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Report to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee
from Jason Kerehi, Maori Policy Advisor, Policy & Planning

Current Iwi Projects in the Wairarapa

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of the status of Iwi Projects within the Wairarapa.

2. Background

2.1 Wellington Regional Council has provided funding to Iwi and associated hapu/marae/whanau to undertake projects that achieve a better relationship between Council and Maori.

2.2 Iwi in the Wairarapa have undertaken projects that will benefit their tribal members. In addition they have encouraged their people to come forward with suitable environmental projects themselves. This has resulted in a mix of small and large-scale projects.

3. Project Status

3.1 Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairarapa

(1) Ngati Kahungunu Taiwhenua Waahi Tapu Database

History

Three Iwi in the Wellington region have begun projects involving recording sites of significance (waahi tapu) onto Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Ngati Kahungunu have been gathering information on sites for at least 10 years and believe that now is the right time to transfer this information onto GIS.

Comment

I met recently with Ngati Kahungunu representatives to discuss developing a Waahi Tapu database. This was in response to the recent GIS Technical Workshop held at the Regional Council Centre and initiatives being taken by other Iwi in the region.

I have been able to advise Ngati Kahungunu on a suitable approach to drafting a proposal and planning their management system

Status - Ngati Kahungunu is currently preparing a proposal

(2) Homewood Wetland

History

A member of the Morris whanau at Homewood approached this office to see if we could assist with their plans to retire a 4-acre block of land and return it to its former wetland state.

A site visit by Melanie Dixon (Wetland officer), Michael Hewison (Engineer) and myself was carried out in March 2002 to assess the site. Michael suggested a survey be done of the land and then an action plan drafted.

Tech Services were employed to carry out the survey and a contour map was produced.

Comment

A proposal has been drafted for this project. The first stage of this project (Year One) will include surveying, fencing of the area, some minor earthworks to create a larger dispersal of water, and removal of some willows. Our engineer has recommended that we carry out these tasks, leave it for 12 months, then reassess the situation at a later date.

Year Two could involve a planting scheme, development of a 3-tier wetland system and relocation of a weir.

The proposal is for Year One only and the owners will apply for further funding (if required) once the site has been reassessed.

Status – The proposal for stage one has been approved, the contract signed and work should be underway soon with completion by the end of October this year.

(3) Ngawi Wetland – Punaruku Lagoon**History**

The Kawakawa 1D2 Trust has sought funding to enhance this wetland area. The wetland is located 1 km past Ngawi Township on the coastal side of the road.

The wetland contains a natural spring and lagoon that local Maori and historians believe was frequented by Kupe.

The Kawakawa 1D2 Trust has a close association with the Ngawi Residents Association and together these two groups are working together to maintain the wetland area. The Department of Conservation has already provided assistance with this wetland. Punaruku Lagoon was a prominent place for nesting birds.

Comment

Discussions have been held with the landowners to advance the first stage of the project, which involves planting and clearance of the lagoon from floating sweetgrass.

Currently we are looking at a planting scheme to enhance this wetland area as well as spraying floating sweetgrass in the lagoon to open up the water body. The local Maori community will play a major hand in the planting of this wetland.

The project will be left for 12 months and the second stage will be looked into. Stage two may involve further planting and improvements to perimeter fencing. The site currently has an electric fence for stock exclusion.

Status – Final proposal pending

(4) Okautete Native Bush Reserve- Homewood**History**

In 1996, a 5 hectare remnant podocarp forest was protected under a Nga Whenua Rahui covenant by members of the local Ngapine Tarawa Trust with the intention of ensuring this unique stand of coastal forest would be protected and restored as a taonga for all New Zealanders and future generations.

The Okautete Bush has won many awards for conservation and protection. The Ngapine Tarawa Trust is seeking funding to create a public walkway in and around the bush.

Comment

A site visit was carried out earlier this year with DoC and Forest and Bird. Chris Peterson (Forest and Bird) has provided advice for a suitable plan. A proposal has been received, which proposes a series of metal tracks (1 km) and boardwalk (150m). There is also provision for perimeter planting

Status – Pending decision

(5) Okautete Bush – Nursery**Comment**

In addition to the walkway, the Trust is seeking assistance to establish a plant nursery adjacent to Okautete Bush.

The intention is to eventually create a source of coastal plants for the Wairarapa. The Trust sees this venture as being eventually self-sufficient. Funding is for establishment of the nursery. The Trust has been advised to seek alternative funding in addition to a contribution from Council

Benefits from the nursery include:

- Locally sourced native plants; useful for Councils, developers and coastal landowners
- Income for the maintenance of the bush
- Opportunity for the local hapu to utilise their natural resource
- The possibility of extending podocarp reserves along the Wairarapa coastline
- Increasing skills and knowledge base of local hapu in silviculture

Status – Decision pending, awaiting further discussion of business plans, additional funding and marketing research

3.2 Rangitaane o Wairarapa**(1) Hamua Sites of Significance****History**

Ngati Hamua is the predominant hapu of Rangitaane o Wairarapa. The Iwi Authority plans to record as many sites of significance relating to this hapu. The project will record sites mainly in the Masterton District. This project will allow Rangitaane to better participate in consent and planning matters. The waahi tapu database will provide benefits to the hapu, Wellington Regional Council, Masterton District Council, and the community.

Comment

This project is underway with the researchers having already collated information on 300 sites. The data sharing agreement (an agreement whereby the Iwi will utilise Regional Council data to advance and record waahi tapu sites) is finalised. The loading of data should be in place shortly, which will enable Rangitaane to use the GIS. Transfer of data will follow soon after.

Masterton District Council has been approached for contribution of funding and sharing of data. Their contribution will be confirmed shortly.

This project will be completed in February 2003 with a presentation of the final report and project overview. The majority of sites gathered during this project will be given to the Regional Council to assist with planning and consent matters.

Status – Contract signed and project underway

(2) Taueru Urupa Project

History

The Taueru Urupa Committee approached the Regional Council early last year seeking funding and assistance to fence off a known waahi tapu. After much discussion it was agreed to add native planting (beautification) and a kohatu (memorial stone) to the project. The area was a major Maori settlement and has high heritage significance.

Over the past 12 months the committee, Council, and the community have pooled together to clear the area, erect and paint fencing, plant natives and come up with a suitable inscription. The Council has provided supervision of planting and transport of the Taipo rock from Tinui quarry in addition to funding.

Comment

The kohatu (memorial stone) has been erected and the memorial plaque mounted. This concludes the Regional Councils involvement.

The Taueru Urupa committee is seeking funding (not through Iwi Projects) for the carving of a Waharoa (carved entranceway). Our Rivers staff has kindly donated logs sourced from the Ruamahanga River to advance the final part of the

project. This is another fine example of partnership and relationship building between the Council and Iwi.

Status – Project completed apart from the carving and a dedication ceremony

4. Communications

No particular publicity is proposed although reports on all Iwi Projects in the region have been delivered regularly to Ara Tahi. Future reports on selected Iwi Projects may appear in the Councils 'Elements' publication and on the Councils website.

5. Recommendation

That the Committee receive this report and note its contents.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:

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