

Government nominees. The Government nominees to be designated "River Commissioners," and to be appointed for three years by the Minister of Public Works, one of the Government nominees being preferably a Stipendiary Magistrate and the other an engineer with expert knowledge of river-control. The same Government nominees to act on both trusts.

Your Commissioners further recommend that the duties of these controlling authorities be clearly set out as follows:—

- (1.) To have detail surveys, plans, estimates, and specifications made for carrying out the works recommended above. These plans shall be approved by the Government nominees on the trust.
- (2.) To assess the total sum to be derived from each district, and to fix the rates on all properties in each district on a classification basis in the ratios of the benefits to be derived, according to the principles laid down in the River Boards Act, 1908, and its amendments.
- (3.) To submit the proposals to the ratepayers and obtain their authority by poll to raise the necessary loan.
- (4.) To carry out the necessary work, either by contract or direct labour, in as expeditious a manner as possible.
- (5.) To maintain the works efficiently, and to do whatever extra work may be necessary to improve the regimen of the rivers and secure the fullest protection for their district from floods.
- (6.) To take all necessary observations and keep records that will assist in the study of the hydrology of the river, changes in its regimen, heights, and duration of floods, &c.

The trusts should have all the powers of a local body, and, further, should have absolute jurisdiction over the channel and banks of the rivers, inasmuch as proposals for all drains emptying into the rivers, all locks, tide-gates, bridges, ferries, wharves, &c., should be submitted to and approved by the trust before being carried out. No planting or cutting of willows to be done except by the trust.

**Drainage:** Any portion of the districts mentioned may be formed into a Drainage Board to do the drainage-work of its particular area, and may obtain reports, plans, and estimates of drainage-works required from the River Trust. The Drainage Board shall then proceed to raise the money from its area, and, having done so, shall carry out the work itself or request the River Trust to do so. The maintenance of the drainage-works shall be done by the Drainage Board.

**Government nominees:** The River Commissioners may be appointed as Government representatives on any River Trust similarly constituted, and they shall report progress to the Minister of Public Works after each meeting of the River Trust. It shall also be their duty to see that all valuable data are collected and forwarded to Wellington for embodying in the Government archives.

No river-control work shall be carried out by the trust unless and until the plans of same have been first submitted to and approved by the Minister of Public Works.

Your Commissioners further recommend, should their proposals regarding river-improvements be carried out, that the Opawa River Trust should to some extent subsidize the Wairau River Trust for the additional cost of flood protective works and river-maintenance occasioned by the augmented flood-discharge in the Wairau River below the entrance to the Opawa. Seeing that the proposed partial closing of the Opawa channel against excessive floods is solely in the interests of Blenheim and adjacent lands, this appears to your Commissioners to be only a fair and equitable proposition, and after careful consideration it is recommended that the amount of such subsidy should be 20 per cent. of the actual cost in the future to the Wairau River Trust of all flood protective works and all maintenance undertaken on the Wairau River below the Renwicktown bridge and the outlet of Rose's Overflow. The Government nominees on the trust to be the sole arbiters in deciding the value and extent of such above-mentioned works.

Furthermore, if any works are found to be necessary at the mouth of the river and the Harbour Board is unwilling or unable to carry out such works, then for the purpose of carrying out the works the two River Trusts shall amalgamate and act as one, bearing equally the cost of such investigations and work, if done.