

Manager – Marketing, Water Supply, Parks & Forests

Report for period ending Friday 8 September 2006

1. Manager's comments

The parks are seeing the benefits of numerous planting days over the winter with several thousand trees going in the ground. It is very satisfying also to have created or furthered relationships with different groups and to encourage a greater sense of “environmental ownership” amongst them.

This stage of the year is a “developmental” one where we start to gear up for the busy spring/ summer period and ferment ideas and projects to draw people into the parks.

1.1 Parks posters

Featuring a single “icon” shot of each park, these are taking their turn in the snap frames at the front of and inside the Regional Council Centre. We will produce more for the other GW offices and ideally other key locations around the region e.g. libraries, public transport hubs, visitor information centres.

1.2 Signs

Ten new “farm park code” signs are to be installed at Belmont Regional Park, replacing the old Waitangirua Farm signs with a more user friendly and clearly branded design.

1.2.1 Kaitoke Loop Track interpretation

Design concepts have been finalised for the Kaitoke Loop Track interpretation and illustrations are now being completed.

1.3 Events

Planning has started on the Regional Outdoors Programme 2007, with a session at the September rangers' meeting and discussion with several of the volunteers associated with the events. All are keen to be involved again. We envisage some tweaks but will feature most of the old favourites and last year's “hits” again.

The only major change envisaged at this stage will be to organise a “Park Family Open Day” at Queen Elizabeth Park at the end of January. We expect this to include most of the family oriented events that were run individually last summer.

1.3.1 Corporate planting days

The tail end of the season is approaching now and it has been very successful in terms of hosting corporate planting days. On 5 August a group of around 40 Honda Kapiti dealers

and customers, Girl Guides and the Friends of QEP completed a second planting session on the Whareroa Stream. On 16 August around a dozen people from IAG enjoyed perfect weather as they continued planting in the MacKays Crossing wetland. Later that same week just over 50 Wellington and Wairarapa Honda dealers and staff planted and mulched around 1300 trees near the Te Marua pumping station at Kaitoke Regional Park. On that occasion GW was also the very pleased recipient of a large cheque from the Honda Treefund.

Staff also helped plan and organise a Honda Tree Community Planting Day at Mauriceville on 31 August. The “quid pro quo” of that work is some assistance from Catchment Management staff in managing the Cannons Creek catchment.

Other planting days planned at the time of writing include one at the QEP bush remnant on 2 September and a group from the ANZ National Bank also in the MacKays Crossing wetland on 13 September.

This year we have had numerous enquiries from smaller corporate groups, numbering around 10 people. Fortunately with our Parks staff and a selection of gear on site we are able to accommodate these smaller groups who generally manage to complete an impressive amount of work. In addition to this it is a good opportunity to educate these people about the parks and how what they are doing is contributing to the bigger picture.

1.4 Wellington Region Recreation Initiatives Group (WRRIG)

The Regional Physical Activity Plan (RPAP) is now well underway, with consultants Algate presenting and conducting workshops with various stakeholders so that outcomes are as well defined as possible. While there is some cross-over with the Wellington Regional Strategy in relation to links between open spaces, the aim of the RPAP is collaboration on planning and implementation for facilities and programmes for residents of the region. Done well, this will have flow on effects for economic growth and other aims of the WRS.

Contacts developed through work on the RPAP are resulting in two other initiatives this year:

1.4.1 Greater Wellington Buggy Walk

Known in Australia as the “Great Pram Stroll” this free event originated in Melbourne in 2002 as part of the Parks Victoria “Healthy Parks, Healthy People” initiative. It raises awareness of the issues of social isolation of new parents and highlights the notion that parks are great places to meet and get healthy.

To be organised by Sport Wellington, the first Greater Wellington Buggy Walk will be held in Waitangi Park on 11 October. GW Parks will be on display there with the first 200 to arrive to receive a GW sipper bottle (filled with quality Wellington water) along with other giveaways.

Participants will then be encouraged to attend a Greater Wellington buggy walk on the first Thursday of each of the ensuing six months in one of the regional parks. The January, February and March events will form part of the Regional Outdoors Programme.

1.4.2 Kev the Wandering Kiwi

Developed in collaboration with Upper Hutt City Council and Hutt City Council, this successful series of walks will be repeated in January 2007, also as part of the Regional Outdoors Programme. Following feedback we will change the format slightly to encourage more attendance at the events but continue to feature the highly popular Kev.

1.5 MacKay's Crossing development

The detailed plan for the MacKay's Crossing entrance area is now complete. We have written to contractors Fulton Hogan, giving them a list of hard landscape works to complete within the agreed budget.

The plan includes work around the new ranger office such as the carpark, planting beds and some drainage work. Officers will be working with the horticultural team to implement the plan on-site.

1.6 Staff

Applications closed for the Events Advisor position on 1 September and we are making good progress on appointing a candidate.

Amanda Cox

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