



Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter February 2009 Number 22

Kia Ora/Greetings to all Forum Members

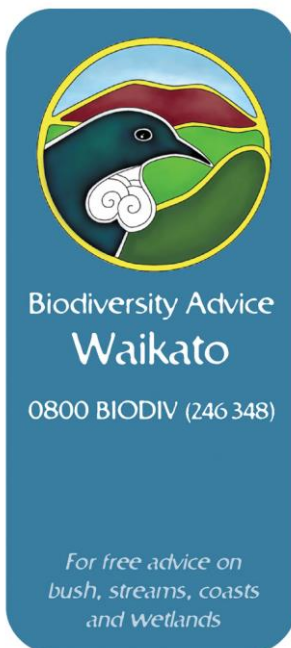
We have a busy 2-3 months ahead of us with Regional and District Councils draft Long-term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs) being released for consultation. The first news item gives details of this important process. Environment Waikato is also reviewing the Regional Policy Statement and this is due for release in March for consultation (see item below). So a lot is happening and we need to be actively involved in these processes to speak out for the importance of biodiversity actions and outcomes in these plans and policies.

Submissions on draft Longterm Council Community Plans (LTCCPs)

All draft LTCCPs are being reviewed and released for submissions over the next 2 months. Thames Coromandel District Councils and Taupo District Councils have closed for submissions. Environment Waikato's (EW) is due for release on 6 March with a closing date of mid April for submission. The EW consultation will be a vital process for us to be involved in this year. We need to have our voice heard to have influence on the outcomes that are proposed. I encourage you all to submit to give a voice for biodiversity protection and at the very least to maintain the gains that have been made over the past years. Support for the Forum is contained in the draft and not the Biodiversity Advice Waikato service. We will get more detail of other proposals which affect biodiversity on Friday. I will be preparing points from the Plan to submit and sending you all these points to encourage you to write submissions individually as well as on behalf of the groups you belong to. **It is a numbers game and if enough people speak out for the importance of resources for biodiversity it will make a difference.**

As part of the LTCCP consultation process I have started writing letters to all of the 12 District Councils in the region for on-going funding of the Forum and made submissions on two Councils LTCCPs

Biodiversity Advice Waikato (BAW)



Biodiversity Advice Waikato is provided and supported by the Waikato Biodiversity Forum. Key Contact, Jan Hoverd **Ph.0800BIODIV (0800 246348)**

Service operates Monday to Friday 9am-6pm, and has an after hours phone.

Email: biodiv@bioforum.org.nz

Website: www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz

Over the Christmas period the exciting news has been the reporting about the environment in the news media. The New Zealand Herald produced a large article about Bar-tailed Godwits at Miranda and elsewhere. Both the Waikato Times and New Zealand Herald continued their Eco pages through the holidays. One paper had an article about recycling Christmas trash. Protecting, enhancing the planet is a 365 day commitment.

It is now February/March but people are already considering what native species to plant this autumn. The intermittent rains through this summer have been encouraging the plantings from last year to flourish. This is a sure fire way to energise us all into more plantings of native species to encourage New Zealand's endemic insects and birds to multiply.

Calendar of Events pages on Website



Janice (Biodiversity Advice Waikato) and Moira (Waikato Biodiversity Forum) provide a regional notice board type calendar on the website. The Waikato Biodiversity Forum is a regional service so we'd like to include events from the range of areas across the Forum's boundaries. The Forum's event page <http://www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz/events/> is one of the highest hit pages on the website so people must be interested in finding out about biodiversity related events/working bees. So if you have events, working bees or trips planned over the next few months and would like them advertised outside your group they can be forwarded to the Biodiversity Forum coordinator for inclusion on the website.

Taupo District Plan Changes

The first Landscape and Natural Values Plan Change 24 and Variation 25 to the Taupo District Plan consultation period has closed. However there will be another submission period where people can make a further submission on the original submissions. The further submission phase will commence once Council has produced a summary report is prepared on the original submissions (the timing of this will depend on how many submissions the Council gets and how long it takes to summarise them). The further submission phase will be publicly notified in the following papers:

- Taupo Times
- Turangi Chronicle
- Tokoroa Times
- Rotorua Daily Post
- Dominion Post
- NZ Herald
- Hawkes Bay Today
- Ruapehu Press

Or keep an eye on Council's website for updates (www.taupo.govt.nz, look under 'Key Information' and click on Landscape and Natural Values Plan Changes), or ph Kara Maresca on 07 376 0641

The Waikato Regional Policy Statement (RPS)

The Waikato Regional Policy Statement (RPS) is under review with the intention of notifying the 'second-generation' RPS in August 2010. A discussion document identifying issues and potential approaches to be considered in the review has been prepared to generate discussion with regional stakeholders. The discussion document will be available for download from the RPS review website from 9 March 2009 (www.ew.govt.nz/rpsreview). The feedback received on this document will help shape the draft RPS to be released at the end of this year. Feedback should be submitted by Friday 17 April 2009.

An RPS provides an overview of the resource management issues of the region and the way integrated management of the region's natural and physical resources is to be achieved. All regional councils are required to have and regularly review a RPS. In 2007, EW commissioned an independent evaluation of the existing RPS, which highlighted how much has changed since the RPS was developed. New issues have emerged while other issues have yet to be resolved. Some of the RPS policies remain relevant and will require little change. Other areas require improvement. Recent law changes and national policy direction will also influence the content and style of the new RPS. The RPS will set the direction for managing our region's natural and physical resources for the next ten years, However, decisions made now will have an impact for many years beyond this timeframe. It is therefore important that stakeholders and the community have input into its development. We welcome your feedback on the RPS discussion document.

Blair Dickie

Programme Manager: Policy and Strategy

Environment Waikato

rps@ew.govt.nz

Fragments need fencing *and* pest control

A 2-year collaborative research project in Waikato forest fragments by Landcare Research, Waikato and Canterbury Universities and AgResearch has shown that both stock fencing and pest control are required to maximise fragment condition. Researchers learned from over 100,000 invertebrates collected in almost 1000 samples from 30 forest fragments and three reference forest sites, that invertebrate densities found in fragments fenced 30-40 years ago were up to 100 times those found in unfenced fragments. Timing of pest control in relation to time of fencing is important. While possum and rat control at any time will improve leaf production, flowering and fruiting, control at the time of initial fencing can improve the whole restoration trajectory of the fragment by allowing palatable seedlings to become saplings. Another interesting finding was that large-fruited, long-lived, shade-tolerant species like tawa, kohekohe and mangeao regenerate poorly in fragments even when fenced, which may be due to pests, altered climate in fragments, or poor seed dispersal services.

John Innes, Landcare Research, Hamilton

ACRE welcomes new members

As the result of its' recent elections, ACRE is very happy to welcome new representation from Tairua (Joyce Birdsall), Waipa (Dr Alison Dewes and Taupo (Dr Brian Robinson). Dr Daniel Rutledge and Catherine Bryan from Hamilton were also elected. Re-elected for another 3 year term, were Arthur Cowan (Otorohanga), Dr Mairi Jay (Hamilton), and Martin Wallace (Morrinsville).

It is critical that ACRE have wide representation from throughout the region so this election result is particularly pleasing. The Advisory Committee on the Regional Environment (ACRE) is a voluntary organization of fifteen members who represent or have affiliations with some 35 other environmental advocacy groups in the Waikato. The purpose of ACRE is to advise the Regional Council, Environment Waikato, on new policy matters, to comment on the implications of existing policies, to alert the Council to matters in need of attention, liaise with groups sharing similar environmental concerns, act as a forum for ideas, monitor environmental progress and network to promote good practices within the region. ACRE is a citizen-based body established with the support of the Waikato Regional Council to advise the Council on environmental concerns within the region.

For any further information about ACRE please contact Chair, Catherine Smith, 2smiths@wave.co.nz

Biodiversity Contestable Advice and Condition Funds

Next Funding round May 2009

See <http://www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/pvtland/conditionapps.html> for details.

National Community Biodiversity Fund

This fund of \$4million over 2 years, has been established for community initiated restoration projects on publicly owned land, particularly in under represented and threatened ecosystem, such as wetlands, dune land, urban waterways, river / stream banks and forest remnants and projects aligned with the Statement of National Priorities for protecting rare and threatened native biodiversity.

Eligibility: Public land (including DOC, Council, Transit, Rail and LINZ lands)

Who can apply: Community groups, NGOs, Trusts etc who are working on restoration projects on public land.

Further information: www.doc.govt.nz/communityfund

The next round is anticipated to open late March 2009.

Environmental Community Group Expo Hamilton Gardens 26th March 2009

An Environmental Community Group Expo is being held at the Hamilton Gardens for community groups who want to 'know', as well as a great networking opportunity. There will be selection of workshops of benefit to environmental community groups, such as writing and publicity with the media, book keeping, tax and Charities Commission advice, funding advice, how to write a funding application, how to organise a community event, and a series of stalls and presentations. All environmental community groups from around the Waikato region are invited to attend. This is a free event with catering provided.

Register by contacting

Rachael Goddard

Environment Centre Hamilton

E: rachael@envirocentre.org.nz

P: 021 261 5759
A: P.O Box 19104 Hamilton

Pukawa Wildlife Management Trust



A new sign has appeared at Stanley Grove on the way into Pukawa. There was predictable discussion about the desirability of yet another sign (we are inundated with signs about trapping and poisoning of pests) but this one we think is striking, tasteful and performs an important function. It is there by courtesy of the Department of Conservation and acknowledges the importance of community effort in preservation of our natural environment, together with financial sponsors and those who are employed to guard our natural heritage. The Pukawa Wildlife Management Trust has made an impact on the density of birdlife on our patch and it now takes several thousand dollars a year not to lose ground. We could not carry on without donations from property owners, the guidance and advice of the DOC

enthusiasts, and an annual grant from the Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust. The latter body has a very significant effect on conservation in the Waikato region. To find out more about this Trust try www.wceet.org.nz. It is good to be involved in two way traffic over conservation values with Mighty River Power and other hydro-scheme interests.

We have an arrangement with the Pukawa Property Owners Association Inc. whereby personal donations to our Trust may be added to the Association's annual subscription when it is paid. The PPOA hands the money on and also makes a grant to the Trust, all of which is gratefully received and well used. Gifts are tax deductible so you will get a receipt.

Weedbusting. As well as fighting four-footed predators this month, members of the Trust have been dealing to rogue acacia trees (*Robinia pseudacacia*) that have survived in the bush by the lake edge from Mission Station days, and also sycamore trees (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) which are proliferating quite widely. The latter are considered a greater threat to the second growth bush because of their vigorous growth and the fact that they seed heavily. The DOC botanists think ahead in decades to what the bush could be like if the young matai, miro, maire and other forest trees which can already be seen in immature form are allowed to develop without competition. Nature moves in a slow and inexorable way if left to itself – after all the life cycle of a forest is measured in centuries!

Compiled by David J Jull.

If you want to contact people whose details are not in the newsletter you can go through the Contact Us page on the Forum website and send an email to either Moira or Jan for their details.

The newsletters are all placed on www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz. for easy access.