

3. OCTOBER 2000 STORM- DAMAGE CLEAN UP AND REPLANTING OPERATIONS

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Corporate Plan Output: Major Parks Tree Replacement Projects & Street Tree Planting Replacements.	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the current situation as to the tree operations relating to the damage caused by the October 2000 storm.

The storm event during October last year caused severe damage to trees along the Heathcote River and to coniferous plantings on the Port Hills roads and reserves.

Most of the wind damage along the Heathcote River was dealt with shortly after the storm, trees found to have been lifting at the roots also having been felled once the main emergency work had been completed. Replacement planting in the section of river between Tennyson Street and the end of Ashgrove Terrace is currently in progress.

Dealing with the wind-thrown pine plantations, which received massive damage, has proved to be difficult and costly due to the steep terrain and lack of formed access tracks for heavy logging machinery. With the Lower Bowenvale Reserve in particular, safety was a major consideration in clearing the fallen timber. Of prime concern was the safety of the logging crews carrying out the work, also the safety of the adjacent properties along the lower slopes that were at risk of being damaged by rolling tree stumps and dislodged boulders. Another consideration was the effect the logging operation and the construction of temporary extraction tracks would have on the erosion prone soils of the plantations. Erosion control was the principal reason for establishing the pine plantations on these sites in the first place.

The logging operation was halted without clearing the top north-east corner of the reserve of fallen trees as the overall costs of the work had risen to \$110,000 and there was considerable concern that the work would destabilise the soils in the steep water gullies with the risk of the eroded material flowing down on the properties below.

This plantation has been replanted with native trees and shrubs instead of pines, as, for soil conservation purposes alone, they are considered to be a more sustainable option in view of the failure of pines in storm conditions.

Duncan Park, off Port Hills Road, also suffered major wind-throw damage on the conifer plantation on the west side of the hillside. All the fallen trees have been cleared from this site and the area is about to be replanted also with native trees and shrubs.

Victoria Park and other hill reserves received severe damage also. Some of the more accessible, high public use areas have been cleared of wind-thrown timber, but other large areas (in particular the Upper Bowenvale plantation across the valley on the east side of Victoria Park) remain untouched. The overall costs of clearing this plantation are estimated as \$200,000. The monetary recoveries from the sale of the timber taken from the site will not be high as the fallen timber will have deteriorated and the standing trees still on the immature side to achieve good log prices. There are also no funds available in the current years budget for an operation of this scale. The full range of considerations involved in clearing the plantation will be assessed later in the year and the findings presented to the Board and the Parks and Recreation Committee for a decision. At present the Parks and Waterways Unit is still awaiting Resource Consent for the clearing operation.

Heathcote Domain suffered extensive tree damage in the storm with significant bluegum plantings being destroyed. Replacement planting will be carried out shortly. The planting will be in accordance with the landscape concept plan approved for the Domain from which the landscape architect, John Marsh, has produced a more detailed design.

City Care has conducted a city-wide survey of storm damaged and missing street trees and is progressing with replacement planting.

Recommendation: That the information be received.