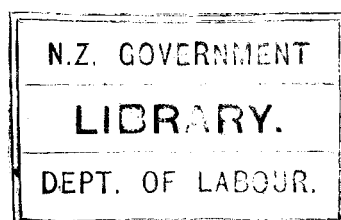


1909.
NEW ZEALAND.



WANGANUI RIVER TRUST

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

WANGANUI RIVER TRUST.

MEMBERS.—T. D. Cummins (Government nominee), Chairman; J. T. Hogan, M.P., Wanganui; G. V. Pearse, M.P., Patea; W. Ritchie, Chairman, Waitotara County Council; D. Mason, Chairman, Wanganui County Council; J. H. Keesing, President, Chamber of Commerce; C. E. Mackay, Mayor; T. B. Williams, W. G. Bassett, and J. T. Stewart, elected by the ratepayers of the Borough of Wanganui.

REPORT.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 31st March, 1909.

I have pleasure in reporting on the work performed and condition of the Upper Wanganui River for year ended the 31st March, 1909.

The conditions of the river and the weather for the improvement works have not been so favourable as in some past years for the economic prosecution of the work, still I venture to hope that you will consider the schedule of works completed show a good return for the expenditure.

It is pleasing to again be able to report that the benefit of the river improvement works have much assisted settlers both from Taumarunui downstream and from Wanganui to the newly opened country lying below Pipiriki, notably the Ahu Ahu, Te Tuhi, Ohotu, and Tauakira No. 2 Blocks. These lands are sparsely roaded, and much of the settlers' requirements are carried on the river-steamers.

The volume of tourist traffic has also been apparently satisfactory from Taumarunui to Wanganui.

The energies of the Trust have been mainly directed to the improvement of the channels in the upper reaches of the river, it having been found necessary to employ one party for a short period in maintaining the channel below Pipiriki. I would again emphasize the fact of the stability and permanency of the work now being undertaken; most of the walls constructed at the inception of the work are still intact. This more especially refers to the walls or groynes built of large boulders and rock in the lower part of the river. To overcome the difficulty found in the upper reaches of the river of obtaining suitable stone for constructing walls, these have been mostly built with shingle enclosed in wire netting, and, although certainly not so stable as stone, have achieved the purpose, and appear to have considerable life.

The steamer traffic has been fully maintained, without a single accident and without interruption.

Mr. J. T. Stewart will supplement this with a report made after personal inspection and observation.

The improvement works consist of construction of walls or groynes, the material of which has been stone where procurable, or shingle enclosed with No. 10 gauge wire netting of such mesh as was suitable for enclosing the shingle found in the locality, the nets being made by the Trust's employees. A considerable length of channel has also been cleared of snags and boulders, the net results being most satisfactory. The following schedule shows the walls completed, with the length of each. The number denotes the number of the rapid as shown on Mr. J. T. Stewart's plan of the river, published in parliamentary paper C.—15, 1908.

No.							
1.	Ngahuinga, No. 2 wall from R. B.	..	396 ft.	by 6 ft.	by 2 ft.	6 in.	
14.	Towhenua, wall from R. B.	..	321 ft.	„ 4 ft. 9 in.	„ 3 ft.	6 in.	
14.	„ (apron)	..	291 ft.	„ 3 ft.	„ 3 ft.		
16.	Tauteti, additions and repairs	..	26 ft.	„ 16 ft.	„ 4 ft.		
16.	„ new wall	..	26 ft.	„ 16 ft.	„ 4 ft.		
16.	„ wall from R. B.	..	222 ft.	„ 7 ft.	„ 3 ft.		
16.	„ No. 2 wall R. B.	..	239 ft.	„ 4 ft.	„ 3 ft.		
16.	„ (apron)	..	156 ft.	„ 3 ft.	„ 2 ft.	6 in.	
16.	„ cross-wall	..	228 ft.	„ 6 ft.	„ 3 ft.	6 in.	
16.	„ (apron)	..	126 ft.	„ 3 ft. 6 in.	„ 1 ft.	6 in.	

No.									
18.	Wairere, wall from R. B.	..	..	395 ft.	by	4 ft. 6 in.	by	2 ft. 9 in.	
19.	Pataaua, wall from R. B.	..	..	491 ft.	„	4 ft. 8 in.	„	2 ft. 9 in.	
19.	„ wall from L. B.	..	..	243 ft.	„	4 ft. 6 in.	„	2 ft. 8 in.	
20.	Raparua, wall from R. B.	..	..	461 ft.	„	5 ft.	„	3 ft.	
20.	„ wall from L. B.	..	..	253 ft.	„	5 ft. 6 in.	„	4 ft. 10 in.	
20.	„ additions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
23.	Taitaka, additions and repairs	..	..	74 ft.	„	4 ft.	„	2 ft.	
23.	„ wall from R. B.	..	..	40 ft.	„	4 ft.	„	3 ft.	
24.	Horoporoaki, wall from L. B.	..	..	360 ft.	„	4 ft. 6 in.	„	3 ft.	
24.	„ repairs and apron added								
	to wall from R. B.	..	..	345 ft.	„	3 ft.	„	2 ft.	
28.	Wall from R. B.	..	..	583 ft.	„	4 ft. 4 in.	„	2 ft. 6 in.	
91.	Kahuitara, wall from L. B.	..	..	3,213 ft.	„	5 ft. 2 in.	„	3 ft.	
91.	„ wall from L. B.	..	..	198 ft.	„	6 ft.	„	3 ft.	
91.	„ (apron)	..	..	264 ft.	„	3 ft.	„	1 ft. 3 in.	
91.	„ wall from R. B.	..	..	396 ft.	„	6 ft. 3 in.	„	3 ft. 2 in.	
93.	Ohuraiti, wall from L. B.	..	..	649 ft.	„	5 ft.	„	3 ft. 4 in.	
233.	Below Pipiriki, wall from L. B.	..	..	594 ft.	„	4 ft. 6 in.	„	3 ft.	

This makes a total of 10,580 ft., or 160 chains 20 ft.

The walls under construction but not completed at date are: No. 33, Pouwhakamara; and No. 101, Otahapa.

The work at Tauteti (No. 16) has been the most difficult on the river, and it is satisfactory to say that a safe channel now exists in this previously difficult and dangerous place.

No. 101, Kahuitara, the reach below the houseboat at Ohura, has also been a heavy job, the river here being broad and shallow, necessitating walls totalling in length 3,213 ft.

There is still further work to be done in the upper reaches to facilitate navigation in low conditions of the river that occur in the summer months, and mostly when the tourist season is at its height and the steamer traffic taxed to its utmost.

I would urge that a sum of not less than £3,000 be placed on the estimates for the work in the ensuing season.

I am, &c.,

T. D. CUMMINS, Chairman.

W. C. Kensington, Esq., Under-Secretary for Lands, Wellington.

REPORT by JOHN STEWART, Member of the River Trust.

T. D. Cummins, Esq.,

Chairman Wanganui River Trust.

Wanganui, 20th May, 1909.

In the month of March, 1909, from the 7th to the 13th, I visited the River Trust works between Raorika and Taumarunui, as requested by you.

The state of the river was favourable, the water being low, the gauge at Pipiriki showing 2 in. below the assumed low summer level.

In the river below Pipiriki maintenance has been attended to this season. A new stone training-wall has been put in from the left bank at the wide shallow near Ramahiku, some way below where the river-bank road from Upokongaro comes out to the river-side. Several other broad shallow runs might with advantage be similarly treated. In this lower river it is advisable to construct these walls of stone, which is generally available, as the shingle here, being small, is not so favourable for netting walls as it is in the upper reaches of the river. Generally in the upper river, also, stone walls are preferable where stones can be got at a reasonable outlay.

Between Pipiriki and Tangarakau Junction the principal work requiring attention is the improvement of the Upper Ngaporo Rapid, No. 189, which should be attended to next season as soon as the river gets low enough for favourable work. This applies also to some minor matters already noted, and to the general going-over of the river-channels from the Retaruke Junction down to Pipiriki, removing snags, stones, &c., which, although not involving heavy work, can only be done when the water gets low enough.

In the upper reaches between the Retaruke Junction and Taumarunui landing, a large amount of work has been done this season in constructing training-walls and removing boulders, &c., in the channels, and the river navigation has been much improved thereby. These works are detailed in the Chairman's annual report for this year. There are a good many places requiring similar attention to bring them up to the level of the general improvement done to the channels. Careful maintenance, in this portion of the river especially, will always be required. The foreman of works to the River Trust, Mr. A. Marshall, has carried out these works judiciously and with care and attention.

It was mentioned in a former report that the question of suitable boats for the navigation of these upper reaches was an important element. The proprietor of the river traffic service steamers has this year placed on the upper reaches what seems to be an eminently suitable boat. It is built of steel, and was constructed by Messrs. Yarrow and Co., of Glasgow, Scotland. Her dimensions are 63 ft. in length by 6 ft. 6 in. in width, and she has a draught, when light, of 9½ in.; with forty passengers, 16 in.; and with sixty passengers, 17 in. to 18 in. The power is an oil-engine of 45-horse power. She is open, with cross-seats, and a protective awning for wet weather. This class of boat appears very suitable for tourist traffic in the upper reaches of the river.

Besides the tourist traffic, there is a growing traffic in connection with the settlement of the lands adjoining the river on both sides. The opening-up of roads abutting at suitable places on the river is necessary to allow of this, and evidently much attention is being given by the Government to this matter.

Of these roads, there are the following already located and partly under construction or constructed (as yet they are chiefly horse-tracks, or what are commonly called 6 ft. tracks) :—

Approximate Distance from Wanganui by River, in Miles.	Roads.	Position near Rapids given on Map of River published in Parliamentary Paper C.—15, 1908.	Formation generally as a Horse-track or 6 ft. Track unless otherwise mentioned.
<i>On Left Bank of River.</i>			
142	Tunakotikoti ..	Rapid No. 8 ..	This not yet formed.
138	Makokomiko ..	„ No. 20 ..	Formed inland to railway-line.
137	Hikamutu ..	„ No. 22 ..	Formed nearly through.
132	Te Maire ..	„ No. 35 ..	Formed 5 or 6 miles in from river.
121	Kokakonui ..	„ No. 72 ..	Formed some miles in from river.
117	Kokakoriki ..	„ Nos. 80–81 ..	Formed through to near Raurimu, on railway-line.
110½	Mangaohutu ..	„ No. 97 ..	Formed for some miles in from river.
108½	Te Rata ..	„ No. 104 ..	Above Retaruke Junction, formed 3 or 4 miles in from river.
108	Retaruke Valley	Retaruke Junction ..	Formed, except some 3 miles of a gap. This is the principal line inland to railway.
67½	Arawhata ..	Rapid No. 186 ..	Not yet formed. This is located to the River Trust Endowment Block of 10,000 acres, which is now occupied.
55	Pipiriki–Ohakune	Pipiriki ..	A main dray-road to Raetihi and railway-line.
49	Otaranoho ..	Hiruharama ..	Jerusalem. Dray-road about 4 miles in from river.
40	Matahiwi–Ohotu	Rapid No. 212 ..	Formed into Ohotu, and joins Parapara–Raetihi Road.
26½	Pitangi ..	Near No. 229 ..	Formed about 4½ miles inland from river.
..	River Bank ..	On left bank of river, from near Rapid No. 236 upwards	This connects with the old road system near Upokongaro, and is formed, with some gaps, to about 30 miles from Wanganui.
<i>On Right Bank of River.</i>			
128	Te Aukopae ..	Near No. 52 ..	This goes inland to the settlements on the Ohura Valley, and is in use.
85	Tangarakau–Whangamomona	Tangarakau River Junction	Goes inland to the Whangamomona Settlements. This is formed as a dray-road for some miles from Whangamomona, and the remainder of the length is nearly completed as a horse-track to the Wanganui River.
45	A road-line from about opposite Ranana	Opposite Ranana ..	This goes into the upper part of the Ahu Ahu Settlements, and is not yet formed.
33	Ahu Ahu ..	Near Rapid No. 220	This is formed about 14 miles inland from the river.
14	Kauarapaoa ..	Near Raorikia ..	Formed in some miles from river.

The importance of continuing the location and forming of roads inland from the river-banks is very evident, viewing the Wanganui River as a main highway direct into the interior, and requiring these branch roads for settlement interests.

It is not superfluous to refer to the question of the preservation of the bush scenery along this tourist route. Last year I reported in detail on the existing state of the bush scenery along the whole river course in the River Trust district between Raorikia and Taumarunui (parliamentary paper C.—15, 1908). On the present trip I observed recent bush-burnings in both the upper and the lower river which have occurred since that report was made. This is likely to go on in an increasing ratio wherever the river-banks have not been secured as a public domain.

JOHN T. STEWART.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation not given; printing (1,550 copies, £2 7s. 6d.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1909.

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...

...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...
...the ... of ... is ...