



NEWSLETTER 3

JUNE 2005

Queen Elizabeth Park Management Plan

Management Plan Review

The review of the draft management plan for Queen Elizabeth Park (QEP) is well underway.

The draft was prepared after the first phase of consultation was completed. The submissions we received, and the ideas we gathered at the public meeting, were put forward to Greater Wellington (GW) for consideration.

The draft has taken into account all statutory responsibilities and GW policy documents, including the Regional Parks Network Plan.

Consultation is now focussed on the draft plan and its contents. The draft plan is available at the Kapiti Coast Library and KCDC offices, QEP Rangers office and from us directly at the GW office. Alternatively you could download it from our website www.gw.govt.nz

Submission forms are also available and are there to help you. If you need any assistance filling them in please feel free to call Fiona Shaw on 04 381 7784. The form is only there as a guide so if you prefer to write or email that's okay too!

Remember there will be an opportunity to have your say at a formal hearing in front of the Parks and Forests hearing committee. If you wish to be heard in support of your submission, please indicate on the form.



Key changes made in the draft plan

The draft management plan remains similar to the existing plan in terms of vision and direction. However the draft has been updated to reflect the objectives and policies of the Regional Network plan and in response to submissions.

There are some key changes to the plan though which we are expecting some interest and debate over in the next few months. They include:

- New zones across the park
- Allowing cycling on the coastal track.
- No motorised recreation within the park
- A move away from specific developments to effects based assessments.

If you want to have your say about these topics or anything else within the management plan be sure to make a submission to us.

Please help us with your submission; we need to be able to easily read your comments if we are going to take your concerns into account so please write clearly and succinctly.

NB: any submissions you make may become publicly available. If you are making a submission as an individual, Greater Wellington Regional Council will consider removing your personal details if you so request in your submission

What's on at Queen Elizabeth Park?

There have been comings and goings at QEP! Chris Muller, the current park ranger, is moving north to pastures warmer if not greener. Thanks to his contribution over the last few years, he will be missed by many locals and of course GW staff.

We would also like to welcome Nikki La Monica to the team as the new Western sector mobile ranger. Nikki brings a wealth of experience and has this to say about her new role:

“After spending 10 years as a manager of a bird sanctuary in Newport, Rhode Island, USA, I am thrilled to be working in a country known for its avian diversity! To be employed as a ranger in this beautiful country is a dream come true.”

Key Dates for the Management Plan

June – July 2005 – 2nd Phase of consultation

August – September 2005 – Analysis of submissions

October 2005 – Council Hearing

November 2005 – Plan finalised

In the States I participated in a number of habitat restoration projects; an important component of those projects has been interpretive trails.

The habitats and tracks are slightly different here in New Zealand but the issues seem to be the same; managing and educating about the effects that exotic species of flora and fauna play on our natives.

The work done to date in our parks is really impressive. I am proud to now be a part of the GW and local communities' team that support all the parks & forests.

News from QEP – Arbor Day

The focus of this year's Greater Wellington Arbor Day celebration was to improve the wetland at Mackay's Crossing. The wetland is a joint project between GW and Transit and is the result of the SH1 redevelopment.

Over 200 people, including children from Raumati and Te Ra schools helped plant a variety of native plants including, ti kouka (cabbage tree) and harakeke (flax).

The QEP ranger Chris Muller showed everyone how to plant a plant and within less than an hour hundreds of them went in the ground – great to see!



Did you know?

Five thousand years ago the sea level along the Kapiti Coast was higher than it is now. As the waves retreated and the wind blew, a series of dunes formed on the exposed sea bed. The dunes trapped water and eventually created a series of lakes and swamps behind and amongst the sand dunes.

Prior to clearance and drainage, the Kapiti Coast was cloaked with swamp forest, dominated by tall trees such as kahikatea, puketea, swamp maire

and rimu. There were extensive areas of flax swamp and a number of sedges, rushes and cabbage trees.

It was so wet that the area from Paraparaumu to Foxton was referred to as the "Great Swamp". Centuries of growth of wet forests developed a deep fertile soil on all but the young sand dunes.

In the Wellington Region the "Great Swamp" has been reduced from almost 2,000 hectares to small, heavily modified remnants, totalling less than 300 hectares.

Wetlands act like a giant sponge and have been described as "the world's kidneys." Wetlands are vital to cleansing water, trapping sediment and capturing nutrients that flow through them. In this way, wetlands improve water quality downstream. This makes them great places to find native fish and insects.

Wetlands are also reservoirs of biodiversity. Wetlands support more bird species than any other type of habitat in New Zealand. Although wetlands are less than 2% of the country's land area, they support 22% of our bird species. Birds that live in wetlands include pukeko, bittern and fern bird. Many rare species, including a number of rare plants, rely on wetlands.

Further Information

The following material provides more information about the park and its values:

- The Queen Elizabeth Park Management Plan
- The Queen Elizabeth Park Plan – Resource Information
- Regional Parks Network Management Plan.

You can find the information above at the Regional Council and Public libraries.

You can also visit our website www.gw.govt.nz or ring us on 04 381 7753.

If you do not want a copy of this newsletter sent in future please contact Eloise Page on 04 802 0327 or email eloise.page@gw.govt.nz.

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Publication date June 2005