

I can unhesitatingly say that the river service still continues an important factor in opening and developing the country adjacent to the river, and this is evidenced by the largely increased goods traffic from both the Wanganui and Taumarunui ends.

From Wanganui the service is handled by the steamers leaving Wanganui for Pipiriki together three times weekly, carrying cargo and passengers for wayside landings, and also from Taumarunui to Pipiriki three times weekly. The tourist traffic, even despite curtailment due to the war, is considerable, and no doubt under ordinary circumstances would have been a record one. Downstream from Pipiriki the passenger-list is generally a full one, comprising settlers and tourists. During the wool season the boats are fully laden, and it is noticeable that larger quantities of wool are carried each succeeding year. The increasing revenue derived from tolls on cargo is ample evidence of the growing importance of the river as a highway.

In concluding my report I would voice the opinion that the future of the Trust is such that without better arrangements are made for its continuance it will be for all time a struggling body, unable to deal with a valuable asset to the Dominion—strangled for want of sufficient financial assistance. The present system of having to wait for parliamentary subsidies is, to say the least, a crude one, and has in the past proved cumbersome and expensive. I may point out that the present revenue of the Trust from its endowment is only £201 8s. 8d. per annum, and tolls from goods carried by river steamers £200. The maintenance of 130 miles of river (cutting out the fourteen miles controlled by the Harbour Board) is a serious matter, more especially as the river improvement works have not approached the stage of completion, and there is still yet much to be done in that direction. The Trust has had to be content in the past with Government subsidies, and I would here point out that there is no certainty of these, or to what extent Parliament may from time to time subsidize the Trust. Again, the subsidies are not usually granted till the end of the parliamentary session—usually in November—whereas the active work on the river should be commenced in September, and preparation of material, &c., at a much earlier date.

I would offer a suggestion that a Commission should be set up during the next session of the House to take into consideration a better system of providing financial assistance, so that the work on the river could be proceeded with in a more systematic and economical manner.

I append a schedule showing the work that is necessary, and an estimated cost of the same.

T. D. CUMMINS, Chairman.

SCHEDULE SHOWING CONDITION OF CONSTRUCTED WALLS OR GROYNES ON RIVER FROM TAUMARUNUI TO WANGANUI, AND ALSO NECESSARY WORK REQUIRED TO PUT THE RIVER-CHANNEL INTO WORKING CONDITION FOR THE SAFE PASSAGE OF STEAMERS AND LAUNCHES.

[NOTE.—The cost of work is estimated. The names and numbers of the several rapids, shallows, or places where work is necessary and mentioned are to be found on reference to the map of the Wanganui River compiled by the late Mr. J. T. Stewart in 1903.]

Number and Name of Rapid, and Remarks as to Requirements and Condition.			Probable Cost of Work.		
			£	s.	d.
2. Pungahuru No. 1.—Requires new cap netting and lacing down	...	...	10	10	0
4. Rurumaiakatea.—New wire netting and lacing down and filling	...	...	20	0	0
6. Te Miro.—Rough stone wall from right bank (3 chains), also large stones to be removed from channel	...	...	30	0	0
11. Kokirae.—Stones and large boulders to be removed	...	...	5	0	0
12. Pokaka.—Stones and large boulders to be removed	...	...	5	0	0
15. Rakauwhakamatuku.—A new wall urgently required from left bank, to be constructed of large stones	...	...	72	0	0
17. Porokurangi.—A new wire-net wall is urgently required from the left bank (about 2 chains)	...	...	48	0	0
23. Titakataka.—Left-hand wall now there requires to be lengthened and straightened	...	...	20	0	0
26. Omaka.—Wall from right bank requires repairs	...	...	15	0	0
27. Auhaurua No. 1.—Wall requires to be extended 2½ chains	...	...	60	0	0
30. Onepoto.—Boulders to be removed	...	...	7	10	0
31. Manawanawa.—Boulders to be removed from channel	...	...	10	0	0
33. Pouwhakamaru.—Left-hand wire-net wall requires repairs	...	...	12	10	0
35. Motutara.—New wall, to be constructed of wire net and shingle, is urgently required here (about 8 chains), and will cost about	...	...	160	0	0
36. Te Hinau.—This is a long shallow. A wall would be better here, although not as urgent as other places, and can be held over.					
38 and 39. Te Rua a Te Namu.—These are shallows, and would be better for walls to be constructed; these can be held over meanwhile.					
40. Te Rata.—Boulders require to be removed from channel	...	...	15	0	0
45. Otunui.—A landing-wharf is badly wanted here	...	...	75	0	0
46. Te Pera.—Boulders require to be removed from channel	...	...	10	0	0
51. Omarutihona.—A wire-net and shingle wall required from the left bank	...	...	72	0	0
53. Okupae.—Papa in mid-channel requires removal	...	...	8	0	0
56. Taura Kawau.—Wall required from left bank	...	...	72	0	0
57. Toka Ate Atua.—Papa to be removed	...	...	10	0	0
58. Komako.—Wall from left bank is necessary. Large stone is available here for this wall	...	...	80	0	0
61. Paparoa.—Stones to be removed from top of rapid	...	...	10	0	0