



The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Inc. is a registered charitable entity in terms of the Charities Act 2005. Registration No. CC46103

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Your President's Report



Thanks to all our members who attended the Society's AGM in March. A new and enthusiastic committee was elected. We are sorry to lose Tim O'Shea who has been on the committee since 2008 and has worked on many issues including the Heritage Area Bill, protection of the foothills and the development of the new website. Following the AGM, Graeme Murdoch's address on the "Maori place names in the Waitakere Ranges and their relationship to the former ecology" was very informative.

We met recently with the Waitakere Ranges Local Board to discuss our concerns and we had a very constructive meeting and agreed to meet more regularly in future. They intend to appoint a Kauri Dieback Coordinator to liaise with the research and management teams, and ensure that the community is better informed. We will also have input into their three-year plan which will be open for submissions soon.

Te Henga quarry was scheduled to close in the next few years when the lease expired. However there is a proposal by Auckland Council to extend the area available for quarrying into surrounding land designated as a reserve and within the Regional Park and the WR Heritage Area. This proposed new area is of high ecological value and also currently provides a buffer between the noise and dust of the quarry operations and local homes. This proposal goes to Council committee in June. The Society opposes the extension.

Our new website should be active in the next few weeks, and our thanks go to Anna Fomison for overseeing the design and content. Christine Rose, our Heritage Area Coordinator has been working on a number of submissions in the past three months and her report can be read in this newsletter.

In the battle to combat kauri dieback disease, we welcome the Budget 2014 provision of \$10.9 million for DOC operational costs over four years, \$10.7 million for DOC capital costs for tracks, boardwalks and hygiene stations and \$4.9 million for MPI over four years for research and management tools, as well as surveillance and co-ordination of the disease response. However as there is no DOC estate in the ranges, we are currently waiting for more information on how the money will be allocated to the local and regional agencies.

John Edgar
President

WRPS Newsletter Email List

If you are receiving this newsletter by post but would prefer to receive it by email (as a .pdf file), please email us at wrps@waitakereranges.org.nz. You will have the added advantage of being able to view the photographs in full and glorious colour.

Heritage Area Coordinator's Report

There's something about the intrinsic values of nature that makes them vulnerable to exploitation. Nature sits there in all its complex glory – in the forests it's the changing of the seasons, the growth and maturing of trees, the flowering, and falling of blossoms, and leaves, the life of birds. At sea it's the rising and falling of the tides, the wash of sand up the coast, the life cycles of animals often unseen. We know that there's value in nature, whether we make use of it or not.

But because these values are passive, latent, good in themselves, they're vulnerable to exploitation. So it is in

the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and its coastal margins. Nature and natural processes should be safe to do their own thing in their own cycles and timescales. But development pressures interrupt natural processes, especially for commercial gain. This is the ‘tragedy of the passives’ – passive values like the dark night sky, peace and quiet, the loveliness of nature, are all vulnerable to the active pressures of development, extraction and ‘progress’.

This is clear to see with proposals for sea bed mining off the West Coast – almost the whole coastal marine area has been opened to oil and mineral prospecting, requiring submissions and action by the community – often up against the world’s biggest companies whose extraction proposals are often subsidised by the Government. On the land, the risk of ‘death by a thousand cuts’ means we have to respond to the ‘thousand’ challenges that threaten the integrity of our environment. Big and small, things like dune management (often ‘modification’), roading plans, signage, street lights, subdivision, all run the risk of undermining the natural qualities of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. That makes the role of the Heritage Area coordinator a busy one, looking out for the challenges that threaten our rohe.

In the last few months the Heritage Area Coordinator role has required reviewing Local Area Plans to ensure they don’t become ‘development blueprints’. We’ve spoken out against sea bed mining on the West Coast, and against the proposed reintroduction of ring-netting in the Manukau Harbour, a threat to Maui’s and Hector’s dolphins. We’ve submitted against the expansion and extension of the Waitakere Quarry beyond its current footprint and time limit, into Regional Parkland and the Heritage Area. We’ve submitted on the Piha Dune Management Plan which suggests more modification of natural dune character. We’ve supported Labour’s promised funding for an improved response to Kauri Die Back. We’ve kept an eye on subdivision proposals and applications to remove trees. We submitted to the Auckland Council Annual Plan to ensure council-led development is sensitive to the integrity of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. We’ve also been working on the development of a photography competition to celebrate the Waitakere Ranges, on the basis that we should rejoice in what we love and not just react against its threats.

Environmentalists’ work will never be finished, and the price of preserving and enhancing our natural treasures is diligent attention and response. The role of Waitakere Ranges Protection Society has been essential in protecting the area’s natural values for the last forty years, and will continue to be vital for more than forty years to come.

Christine Rose, Heritage Area Coordinator (HAC)

Te Henga Quarry – is the end nigh?

The Te Henga Quarry has been operating for over 60 years, causing noise, dust, heavy truck movements, vibration and ecological damage. It has been some comfort to the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society and

people living in the Te Henga Rd area, that the existing extraction permit was due to expire by 2020, and that available aggregate within the current footprint would be depleted around the same time.

In the meantime, quarrying activity has increased with the huge motorway and residential development occurring in the region, meaning the aggregate is being used up more quickly than expected, and bringing forward the date for potential quarry closure, to 2015.

But just when we thought the end of the quarry was nigh, bringing peace to the valley at last, Auckland Council Properties Ltd are proposing an extension both of the operating period and of the footprint of quarrying works.

Expansion of the quarry would require incursion into the Waitakere Ranges Regional Parkland, which is also ungazetted Reserve land within the Heritage Area, an outstanding natural landscape and a significant ecological area in its own right. There are huge old trees in the area where ACPL wish to extend operations, including pre-European specimens, it’s a nationally significant kereru habitat, and kokako are living in the vicinity.

Expansion of the quarry would be in bad faith given community (and community group) expectations that the quarry had a definite closure date of 2017 at the latest. It would mean the adverse effects of noise, dust and vibrations continue when we all believed they would cease. It would destroy significant forest and introduce edge effects such as wind, weeds, light and dust as the buffer against these effects on the rest of the forest are removed.

The Waitakere Ranges Local Board is opposed to extension and expansion of the quarrying activity, but ultimately the decision lies with the Governing Body – Auckland Council and ACPL. Their motivations are quite different from WRPS and other groups such as the Waitakere Branch of Forest and Bird, and from affected neighbours. The Council and ACPL want to preserve the income stream from the quarry to offset rates rises. ACPL also argue that the value of the aggregate to Auckland is important so as to justify the expansion of the quarry footprint and a 10 year operating extension.

WRPS will continue to oppose the ACPL/Auckland Council proposal which will be decided within a few months. As the plan progresses, we’ll look at how we can best work with other groups and residents to ‘stop the quarry expansion’.

Christine Rose, Heritage Area Coordinator (HAC)

WRPS Photography Competition - in the planning

The Waitakere Ranges are an area of great beauty and diversity, and we think that’s worth celebrating. If you have images of the Ranges, the Waitakeres West Coast – including the Manukau, flora and fauna, community, characters, culture and heritage, then get ready for our digital photography competition.

We're in the planning stages but will be offering appealing prizes, and the chance for your (attributed) images to feature on our website.

Details are still being developed, but we know that in the era of digital photography it's easier than ever before to capture and share stunning images. And we've got a great source of inspiration in the Waitakeres. We'll let you know more as our planning proceeds. In the meantime, keep those cameras 'snapping'!

Seabed Mining in Taranaki poses threats to entire west coast

Throughout April and into May, the Environmental Protection Authority Hearings Panel has been considering a sea bed mining application by Trans-Pacific Resources (TTR) to extract and process 50 million tonnes of sand per annum for iron ore and other minerals.

The current proposal is centred on an area of 65km² off the South Taranaki Bight, so it's relatively distant from the Waitakere Ranges. Unfortunately though, this proposal is a bad portent for the whole West Coast, and for the values closer to home.

Vast areas of the New Zealand coast have been opened to sea bed mining and oil exploration prospecting. With that comes seismic testing, and extraction effects. The TTR application for example, uses 12m long, 350 tonne crawlers to suck up 50 million tonnes of sand per annum, which will be pumped to a processing ship, where an estimated 5 tonnes of useable iron ore is separated magnetically, with 'waste' material returned to the sea, forming a sediment bed up to 5m deep. The extraction process is destructive in itself, but with the sediment plume and deposition field also smothering benthic sea life and reef ecology, damaging mussels, worms, and crustaceans, benthic invertebrates, phytoplankton, and zooplankton, it impacts the entire food chain from fish to seabirds and cetaceans. Sea bed mining reduces access to fishing grounds and public water space. Freshwater species which spend time in the marine environment as part of their life cycle may also be impacted.

Maui's & Hector's dolphins, orca, blue whale and southern right whale, all threatened or endangered, live in and transit through these waters, so sea bed mining will impact on their habitat, migratory routes, food supplies and water quality. Seismic testing impacts are felt for miles by cetaceans so this is also a major concern.

The sands being processed are a non-renewable resource and are vital for replenishing coastlines, sand banks and surf breaks up the coast, affecting the values of West Coast communities to the north.

The Environmental Protection Authority has a tight time frame for reaching a decision, despite the challenge of lack of information. In the meantime the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment have granted TTR a mining permit in advance of the EPA's decision, due in June. We'll keep you up to date when the EPA decision is

released.

Christine Rose, Heritage Area Coordinator (HAC)

Annual Report of the Executive Committee presented at the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Monday 31 March, 2014 by John Edgar, President

I am pleased to present the 40th Annual Report of the Executive Committee of The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Incorporated.

In 1973 when the Society was formed, few of the activists who opposed the proposed rubbish tip in the old Duck's Quarry in the Waitakere Valley would have thought that 40 years later the Society would still be active. But just last year we celebrated our 40th anniversary, and there is a strong resolve in the current committee and membership to take the Society forward. To achieve that, we need to be recruiting new members, especially young people who love the Ranges and want to contribute to their conservation and protection. To celebrate our 40-year milestone, the Society commissioned Trixie and Bruce Harvey to research and write the history of the first 40 years of the Society, and the book was published in July 2013. In 168 pages it tells our story with a special emphasis on the issues, the campaigns and especially the people involved; those members who tirelessly gave of their time and expertise to advance our cause.

It was great to see so many members and friends at the 40th anniversary celebrations on the 7th July. The Waitakere Village Hall where the Society held some of its first meetings was filled with people, many of whom had not seen their friends for some years. The Society presented Honour Certificates to Dave and Barbara Harre, Geoff Davidson, Graeme Ramsay, Peter Maddison, Graeme Murdoch, Lynne Pillay, Dorothy Wilson, June Henderson and Ted Scott for their outstanding contributions to conservation in the ranges. Since 2003 we have presented 32 certificates. Many volunteers helped to make the afternoon a success, and the enthusiasm and good company of all those who attended showed that the Society is in a strong position to ensure our next 40 years are even more successful.

Over the past year the Society has spent considerable effort working on the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (PAUP) which was released for public submissions on the 15 March 2013 when the Society made initial submissions. Following that a draft of the PAUP was notified on 30 September 2013 and since then our planning and legal team has worked hard to prepare our submissions which were lodged on the 27 February. We have also made submissions to the Auckland Council and the Waitakere Ranges Local Board Annual Plans, the Te Henga Local Area Plan, the Visitor Management Plan and the west coast Marine Mammal Sanctuary.

The number of non-complying resource consent

applications have been few in the past years and on the advice of our planning and legal team, they have been able to be resolved by consent order. Most notably was Plan Change 36 which provided for non-residential activities in the WRHA to enhance the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people and communities. After lengthy mediation in the Environment Court with all parties, the Society was able to make a number of amendments to the plan change prior to it becoming operative in October.

April last year marked five years since the WRHA Act gained assent, and the Waitakere Ranges Local Board commissioned a five monitoring report to find if the objectives of the Act are being met and how human activity and the actions and decisions of Auckland Council and its council controlled organisations are affecting the area. That report is available online from the Auckland Council website.

The RMA Reform Bill and the Housing Accord Bill have been of great concern. Our submissions on these matters were not accepted by the Select Committee, and both bills were enacted. We are currently considering the discussion document "Improving our Resource Management system" released by the Ministry for the Environment in February 2013, which proposes further changes to the RMA that we consider will have negative effects on the environment, conservation and protection of the ranges.

Kauri in the ranges are infected with the pathogen *Phytophthora* taxon Agathis and there is no known cure. Scientists estimate that currently 13% of kauri in the ranges are infected, and 65% of these are along walking tracks, an indication that trampers, runners and animals are spreading the disease. The Society welcomed the closure of 27km (10%) of walking tracks in the ranges in 2012, and these closures of areas where there is no sign of kauri dieback will provide scientists a benchmark to study the spread of the disease. Funding for research and management of the disease runs out this year and to date there has been no assurance from the Government that funding will continue. In January, with no public consultation, Council approved the Hillary Trail Ultra Marathon from Arataki to Muriwai involving up to 500 participants. We are not convinced that the conditions imposed on the event in March will stop the spread of kauri dieback, the greatest occurrence of which is along the Hillary Trail.

News this month that kauri dieback has been detected for the first time on the Coromandel Peninsula in the 319 ha Whangapoua Forest/Hukarahi Conservation Area is of concern. This detection of the disease is in a forest with no public tracks and little public use other than pig hunters. The Minister for Conservation has issued a Notice of Closure for the entire area to contain the disease and to reduce its spread.

Our Oral Historian Anna Fomison has progressed this project well. In the past year three new interviews have been completed and lodged with Auckland and Turnbull Libraries, and three more are currently underway. To date 24 interviews have been completed and we will apply for

further funding later this year. Anna and Tim have also worked on our new website which is being designed by Think Red, and should be operative in the next month. This new website will make it much easier for members and the public to access information about the Society and the ranges.

Together with the Royal Forest and Bird Society we are currently involved in negotiations with Auckland Council and the Te Henga quarry operator on the rehabilitation plans for the quarry when the current lease expires. We started working on this last year to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved for future public access to and enjoyment of the area. However, we have recently heard that Council may seek to extend the quarry lease and make new areas adjacent to the existing quarry available for quarrying, which will set back any rehabilitation plans. We will be watching this very closely.

Our congratulations to the successful candidates in the local body elections in October. Penny Hulse and Linda Cooper were elected as councillors for Waitakere Ward, and the Future West team of Sandra Coney, Denise Yates, Greg Presland, Neil Henderson, Steve Tollestrup and Saffron Toms won all six positions on the Local Board. Penny is Council Deputy Mayor, and Sandra is Chair of the Local Board.

When Saffron Toms was elected to the Waitakere Ranges Local Board she resigned her position as our Heritage Area Coordinator. In February the Society appointed Christine Rose to this position. Christine has a political background, with 15 years in local and regional government. She has been Deputy Mayor of Rodney District Council, Deputy Chair of the Auckland Regional Council, Chair of the Auckland Regional Council's Transport and Urban Development Committee, and Deputy Chair of the ARC's Parks and Heritage Committee. We are privileged to have her working for the Society. This position is funded by a grant from the ASB Community Trust supplemented by tagged donations from members, for which we are very grateful.

In February Te Kawerau a Maki signed a deed of settlement of historical treaty claims with the Crown in a very moving ceremony at Makaurau Marae. Te Kawerau a Maki are the tangata whenua of Waitakere area, and they hold customary authority or manawhenua. Te Kawerau a Maki descend from the earliest inhabitants of the area, and have been a distinct tribal entity since the early 1600s, when their ancestor Maki and his people conquered and settled the district. Today Te Kawerau a Maki live throughout the west and wider Auckland region and maintain a close relationship with the Waitakere area.

The Society relies on professional consultants to prepare submissions and evidence for us on a range of matters. The *pro bono publico* contribution of our legal counsel Douglas Allan and Joanna van den Bergen from Ellis Gould Ltd., our resource management consultant Gary Taylor and the Environmental Defence Society is invaluable. Thanks also to James Hook at Envivo Planning who has advised and represented the Society on various planning matters. And once again our thanks go

Financial Report to the AGM

Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Incorporated Statement of Financial Position As at 31st January 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
ASB Bank – FstSver (N&JSmith Fund interest)	3,808	2,851
ASB Bank – Short Term Deposit	20,000	20,000
Kiwibank - 00 Account (H.A.C.)	7,777	11,747
Kiwibank - 01 Account (Operating)	5,474	16,928
Kiwibank - 02 Account (Waitakere Book)	7,209	3,426
Kiwibank – Notice Saver 13	5,343	-
Kiwibank - Short Term Deposits	196,261	201,092
GST Refund Due	863	-
Accounts Receivable	252	144
Accrued Income	5,095	10,612
Stock on Hand – Finished Goods	<u>17,883</u>	<u>3,085</u>
Total Current Assets	269,965	269,885
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Fixed Assets as per Schedule	<u>6,786</u>	<u>2,407</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	276,751	272,292
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	-	2,201
GST Due for payment	<u>2,198</u>	<u>1,307</u>
Total Current Liabilities	2,198	3,508
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>2,198</u>	<u>3,508</u>
NET ASSET	<u>274,553</u>	<u>268,784</u>

Represented by:

TRUSTEES FUNDS

Retained Earnings	274,553	268,784
TOTAL TRUSTEES FUNDS	<u>274,553</u>	<u>268,784</u>

Copies of the Audited Financial Statements are available on request from the Treasurer Ph: 817 2788

Auditor: McGregor Bailey, Chartered Accountants

NOTES:

Bank accounts:

Operating account

Total: \$5,474 + \$5,343 held in a 90-day Saver a/cc

Reserves (land acquisition) account

Term Deposits totalling \$56,767

Waitakere book account

Total: \$7,208 + \$139,493 held in Term Deposits.

This is being accumulated to cover the costs of a possible reprint (or second edition) of the *Waitakere Ranges* book in the next few years. A portion of the interest earned on these Term Deposits over the last 6 years was used to subsidise the publication of the history of the Society, *Saving the Ranges*, in July 2013, and to fund the development of the new website, soon to be launched.

H.A.C. (Heritage Area Coordinator) account

Total: \$7,776 (ASB Community Trust Grant)

Fast Saver Account - Neil & Jean Smith Fund

The original donation (\$20,000) is held as capital and the interest earned (current balance \$3807) is employed for special projects.

Stock on hand – value \$17,883.

This consists primarily of stocks of *Saving the Ranges*, and residual copies of *Waitakere Ranges*.

Accrued income -\$5,095. This represents the anticipated income from Term Deposits in the next financial year.

Fixed Assets - value \$6,786. Equipment purchased in 2009 from NZ Lottery Grants Board and ASB Community Trust grants (laptop computer, data projector and screen, digital recorder, mobile display). It also includes the new website as a fixed asset.

Total Trustees Funds combines \$268,784 carried forward from previous years, with \$5,769 excess income over expenditure in the current year. A major part of this money (\$216,260) is held in tagged funds – the Reserves fund for land acquisition, the Neil and Jean Smith fund, and the Book fund tagged for future publications.

to Jenny Taylor who has maintained our membership database and coordinated mail-outs for many years.

The executive committee has met on the second Tuesday of the month. I would like to ask the outgoing committee to stand up. These people are your elected executive who have given the Society so much of their time over the past year. It has been a pleasure to work with you all and I would like this meeting to join with me in showing our appreciation for their efforts on our behalf.

Special thanks go to our Vice-President Anna Fomison, Secretary Lynda Williams and Treasurer Sandra Jones. Sandra has also edited our quarterly newsletter. The Society currently has three Patrons, Emeritus Professor Dick Bellamy, the Rt. Hon. Jonathan Hunt and Lynne Pillay. It has been my honour to be President and to chair the executive committee for the past sixteen years. I want to thank Society members and my family and friends for their support which has enabled me to better serve the Society.

As you will hear in the financial report, the Society remains in a strong financial position. The majority of the reserves have accumulated from sales of the Waitakere Ranges book and these funds are currently tagged for future publications.

During the year five long-time members of the Society died. In June Andrew Channings died. He and his wife Ann had a life membership since 2000. And in September David Fowlds died. His wife Violet will remain a member of the Society. In January, Daphne Blackshaw, Colleen Pilcher's sister died. Dr Colin Little, QSO MBE FNZIAS MSc DPhil. who joined in 1995, died in February in his 101st year. Colin's last communication with the Society was a letter in 2009 suggesting a possible treatment for kauri dieback disease. Owen Lewis, headmaster of Selwyn College 1966-1979, died in March aged 92. Owen was a foundation member of the Native Forests Restoration Trust and had a property in Mountain Road until 2010. Our condolences go to their families.

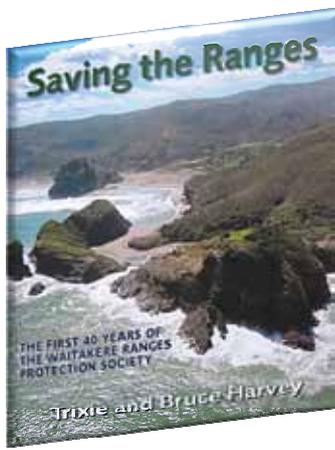
The Society is forty years old. To the members and friends who were there when the Society was founded in 1973, and the many others who have since joined we would like to express our thanks for your support over the years. The Society has a proud history, but our work is not done. While the Heritage Area Act has made some matters more certain for both landowners, developers and the Society, recent changes to the RMA will have adverse effects on the landscape and environment of the ranges. Your support in the coming years will be more important than ever.

Thank you.

I move that the Annual Report be received

John Edgar
President

The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Inc.



Saving the Ranges

Price: \$35.00

+ \$5.00 p&p

Payment instructions:

Online:

Email your order information to the Treasurer at kemsdale@ihug.co.nz and make your payment to Kiwibank Acc/ No. 38-9010-0379887-02

Cheque:

Send your order & cheque to: The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society, PO Box 15668, New Lynn, Auckl 0604

YOUR COMMITTEE

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Committee meetings are held monthly, from February to November, on the second Wednesday of the month.



The Waitakere Ranges Protection
Society Inc.

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