



Report 10.200
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Committee Regional Sustainability
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Great Outdoors summer events programme

1. Purpose

To report on the 2009/2010 Great Outdoors summer events (GOSE) programme, formerly known as the Regional Outdoors programme.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2002*.

3. Background

The 2010 GOSE programme was the tenth in the series of annual summer event programmes. This year's programme started on 27 December 2009 and concluded on 1 April 2010.

Sixty-five events were scheduled, with one extra being added at the end, totalling sixty-six. Six events were cancelled - four because of the weather, one because of the guide passing away and the last because of the Hutt Valley Orienteering Club over-committing itself. Twenty-three of these events were organised and staffed exclusively by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) staff, 33 were organised and run by GWRC in partnership with volunteer groups, territorial authorities and/or Sport Wellington, and 10 were organised by external providers.

4. Objectives

The GOSE programme contributes to two LTCCP success factors:

- More people visit the regional parks
- More people taking positive action for a healthy community

4.1 More people visiting the regional parks

Through the GOSE programme, GWRC is able to:

- Make it easier for people to use parks by providing a safe structured

environment to explore an area of the park, information about correct equipment needed, and public and private transport options

- Provide an opportunity for park rangers and other GWRC staff to interact with the public, educating them about services that GWRC provides
- Distribute regional park brochures

The programme events are attractive to many people because they are free or low cost and offer a variety of activities for various ages and fitness levels. Twenty-seven percent of the surveyed respondents who attended a GWRC event had not previously visited the regional park that the event was held in. Almost all of the respondents indicated they would revisit the respective park.

4.2 More people taking positive action for a sustainable region

4.2.1 Volunteers

The GOSE programme provides an opportunity for GWRC to build relationships with environmental and park user groups (see attachment 1). It also allows groups to promote their aims and encourage the public to join up. Many of the groups we have worked with have reported increased membership as a result of the programme.

GWRC staff members are given the opportunity to volunteer at events. Staff from Water Supply, Flood Protection, Support Services, Marketing and Design, Transport Strategy Implementation, Parks, and Communications supported the events throughout the programme. These volunteers gain knowledge of our parks, as well as a chance to interact with the public and promote other functions of GWRC.

Volunteer partners and staff are each given a T-shirt representing the park they worked in to thank them and further promote the park.

4.2.2 Territorial authorities and partners

One of the outcomes of the Wellington Regional Strategy is to provide a quality lifestyle. The Wellington Region population is fortunate that several territorial authorities have diverse and low cost summer programmes. By establishing positive and ongoing relationships with territorial authorities, we have been able to cross promote events and work on joint projects, as well as ensuring events do not clash and are spread throughout the summer period.

We have worked on the following events with territorial authorities and partners:

- *Kev the Wandering Kiwi* - with Upper Hutt and Hutt City Councils. Kev the Wandering Kiwi was held every Thursday in January and targeted families with young children. The parks used were Tunnel Gully Recreation Area, Wainuiomata Recreation Area, Kaitoke Regional Park and Belmont Regional Park.
- *Paws in the Park* - a joint initiative with the Upper Hutt City Council that promotes the dog friendly aspect of Tunnel Gully and responsible dog ownership.

- *Sport Wellington buggy walks* - an ongoing partnership with Sport Wellington. This monthly event is aimed at parents and caregivers with babies, with events from November to April taking place in the regional parks and the winter series in urban areas.
- *Bike the Trail* - a family focused fun bike ride from Harcourt Park in Upper Hutt to Hikoikoi Reserve via the Hutt River Trail.
- *Walk the Trail* – a family focused walk from Trentham Memorial Park via the Hutt River Trail to Stokes Valley.

5. Promotion

Promotion for 2010 included:

- A four page lift-out in *Our Region*. The brochure was redesigned to include a new look and layout that made the best possible use of the available space. This was the first year that *Our Region* was distributed via community papers, which seemed to reach more people in previous years.
- Bundles of extra brochures were delivered to libraries, information centres and other organisations to be displayed to the public.
- Distribution of the programme brochure at GOSE events.
- Listings on the GWRC, New Zealand Live and Eventfinder websites.
- Feature stories on the GWRC website.
- Half page full colour advertisements were placed in *The Wellingtonian*, *Kapi Mana*, *The Hutt News* and the *Upper Hutt Leader* at the end of February for March events.
- Territorial authorities promoted GWRC events specific to their area within their summer programme brochures and on their websites, e.g., *Summer Scene*, *Porirua City Council* and the *Nature Coast* events website.
- Media releases were written for the following events:
 - The Great Outdoors summer events launch
 - Outdoor opportunities close to home – *The Hutt Gravel Grab*, *Take A Kid tramping*, *Creek to Peak*
 - Enter the world of Maori weaving *Harakeke* – *Flax weaving on the Coast*
 - Females wanted for some great bachelor robins! *East Harbour Robin Walk*
 - A day of activity, high on the hilltops – *Belmont Regional Park Open Day*
 - Great guided walks this weekend – *Ridge Track Adventure*, *Rimutaka Rail Trail*, *Farm to Coast*

This work resulted in a total of 45 articles published throughout the Region.

In addition, we targeted specific newspaper with reminders about upcoming events and offered photos and captions post event. Chris Wootton, then Principal Ranger, Western Sector, was interviewed on Access Radio about the Battle Hill History Trail.

6. Attendance

6.1 Summary of attendance

A total of 12,234 people attended GOSE programme events in 2010, 3,620 less than in 2009. Note that *Anything Vintage Festival* had a 3,700 drop in numbers compared to 2009.

Key result areas	2010	2009	2008	2007
Total number of events in the GOSE	66	62	57	49
Events organised by GWRC	50	49	48	41
Events run by other agencies	10	6	3	4
Events run by volunteer groups with GWRC support if required	6	6	6	4
Participants at GWRC events	4,730	4,736	4,724	3,881
Average number of participants at GWRC events	91	105	98	95

Events organised by outside event organisers totalled 7,215 attendees. These included the *Anything Vintage Festival* (4,800), the *Karapoti Classic* (1,200), the *Mt Lowry Challenge* (265), the *Big Coast* (389), the *Akatarawa Attack* (75) and the *Grand Traverse* (300).

We believe Wellington's inclement summer weather was a significant factor in the lower overall event numbers.

6.2 New events

These included:

- *Queen Elizabeth Park Nature Day* at Queen Elizabeth Park – a guided walk by Ian Armitage a member of the Ornithological Society, Les Molloy Natural History consultant and Dean Scott, temporary Queen Elizabeth Park ranger. Around 12 people enjoyed the morning walk followed by a sausage sizzle.
- *Belmont Regional Park Open Day* – a Friends of Belmont Regional Park event which GWRC supported. This was an opportunity for the public to gain access to the hilltops of Belmont Regional Park, with access opened up to the old shearers' quarters on Hill Road. The Friends of Belmont Regional Park provided a variety of free activities, including guided walks on history, ecology and botany. A local tramping club ran a longer tramp through the park. Hutt Valley Orienteering set up an orienteering course for families and the local 4WD club provided free 4WD trips on a short circuit to the top of the airstrip and back. There was live music and a sausage sizzle, and the event was enjoyed by an estimated 350 people.
- *Take a Kid Tramping* – in association with the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council. This was an opportunity for parents and their children (10 years plus) to learn about the essential outdoor safety skills. This was attended by seven adults and eight children. Feedback was very positive but the event needed to be scheduled earlier in summer to attract more people.

- *Bush Block Management 101* – a low key opportunity for people to learn about how to look after your bush block, including topics such as restoration planting, pest management and the role of livestock on properties. This was attended by 12 people.
- *Explore Wairarapa Moana* – this fully booked bus trip took participants around Wairarapa Moana Wetlands, including down to Lake Onoke to learn about its history and about its future. This event has a lot of potential as the shape of the restoration project becomes clearer.
- *Human Birds* - a three step forest restoration event – led by Friends of Maara Roa with support from GWRC Environmental technician. This is a three step project over a number of months. The first day is where people learn how to collect and prepare seeds from native trees. The next event is learning how to make seed balls and the final day is in May/June where the seed balls are thrown into the bush. Participants needed to be available for all three days. An estimated 22 people have taken part to date. This event was also supported by the Kiwi Conservation Club.
- *Chrystalls Bend Lagoon Walk* – a joint morning event with the Friends of Otaki River with the goal of promoting the Chrystalls Bend walkway and the plantings done by the Friends. This was a very well received event, with 40 people coming along for the walk and cup of tea at Chrystalls Bend lagoon. The Friends of Otaki River signed up at least six people from the community to assist with their planting programme.
- *Kapiti Fly Coast Beginners Guide to Fly fishing* – a programme based on the popular event held on the Hutt River Trail. We approached the Kapiti Fly fishing Angling Club to run sessions on the Otaki River with support from the Flood Protection team at Otaki depot. The event was fully booked out with extras turning up on the day.

6.3 Highlights

- *4WD Sunset Tours 1 and 2* – in association with the Cross Country Vehicle Club – this event has been part of the programme for many years now but is always the first to book out and people love the adventure of going in the 4WDs and being able to access new areas. This is a great event for older people and families.
- The *Rimutaka Rail Trail 3*- the first two planned for the programme were cancelled because of inclement weather, so a third trip was scheduled in March as people were very keen to do the walk. Fortunately the weather played its part and 55 people were able to walk the trail and enjoy the hospitality of the Fell museum.
- We had four *Sport Wellington buggy walks*, including the April walk at Battle Hill. A total of 571 people attended the four buggy walks in the regional parks.

7. Feedback

7.1 General

Participants on GWRC organised events are given evaluation forms to provide feedback about the programme.

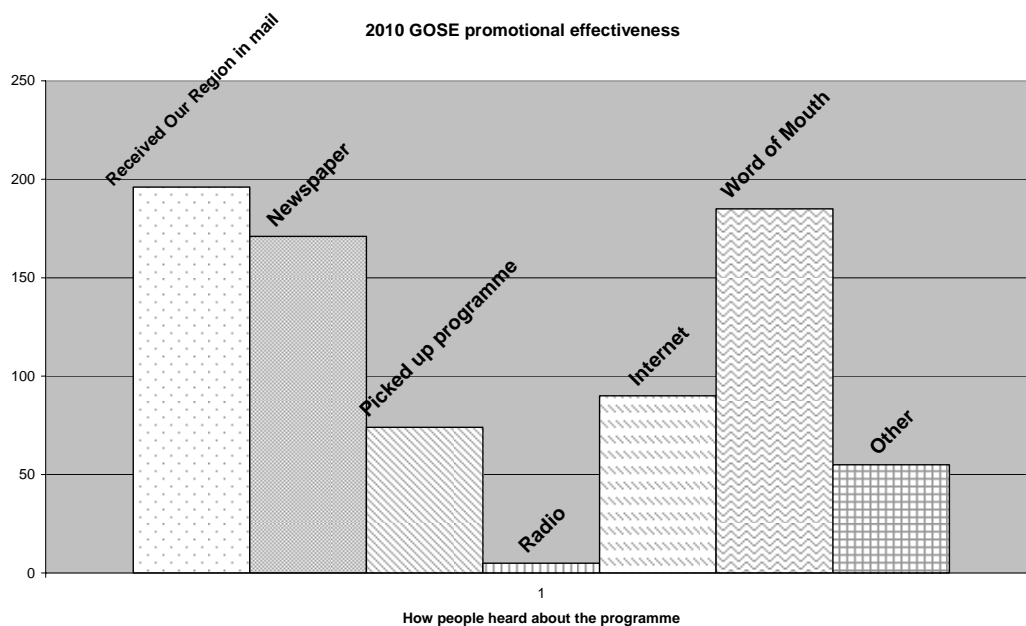
We receive additional feedback through telephone calls, emails and letters.

Comments have been predominantly positive. Suggestions for improvement included a strong theme relating to the weather, communicating about timings of breaks on walks, speakers being louder and having back-ups if key people are sick. Where attendance was low, we will review the event and decide whether to run it again next year.

Discussions with staff and volunteer organisations have indicated potential to include new walks, altering dates for events to take into account the tendency of January weather being unreliable. With two new rangers on board in 2010, we expect that they will be able to provide different ideas for new events. Overall, staff and volunteers were very happy with the programme. We will continue to look for opportunities to promote a range of recreation opportunities, support local groups and clubs, and get better value for the time and resources invested in the GOSE programme.

7.2 Information from 2010 participant evaluation forms:

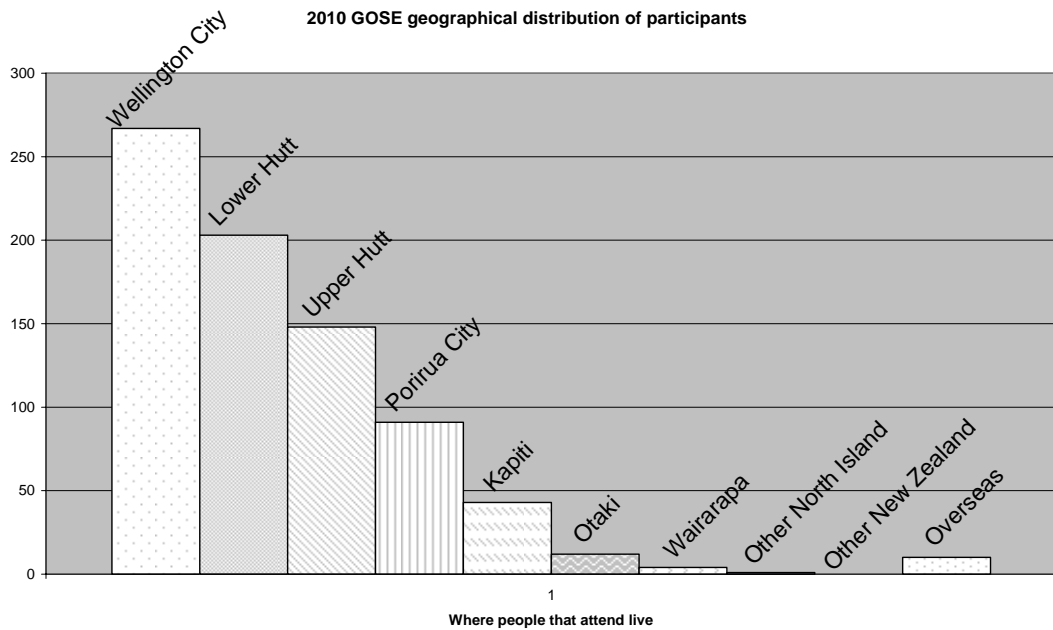
A total of 770 people completed the surveys, which are issued during GWRC organised events.



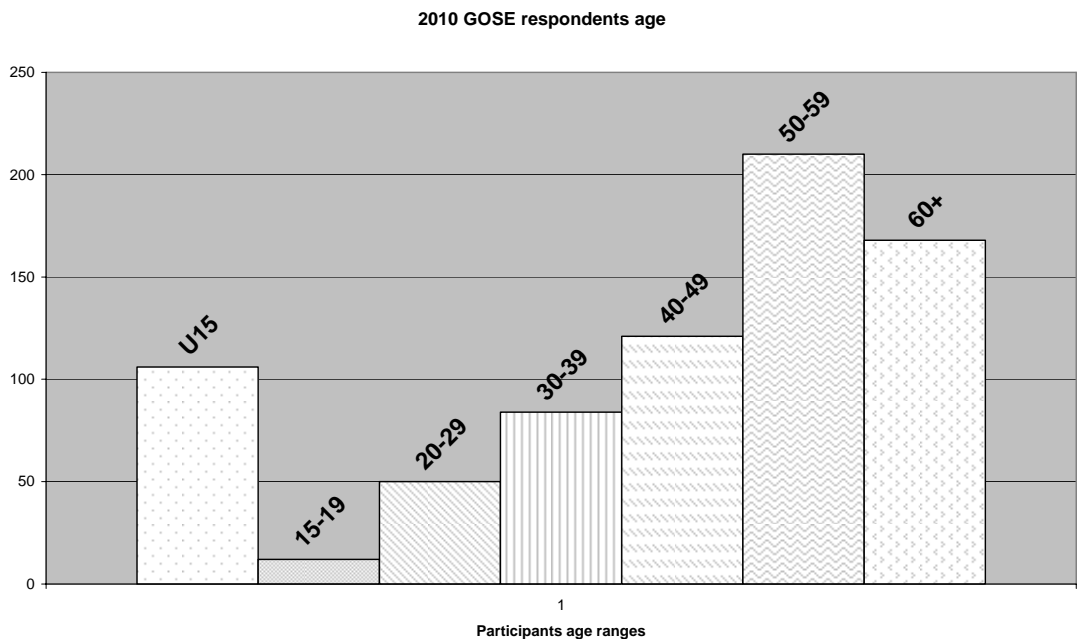
This was the first year that *Our Region* was distributed via community newspapers. From the survey forms compared to 2009 an extra 4 percent were reached via newspapers from 18 percent in 2009 to over 22 percent in 2010. In 2011 we will make this question clearer. Because of printing dates, this was the first year in which we did not send the programme out via direct mail, yet people are still noting that they received it this way. It leads us to believe that the newspaper column should be considerably higher and that we are being more effective with our marketing through the community newspapers than previously.

Interestingly, we experimented with the *Robin's Return Walk* by not including it in the physical programme and only promoting it through the GWRC and

Event finder websites. Eventually only three people attended this walk, showing that the printed programme is still our best advertising tool.



The number of people attending the GOSE from each district is reasonably in proportion with the population of that area. Wellington City attendance has increased by 12 percent from 22 percent in 2009 to 34 percent in 2010. This is possibly indicative of the increased marketing through *The Wellingtonian* compared to previous years. Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt have stayed fairly much the same, with Kapiti and Wairarapa dropping slightly.



We are pleased to see a good number of under 14 year olds attending events. We will continue to explore options to attract more 14-29 year olds but note that this age group is generally more attracted to urban based activities.

Fifty-two percent of the people that attended the GOSE programme were female, with 53 percent saying they would not normally do this many hours of physical activity if they were not attending this event.

The average satisfaction rating for our events was 4.75 out of 5, which was similar to 2009.

Information collected from volunteers' and rangers' feedback forms has been included in recommendations for the 2011 GOSE programme.

8. Sponsorship

The programme received sponsorship from Dwights Outdoors, Caffe L'affare and The Cancer Society (Wellington and Kapiti branches).

Attachment 2 shows more detail about the sponsorship received.

9. Budget

The 2010 programme had a net budget of \$15,000. The budget excludes the cost of GWRC staff time. Any charge to participants covers direct costs, such as transport and Portaloos.

Total expenditure for the programme was \$27,870, with revenue from participants \$13,300 for a net cost of \$14,570. Therefore, the 2010 programme was \$430 under budget.

10. Communications

We have communicated appropriately with the various volunteers and community groups following the events.

11. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

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Attachments

- 1 2010 Great Outdoors summer events programme volunteer groups
- 2 2010 Great Outdoors summer events programme sponsorship