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Committee Council  
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## Report on the Regional Sustainability Committee meeting held on 15 October 2009

### 1. Purpose

To inform Council about the meeting of the Regional Sustainability Committee that took place at Greater Wellington's Masterton offices on 15 October 2009.

### 2. Battle Hill Farm Forest Park Management Plan

In general discussion, Councillors queried the legal status of the Park Management Plan in relation to previous Council resolutions. In addition, there was some discussion on whether or not some background information that provides a paper trail documenting past Council decisions should be included in the Plan. The Committee, after deliberations, agreed to recommend that the Council adopt the Battle Hill Farm Forest Park Management Plan, without reference to such background information.

### 3. Project Kaka - Tararua Forest Park

Dr Ben Reddiex, from the Department of Conservation, gave a powerpoint presentation on *Project Kaka*, a multi-species pest (possums, rats and stoats) control initiative which covers some 22,000 hectares of the DOC estate in the Tararua ranges. A reference area of 38,000 hectares will not be controlled.

The objective of the project is to improve the forest's canopy protection and biodiversity (e.g. short tailed bats, native birds, etc) in the area. The programme will be monitored closely to gauge the effects and benefits of 1080 and other species-specific poison. The project, based on scientific disciplines, covers an initial ten year period after which the results will be reviewed to determine the effectiveness of the programme, the consequences of not treating an area, and how to improve pest control programmes.

There was some discussion concerning other land owned by DOC - the "northern zones" in the Tararua ranges - that are not covered by any pest control programme and the Animal Health Board withdrawing from pest control and management at the foothills of those ranges.

#### **4. Community Environmental Projects Annual report for 2008-2009 and**

Geoff Skene spoke to the Community Environmental Projects programme (*Take Care*). Councillors commended Mr Skene and his team for the work undertaken during the year and requested that the report be held over to the next meeting of the Committee.

#### **5. Biodiversity Year End Review to 30 June 2009**

Tim Porteous, outlined the Council's biodiversity programmes and the success that the programme has had with the community from involving individual landowners, community groups and partnerships with other agencies. The National Regional Council Biodiversity forum meets in November and will include officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and DOC.

#### **6. Take Action Annual Report 2008-09**

Geoff Skene presented a summary of the paper. However, because of the limited time available the Committee undertook to have a fuller presentation made at the next meeting of the Committee.

#### **7. Stuart Macaskill Lakes seismic security upgrade**

Tony Shaw updated the Committee on the engineering options to improve the security of the Stuart Macaskill Lakes from damage that could occur after an earthquake. Additional work is needed to ensure that the water in a lake is fully contained after such an event. From the work undertaken it is estimated that it will take sixty-six days to restore the water supply from the Waterloo treatment plant through to Wellington and this could be met by upgrading Lake 2. Therefore, a two stage process was recommended with Lake 2 embankments to be lined, and any decision on whether to upgrade Lake 1 to a similar standard being deferred until October 2010.

#### **8. Parks and forests lands management planning**

Murray Waititi updated the Committee on progress with the development of a single Parks Network Management Plan that consolidates the previous three tiered plan structure.

Councillors requested that some consideration be given to consulting with the public on a more informal basis before a draft plan had been produced. Mr Waititi advised that the timetable set complies with the Reserves Act 1977 and that there was very little flexibility for any additional work to be undertaken. Under the timetable, a draft consolidated Plan will be brought to the April 2010 meeting of the Committee. Further consultation not included in the timetable may slow the delivery of the draft plan.

## **9. Draft Parks Network Strategy**

Murray Waititi presented this report and outlined how the Draft Parks Network Strategy will act as a guiding tool for the development of the combined Parks Management Plan.

## **10. Divisional Manager's report**

Murray Kennedy commented on the recent 1080 pest control operation in the Hutt water collection area. He reported that the residual catch results at zero and 1 percent for the Hutt Catchment and Akatarawa Saddle respective areas were extremely good.

David Benham, in response to a query regarding the Council's water strategy advised that a high level review of the Capacity management model has commenced to assess potential benefits.

## **11. Kapiti Pony Club licence to use Queen Elizabeth Park**

Murray Waititi presented this paper and reported that all parties concerned were comfortable with the negotiated outcome.

## **12. Draft Regional Climate Change Response Plan**

Jane Bradbury presented the Draft Plan. She explained that all councils in the region were being asked to respond to the Draft Plan, preferably by the end of November 2009. The Plan now incorporated the suggestions made by councillors at a workshop on climate change and was consistent with the initial approach to resilience that councillors had recently developed, particularly the decision-making framework and the use of existing planning tools. The principles were emphasised, along with the three suggested actions for adaptation. Councillors suggested that leadership was a better term than governance for the suggested climate change forum and that the term "menu of options" was more appropriate for the emissions reductions actions (Appendix 2).

## **13. Public participation**

Richard Moore, a representative of Poly Palace, a business that manufactures polystyrene insulation blocks from waste, sought support from Councillors to reject the Council's *Insulation and Clean Heating Retrofit (Loan) Scheme* because Poly Palace was not an approved Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) provider. Under the Council's scheme only EECA approved products and providers can be used.

Mark Phillips spoke and requested a response to his verbal request which queried whether the draft Battle Hill Farm Forest Park Management Plan presented to the Council on 3 November 2008 should have triggered the Council's Significance Policy. Councillor Wilde apologised that the Council had not replied and promised that a formal response would be made.

Nicky Chapman, a member of the Pauahatanui Futures Society (PFS Inc.) made an oral presentation which supported the Battle Hill Farm Forest Park Management Plan generally. However, she reaffirmed the society's view that the Battle Hill Farm Forest Park was not to be used as an access point for any future windfarm activity.

Andy Cockroft, a member of the Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee (ARAC), spoke and outlined their concern with consolidating the Network Strategy, Network Plan and individual Parks plans into one plan and the extent of consultation with the public in the future. Ken McAdam, a fellow ARAC member, echoed his colleagues concern and highlighted that the Puketiro forest might be closed for recreational use during the construction of a wind farm.

## 14. Recommendations

*That the Council:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

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