

Please renew your membership!

Just detach this back page and send it with your cheque to WRPS, P O Box 15668, New Lynn, Waitakere

Your 2006 subscription to the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society is now due for payment (we collect all subscriptions at the start of the year). **We need your subscription if we are to continue our work to protect the Ranges.** If you have any questions about our work please call me on 8128 555 or Kath (our Secretary) on 8128 406. We'd be happy to talk to you about it. Without your support, the Waitakere Ranges would have no voice.

Three easy steps to renew:

- 1) Check your name and mailing details on the label below and mark on any changes
- 2) Complete your phone and email address on the form below and write how much money you are sending in the spaces indicated
- 3) Send the back page of this newsletter with a cheque made out to Waitakere Ranges Protection Society to us at: WRPS, P O Box 15668, New Lynn, Waitakere. Many thanks for your continued support!

Tax Invoice:

For 1st Feb 2006 to 31st Jan 2007 GST Number: 55 178 178 Donations over \$5 are tax deductible

Telephone Email.....

Family / Group (\$35)	\$ _____	Retired/ Unwaged (\$20) ..	\$ _____
Single (\$25).....	\$ _____	Donation	\$ _____
Lifetime (\$150 + new member)...	\$ _____	TOTAL	\$ _____

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The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society
PO Box 15668
New Lynn
Waitakere City

Invoice enclosed!



Waitakere Ranges
Protection Society Inc

news

P O Box 15668, New Lynn, Waitakere City
www.waitakereranges.org.nz

Issue 129 February 2006

Your President's Report

Let me wish you all a very Happy New Year 2006. I predict that this will be a very important year for the Society and I hope that by the end of the year we will have achieved at least two of our highest goals.

Our first and most ambitious goal, **the permanent protection the Waitakere Ranges**, has been enshrined in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Bill which has now been tabled in Parliament. It will come up for its first reading in February when the house sits in the first session of the year. The Bill will then proceed to a Parliamentary Select Committee which will call for submissions, with hearings likely to be held in Waitakere City. The Bill must come back for its second and third readings within six months of the first reading, when it can be enacted. So the protection that the Society has campaigned for, for 33 years, could be granted as early as August. We will remind you when it is time to make written submissions.

Our second goal is one that goes back more than 20 years, and this is to **publish the definitive book about the Waitakere Ranges**.

Work started on this project when John Lewis was President, and that committee accumulated over 50 essays on the history and ecology of the ranges. When I became President and acquired the Society's archives, I found two cardboard boxes containing the essays and the vast correspondence between the committee and the many authors. It was not until four years ago that we found the editorial team of Bruce and Trixie Harvey who have recommissioned the essays and bought book to the



point where it is now finally designed, proofed and ready for printing at Printlink in Wellington. The finished book will be delivered by the end of March and we are planning a book launch in April and invitations to that long-anticipated event will be

Sent out in due course.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held this year on 20th March at the Arataki Visitors Centre, and members will be notified about that in early March.

Of great concern to the Society at present is the ward boundary review currently being undertaken by Waitakere City. There are three options being proposed by Council and I urge you all to attend the consultation meetings in February and make a submission to Council in support of keeping Waitakere ward intact so that the Heritage Area is contained within the Waitakere ward boundary (excepting the land in Rodney district). The proposal to split Waitakere ward into three parts would make a mockery of Council's designation of the Ranges as special Heritage Area by dividing the communities of common interest from each other.

The Swanson Structure Plan Appeal hearings in the Environment Court have been completed and we await the court's decision. Thanks to Douglas Allan, Gary Taylor and Adrienne Young-Cooper for representing the Society.

We note with sadness the resignation of Waitakere Ward Councillor Pat Booth due to ill health and we wish Pat all the best in his retirement. Council must now hold a by- election within three months.

I hope that you will continue to support the Society in this exciting year, and I look forward to seeing you at the AGM and the book launch.

John Edgar
President

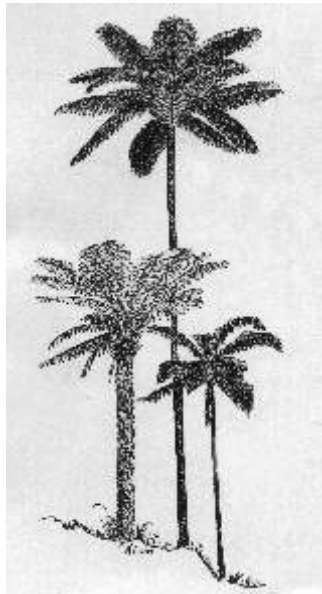


Image courtesy of Alan Esler (2002) and ARC



WRPS secures continual flows from Waitakere dams

Following 3 years of negotiations by WRPS with Watercare Services Ltd (WSL) and Auckland Regional Council (ARC) over the conditions to be applied to the 35 year consents for the 5 water supply dams in the Waitakere Ranges, the environment is the winner.

The initial consultation process, which included several community and environmental groups as well as WRPS, lasted 2 years. WRPS and others, including Waitakere Rivercare Group and Huia Residents and Ratepayers appealed the consents. Water and fisheries experts Mels Barton and Clint McCullough made submissions at an ARC hearing in March 2005 as part of the WRPS team, led by Douglas Allan. The ARC commissioners' decision agreed with many of the issues raised by WRPS, however some important points were missed. An appeal was lodged and agreement finally reached during mediation in July 2005.

Key environmental outcomes from the process were as follows:

1. WSL must perform 2 years of comprehensive baseline monitoring to establish the current condition of the Waitakere, Nihotupu and Huia streams and the creatures living there.
2. After 2 years WSL must begin a continuous release of water flow from the Waitakere, Upper Nihotupu and Upper Huia dams of at least 30 litres per second. During times when the dams contain more water, the flows will increase to 60 and then 90 litres per second, depending on the level of storage.
3. Flushing flows of 450 litres per second will also be released once per month during summer to remove the build up of algae from stream beds. These flows will be insufficient to remove fine sediment, but WSL will be required to undertake additional monitoring to assess the presence of fine sediments.
4. Comprehensive monitoring of water quality and quantity, native fish, algae, sediments and macro-invertebrates will continue once flow releases begin.
5. ARC will use this "before and after" data to review the effectiveness of the flow release volumes for protecting stream life at regular intervals. If necessary the flows (including flushing flows) will be changed and could potentially be increased.
6. Additional flow releases will be required from the Lower Nihotupu and Lower Huia Dams to enhance fish spawning and WSL will undertake upstream transfer of native fish. WSL are also required to evaluate options to enhance the riparian zone below the Lower Huia Dam to

- encourage migration and spawning of native fish.
7. WSL are required to provide \$150,000 for riparian planting projects in the Waitakere River catchment. This will be sufficient to provide for a 3km long, 10m wide margin to be planted, plus the maintenance costs for 5 years. Riparian planting shades and cools the streams, reducing stress on fish and inhibiting algal growth. ARC will administer the funding and WSL will pay any administration costs.
8. The flow releases will have no impact on the overall yield of the water supply system, nor will they require additional resources to be developed sooner than already planned.

WRPS water expert Dr Mels Barton said "I am proud to have been part of a process that will restore these important rivers to something resembling their natural state. For 90 years they have been dry and lifeless for several kilometers downstream of the dams in dry weather. I am glad we have been instrumental in ensuring this will never happen again and that native fish can return to habitats that have disappeared from so many places in New Zealand due to development. The people of Auckland can be happy that

their use of Waitakere Ranges water is now in balance with the environment that provides it, rather than exploiting it." WRPS thanks all those individuals who have contributed to the process by providing advice and information, help and support. Their input has been invaluable.



Dry stream-bed. Image courtesy of John Edgar

Lynda Harris bowls and mugs

Following the fantastic success of our Lynda Harris handmade and painted coffee mugs, we have worked with Lynda to extend our range of unique Waitakere Ranges Protection Society tableware. Society supporters can now enjoy fabulous bowls, designed to match the mugs. Both pieces feature our custom-designed Waitakere Ranges artwork of kereru, karaka berries and Waitakere coastline. The new bowls match the mugs and both pieces are highly collectable. Each bowl and mug is handmade, painted and fired by Lynda in her Karekare studio.



The mugs cost \$35 each (including GST, postage and packaging) and \$10 from each sale goes to the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society. The bowls measure 14 centimetres diameter across the top and are 7 centimetres deep. At this size they are ideal for dips, nibbles, dessert or cereal. The bowls are \$42 each (including GST, postage and packaging) with \$10 from every sale going to the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society. Both mugs and bowls are made to order so please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.



Geoff Moon Postcards

Esteemed wildlife photographer Geoff Moon has, with great kindness, donated the remaining supplies of his popular, colour postcards to the Society for us to sell to raise funds. The cards depict a range of New Zealand birds including fantail, silvereye, kaka, brown kiwi, red-crowned parakeet, NZ Kingfisher, tui and ruru with chick. They are printed on quality card with the reverse blank for your message.



We are selling these cards, in mixed sets of ten, for \$10 each (including GST, postage and packaging), with all proceeds after these few costs coming to the Society, thanks to Geoff's tireless generosity. We can't guarantee which cards will be included in each pack and some images will be repeated within each pack.



Yes! Please send me the following WRPS goodies...

Name and address as per label overleaf? Yes No All Pricing includes GST, postage and packing

If no, please write name & address here: _____

Phone number (in case of queries) _____ **Mugs** Number of mugs ____ x \$35 each = \$ _____

Bowls Number: ____ x \$42 each = \$ _____ **Geoff Moon postcards (set of 10)** Number of sets: ____ x \$10 per set = \$ _____

T-Shirts - Please write the number you need for each size in the boxes below: **TOTAL** payment \$ _____

S M L XL

Total at \$30 each = \$ _____

Please send your order to Waitakere Ranges Protection Society, P O Box 15668, New Lynn, Waitakere City. Please enclose your payment with your order. Thank you for your support.

Your committee: Greg Presland

Greg Presland has been on the executive of the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society since November 2004. He was previously a Councillor of the Waitakere City Council but missed out on re-election that year. He has lived in Titirangi in the foothills of the Ranges for the past 18 years and decided to run for Council after the Go Waitakere dominated council attempted to loosen up subdivision rules. "I was extremely disturbed by what the Go Wacs were trying to achieve. My family were living in this paradise and others wanted to take steps to destroy it".



He met with John Edgar and other like-minded people and Team West was formed. Team West formed a majority on Council after the 2001. As a Councillor Greg worked in a number of areas including transport but protection of the Waitakere Ranges was the area that most interested him. He was a member of the Waitakere Ranges Protection working party, which amongst other things, worked on and recommended the local government protection bill that is currently before Parliament.

The Bill was not without controversy and Greg and fellow executive member Denise Yates were two councillors who advocated for precise and detailed consultation, at an early stage, so the Bill could be advanced with a realistic prospect of passing. "I spent a great deal of time learning about the issues and the need for the bill was clear. Under current planning processes there would inevitably be continuous pressure for development that would undermine the very special qualities of the Ranges. They provide us with fresh water and clean air, tranquility and artistic inspiration. And they are under threat. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment was right when he said that the Ranges would eventually suffer death by a thousand cuts".

Shortly after the 2004 election results, Greg was seconded onto the WRPS committee to help with support for the bill. "I suddenly had a bit of time on my hands and I was very pleased when John Edgar suggested I be seconded." With his help, a majority of support for the Bill was secured from the newly elected Council and it will now go before Parliament in February. Greg hopes to see it pass into legislation. "I want to be able to take my grandchildren to the ranges in the future and show them something fundamentally no worse than it is today."

Your Committee:

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Vice-President: Anna Fomison
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Treasurer: Sandra Jones
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Colleen Pilcher
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Denise Yates
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Greg Presland
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Lynda Williams
Witch2@ihug.co.nz

Other useful numbers:

Waitakere City Council	836 8000
W.C.C. after-hours emergencies:	839 0400
ARC parks (Waitakere Ranges):	817 4993
Marines reserves offences:	307 9270
ARC marine pollution hotline:	377 3107



www.waitakereranges.org.nz

The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Inc.,
P O Box 15668, New Lynn, Waitakere City

ARC investigates dying kauri

The Auckland Regional Council are currently investigating the death of a number of kauri trees. The affected trees are along and near the Maungaroa Ridge track, above Piha. At time of printing this newsletter, the



Images courtesy of Tony Dunn

results of the studies have not been announced.



Power lines

The Society has been in discussions with Vector Energy over recent months, regarding the trimming of trees around power lines in the Waitakere Ranges. The Society has had the backing of the Waitakere Community Board and several Resident & Ratepayer groups. We have been able to raise a number of issues with Vector including community liaison, native species present in trimmed trees and the need for long term planning in the area. A full report of progress on these matters will appear in a future newsletter.

Please join us for our Annual General Meeting

7pm, Monday 20th March

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Monday 20 March at 7pm at the Arataki Visitors Centre.



As previous attendees know, the focus of these meetings is to share information and give members of the Society the chance to meet each other and their committee. The meetings are efficiently run and enjoyable; the committee will present its annual report, the election of committee members will take place and then we will hear from our guest speaker. We look forward to announcing the speaker shortly. In the meantime please put 20th March in your diary. We look forward to seeing you there.

Image © Auckland Regional Council.

Te Pou (the guardian post) at Arataki Visitor Centre. Te Pou is an 11m high ancestor carving by Te Kawerau a Maki, the Iwi who are tangata whenua of the Waitakere Ranges. For more information see the booklet 'Nga Tohu a Nga Tupuna' at Arataki.



Society committed to a Waitakere Ward

Waitakere City Council has to make changes to its ward boundaries for future Council elections and is discussing three options with the public at a series of meetings during February. The Society is very concerned that the initial option tabled would scrap a Waitakere Ward and instead create three wards, each stretching from the West coast to the Eastern boundaries of the City. Waitakere City has to choose a new ward structure because the Local Electoral Act 2001 states that wards and community boards must reflect 'communities of interest' and the number of councillors per ward must meet 'population equity requirements'.

The proposed three-ward model (Option1) would, we believe, have a detrimental effect on the Waitakere Ranges and make the task of groups such as ours, involved in their restoration and in advocacy for their well being, that much harder. We would, for example, have to make presentations to three community boards on matters affecting the whole of the Ranges, instead of one. Such a three-ward model would also cut across the often unified voices of the Ranges communities, carving up the clear community of interest which exists between the city's Manukau harbour and west coast villages. This community of interest is clearly demonstrated by, for example, the West Coast Plan.

The Society would prefer to see a solution where a predominately rural Waitakere ward is retained, reflecting the borders of the proposed Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. This would facilitate better management and care of the Ranges as a whole and ensure the voice of Range's residents is not lost in the competing demands of the city's suburbs.



Council's **option 1** which would divide the Ranges into three electoral wards.



Council's **option 2** which would retain a predominantly rural ward but may mean a reduction in Councillors from three to two.

Members are encouraged to attend one of the public consultation meetings on this issue. The meetings will begin with a presentation about the options, and include an opportunity for members of the public to discuss the options with Council representatives and officers.

The dates and locations of the meetings are:

- Waitakere Ward, Tuesday 14 February 2006 at 7 pm, Waiatarua Community Hall
- Massey Ward, Thursday 16 February 2006 at 7 pm, Massey & Birdwood Settlers Hall (Lions Den)
- Henderson Ward, Friday 17 February 2006 at 7 pm, Te Atatu South Community Centre
- New Lynn Ward, Tuesday 21 February 2006 at 7 pm, New Lynn Community Centre (Main Hall)

Following the close of comments on February 28 2006 the Council will decide on one proposal for formal consultation in March/April 06. For further details see www.waitakere.govt.nz

Long Trail for Waitakere Ranges?

The Auckland Regional Council is investigating a Long Trail for the Waitakere Ranges. The Long Trail would be a 58km multi-day walk using existing tracks, taking four-days (three-nights) to complete and beginning and finishing at locations serviced by public transport (Swanson and Titirangi).

The Council has been researching the issue and its conclusions include:

- New visitors to the Waitakere Ranges are confused by the options of tracks available and what facilities and services they can expect at backcountry campgrounds.
- Park visitors would like to know what to expect before undertaking walks and there is a level of uncertainty about the track standards they may encounter.
- There appears to be an increasing percentage of people who feel they do not have the skills to cope with walks of extended duration or in remote settings.
- The lack of easy access and safe parking is seen as a barrier.
- People would like to engage with the environment but only when they know what they don't know – People would feel more comfortable about discovery if they have been told what they may discover first.
- People see the regional park network as offering a chance to escape from everyday life.

The ARC believes a Long Trail could raise the profile of regional parks and encourage new users. The Council is proposing to limit initial development to upgrades to campsites, to meet minimum standards, and installing track markers. This means the walk will be available in the short term for people with suitable fitness and experience. There are no plans to open the Trail to concessions or commercial activities. Any future development would include consultation with stakeholders such as local authorities, local agencies, communities and groups such as the Waitakere Ranges



Image courtesy of Tony Dunn

Protection Society. There is the potential for the Long Trail to become a western loop of Te Araroa Walkway. (Te Araroa Walkway is a walking trail running the length of NZ and already has established sections in both the North and South Islands – there is an existing agreement to incorporate the walkway through part of the Hunua Ranges Regional Park).

Council will be considering a two-year staged project as part of the upcoming Long Term Council Community Plan process.

The Society would like to hear members' views on the Long Trail.

Dogs in the Ark

There is growing concern at the number of dogs allowed off their leads in the Ark in the Park area, particularly in the presence of breeding robins.

If any members have time to spend helping with dog surveys, at the entrance to the Auckland City walk, it would be appreciated. The information gathered will be given to the Waitakere City Council and the Auckland Regional Council and may result in improved signs or tougher regulation.

For more information contact Karen Colgan, Ark in the Park on mcolgan@netaccess.co.nz or 817 9379.



Image courtesy of Tony Dunn

Sustainable seminars

The Sustainable living centre is holding a fabulous range of workshops during February and March, from how to save money on energy to harvesting rainfall or making a worm farm. All workshops are held at 4 Olympic Place, New Lynn and most cost \$10. Bookings are essential. For more information call 826 0555 or email slc@ecomatters.org.nz

FREE Eco Day in April

Sunday 2 April 10-4pm
Olympic Park, New Lynn

Eco stalls and exhibitions, organic food and drinks, kids zone, workshops and seminars, vehicle emissions testing, tours of sustainable homes and gardens and live music.

Image courtesy of Tony Dunn

