settled weather and dry conditions throughout winter. Staff have been able to concentrate on vegetation management and stopbank maintenance and some gravel management activities.
- 6.2. Erosion repairs are easily seen from the river when just completed, but will be covered in vegetation when established. Railway irons will be used to anchor tree works and rock or concrete rip-rap to protect the toe of the bank. These assets may be submerged and care should also be taken if approaching banks on the outside of bends.
- 6.3. Contractors will also be engaged at various sites on the Manawatū River to undertake vegetation management work. A large amount of this work has recently been completed between Ashhurst and throughout the city. The majority of upcoming sites are in rural areas, in particular the reaches of the Manawatū below Palmerston North City. These works will be undertaken from the river banks. Any disruption to recreational river users should be minor and staff will endeavour to keep any impacts to a minimum.
- 6.4. Railway irons from old river protection works are still being discovered in the Manawatu and the Oroua Rivers. Whenever these are found, they will be removed as soon as conditions allow. River users are urged to remain vigilant for these hazards when using the river. All visible irons have been removed, however there is a chance that some irons may have been missed and care must be taken. Any such hazards observed should be referred to Horizons River Management staff.

01 December 2020

- 6.5. Of particular note are the railway irons that form the river training works adjacent to Hoult's Yard on the Manawatū River. Hoult's Yard is located opposite Te Matai Road, on the true left bank at river distance 90km, with Fitzherbert Bridge at river distance 79km. A previous attempt to remove these irons failed however another is planned to be made this coming summer season.
- 6.6. The Whirikino Trestle Bridge has been completed with traffic now using the new structures. Works to remove the old concrete trestle structure are almost complete. The contractor and NZTA are currently in discussion around removing the old bridge across the Manawatū River. If removal is the chosen outcome, the contractor has not yet finalised the methodology for removing the existing bridge; it is unlikely that a temporary bridge will be built, the preferred option being working from the river edge.
- 6.7. The contractor will keep access to the Whirikino boat ramp open at all times during the works.
- 6.8. Gravel extraction activities ceased in the Manawatū River above the city a few years ago due to degraded river bed levels. Bed levels are recovering and in some locations beaches have grown so much they are causing erosion of the opposing river bank. To try to resolve this issue planning is underway for limited gravel extraction at selected locations above the city.
- 6.9. The works at Ashhurst Domain are establishing well with further plantings being added recently between the rock groynes stabilising the gravel beach. The high flow channel of the Pohangina River has also been extensively planted and a bund constructed at the upstream end to reinstate the rivers alignment back to its previous channel. The upstream rock groyne continues to take the brunt of the Manawatū River flow and has been topped up with rock. A rock lining has also been extended from the rock groyne a short way up the adjacent Pohangina high flow channel.
- 6.10. The Manawatū River bank upstream of the rock groynes has been bolstered with further rope and rail groynes in an attempt to stop the top rock groyne from being outflanked. River users should be careful when navigating this reach.
- 6.11. With river access being restored to vehicles from the state highway bridge there has been a significant increase in vehicle use and unfortunately, damage. It appears 4WD users have taken it upon themselves to construct additional access tracks and ramps throughout the area which has either damaged erosion protection assets or put them at significant risk. Fly tipping has also become a problem, as has vandalism to fencing and gate assets within the Ashhurst Domain. Staff continue to monitor and repair damage to assets and have attempted to discourage these activities with limited success.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

- 7.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Jenna Buchanan
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GROUP MANAGER RIVER MANAGEMENT

ANNEXES

There are no attachments to this report.