

**PLEASE NOTE**

The first stage of the TECT All Terrain Park is expected to be open in the coming year. Please be aware that no part of the park is currently available for public access.

# TERRAIN NEWS

the official newsletter of the TECT ALL TERRAIN PARK



issue 04 SEPTEMBER 2008

## Kuaka brings people into TECT All Terrain Park

Spreading the word about the potential of the TECT All Terrain Park and taking a hands-on role in caring for the park's environment is the main aim of the Tauranga-based company Kuaka New Zealand (KNZ).

KNZ operates as a sustainable business and specialises in getting people into the outdoors to take part in conservation and education.

Through an international student programme, KNZ brings American, Canadian and European students to New Zealand on two-week experiences combining education, conservation, travel and community volunteer work.

Since 2003 KNZ has provided the Western Bay of Plenty region with more than 31,000 volunteer hours of environmental work including

planting, releasing native trees, removing weeds from harbour fringes, building tracks and monitoring streams, forests and estuaries.

In the past two months KNZ students have brought Oropi School pupils into the park to plant the first native trees and park manager Ric Balfour is keen for KNZ to continue this community involvement.

KNZ has signed an agreement with Western Bay of Plenty District Council to help manage and promote the park in the best interests of all users and the wider community.

As part of this role, KNZ will monitor and manage pests, set up environmental monitoring sites to assess overall impacts, help provide education opportunities and revegetate areas of the park with native species.

Kuaka's agreement with the Council also involves helping user groups to manage their chosen patch to avoid negative impacts on other users and the environment.

KNZ operates under a globally recognised environmental management system that provides users with a practical, straightforward system to manage use of their sites in a sustainable way.



Oropi School pupils help plant native trees in the TECT All Terrain Park with Kuaka International exchange students.



The bar-tailed godwit after which Kuaka is named.

## All Terrain Park zone being considered

The Western Bay of Plenty District Council is in the process of reviewing the District Plan that provides rules for development. As part of this review Council is considering creating a specific zone for the TECT All Terrain Park. Currently the site is zoned Rural

G which is the predominant rural zoning for the Western Bay of Plenty District.

While the Council currently holds resource consents to operate and develop the park within the Rural G zone, this zone does not cover the

kinds of activities planned for the future.

The purpose of the new zone is to provide the opportunity for appropriate recreation, education and tourist related activities in the park.

## Welcome to the latest issue of Terrain News.

While the Olympics are over, the project team feels like its settling in to a good marathon pace working on this massive development.

We are in the process of upgrading the concept plans initiated a few years ago to kick off the project and we have also started work on our ten year projection of capital works.

In this issue we highlight two new user groups, hear from Tauranga City Councillor Murray Guy and feature a plant we've dubbed "Princess of the Park".

Read on and enjoy!

# Ready to roll!

After almost four months of work (and a month of delay from bad weather – agghh!), the contractors are ready to roll the new seal on the upgraded intersection of Whataroa Road and Pyes Pa Road (State Highway 36).

This new intersection will become the main access point for the TECT All Terrain Park, where visitors will arrive, get oriented and pick up information on what to do and where to go.

The team from HEB and Harrison-Grierson have widened the road, placed turn lanes from each direction and built a new bridge in the highway that will allow an underpass to feed traffic safely to the west side of the park later this year.

The project included extra work brought forward in the works program so that the link road to Darrin Road could be completed sooner. While it is not finished, all but 100m of the

major earthwork has been completed and a large culvert installed so that by early summer the road will be ready for laying gravel.

Kuaka Inc. has continued working with local school groups to re-establish native plants in the ground cleared for this construction project.

Check out the story on the back for more information on Kuaka Inc. one of the many groups who have got in behind the park's development.



Before construction started on the State Highway 36 underpass.



Construction on the underpass nears completion.



Ric Balfour Manager TECT All Terrain Park

## Inside...

- » Mountain bikers sign up
- » Special TECT All Terrain Park zone on radar
- » Clean up day planned for 16 November

## Want more information?

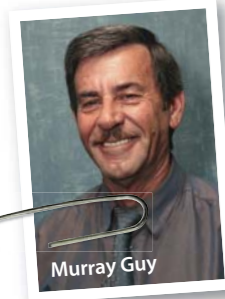
If you'd like more information about the TECT All Terrain Park visit [www.westernbay.govt.nz](http://www.westernbay.govt.nz) and go to the projects menu on the homepage, or call Ric Balfour at the Western Bay of Plenty District Council on 07 571 8008, email [ric.balfour@westernbay.govt.nz](mailto:ric.balfour@westernbay.govt.nz)



0908TP.DEVICH.CO.NZ

## Joint partnership underpins park's success

The **TECT All Terrain Park** is a great example of how neighbouring councils can join to invest in one of the region's greatest assets – the environment.



Murray Guy

That's the view of Tauranga City councillor Murray Guy who, along with councillor Bill Faulkner, is one of two Tauranga City Council representatives on the sub-regional parks committee that is overseeing the development of the park.

Murray says the collaborative role of the two councils in the funding and management of the park is critical to its success, as is getting users to feel that they have ownership.

He believes local authorities in the past have not invested enough in the region's environment, but says land purchases for recreational and heritage parks in the past five years reflect the present councils' recognition that the environment is the "jewel" of the western Bay of Plenty.

"It's extremely exciting for us as a city to have this joint venture with our neighbouring council. I see our role as establishing the park – getting the infrastructure in place, making sure it's safe, monitoring the environment and

then letting the community take ownership," says Murray.

He sees Tauranga City's role as supporting the funding of the park whereas Western Bay Council's strength will be in management and day-to-day operations.

As a committed motor sport enthusiast and an outdoor man, Murray is keen to advocate the many different types of activities that can be developed within the park including horse trekking, motor sports, target shooting, biking and passive recreation.

"Location is one of the greatest attractions of the place, particularly for motor sport. I envisage all kinds of motor sports up there as long as they don't have a negative impact on the environment, neighbours or other park users.

"There is certainly potential for younger drivers to give them an alternative to the streets. We must cater for the needs of our young motor enthusiasts and create a safe environment for them."

He says the park is in exceptionally safe and skilled hands under park manager Ric Balfour of Western Bay of Plenty District Council.

"Ric is the right man for the job – he's passionate, experienced and has good people skills."



### Spring clean-up planned for 16 November

Sadly, as I have explored the park's roads and access points, I've discovered a long history of rubbish, machinery and green waste dumping. Dumping habits seem to be in three categories: 1. piles of household rubbish – some in prepaid bags left at the road side; 2. truckloads of garden waste (hedge clippings, weeds and tree trimmings), and 3. building materials, household appliances and wrecked or stolen cars burnt out or dumped in the forest.

Coming back to NZ after 20 years away it's extremely disheartening to see a few people treating public land the way I've seen it in third world countries and some parts of the US. So why is it a problem? First, it's a hazard for people visiting the park, second it is a hazard for wildlife and third it introduces chemicals and weed species we don't want.

**"We will have prizes for the most collected, the most unusual and the most recyclable, and participants will have a chance to see the progress we are making."**

What are we going to do about it? I will be posting notices, monitoring sites and identifying legal mechanisms to prosecute those found responsible. However, in the mean time I'm planning a spring cleanup where we will invite all the user groups, community organisations and service clubs to come out for a day to clean-up the places where dumping has accumulated. We will have prizes for the most collected, the most unusual and the most recyclable, and participants will have a chance to see the progress we are making in the park and to get to know all the clubs involved. Stay tuned, we will have more info in the next issue of Terrain News. **Ric**

**To find out more check out The New Zealand Plant Conservation Network website at: [www.nzpcn.org.nz/vascular\\_plants](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/vascular_plants) For information about the honey qualities go to: [www.airborne.co.nz/Tawari.htm](http://www.airborne.co.nz/Tawari.htm)**



## Princess of the Park

Late last summer, one of the first people I met out in the park was a beekeeper pulling hives out of a site near Whataroa Road. I asked him what flower his bees had been working on and he said "Tawari – the bees love it, and even if you have Manuka in full flower right nearby, the bees will ignore it and go for Tawari instead."

Back at the office I just had to look it up and found out that Tawari (*Ixerba brexioides*) is only found in the upper North Island, between Waitomo and Kaitiaki.

The creamy white flowers are beautiful, symmetrical and drip with nectar when in full bloom from October to January. According to local Te Rongoa (Maori medicine) expert Rob McGowan, Tawari is slow growing, hard

to propagate and difficult to gather seed from. Maori people did use the flowers as garlands and adornments during festivities – really a very special plant and worth honouring as a "Princess of the Park".

I look forward to finding out more about this beautiful tree and working on ways that we can protect and enhance existing stands in the regenerating bush that makes up about 20 percent of the **TECT All Terrain Park**. One day we may be selling home grown Tawari honey at the visitor centre café and store. **Ric**

Photo: John Sawyer Native Plant Conservation Network

## Mountain bikers sign up to help develop trails

all terrain  
**TECTpark**



The **TECT All Terrain Park** offers an opportunity to set up one of the most diverse mountain bike trail adventures in New Zealand and there's a group of local mountain bikers itching to get their wheels spinning.

Mountainbike Tauranga Incorporated (MTB Tauranga) is barely a year old but it has already signed up to be a part of the **TECT All Terrain Park** and aims to be cutting the first tracks by summer.

MTB Tauranga founder and Secretary Steve Barker has been a driving force behind establishing the club and spearheading a group of club members to work with park manager Ric Balfour to get things humming.

It was Steve's association with the Tauranga Mount Motorsport Club that spurred him to investigate whether there would be a place for mountain bikers in the park.

Steve phoned Western Bay of Plenty District councillor Sam Dunlop to ask which mountain bike club was involved at the park. Sam said none, so Steve got going.

"The **TECT All Terrain Park** was the genesis of our club," says Steve. "My thought was that if we don't have a club, mountain biking could miss that opportunity to be included.

"We would like to be up there with a dingo cutting tracks by summer. If we don't jump in now and get going we could lose momentum."

The club has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Western Bay of Plenty District Council and will set up its trails in a non-motorised area of the park.

The club envisages creating a mix of trails

to cater for a range of experience levels including beginners, families, cross-country pleasure riders, serious downhill competitors. It also intends staging major events.

The benefits are far-reaching, says Steve.

"When you get that many mountain bikers turning up in one place it is contagious. It will spread through the community. People who haven't tried it will see all these people riding around on bikes, building skills and having a

Whakarewarewa Forest in Rotorua (more commonly known as the Redwoods).

"There are very few places in Auckland to mountain bike, so people flock to Rotorua for its world class tracks. The **TECT All Terrain Park** could be a part of that – the two parks, Redwood and TECT, would complement each other," says Craig.

For club founder Steve, the park embraces the heart of the club's charter, "To do whatever we can to promote mountain biking in the community."

**To contact Mountainbike Tauranga, email: [mtbtauranga@ihug.co.nz](mailto:mtbtauranga@ihug.co.nz)**

**"The TECT All Terrain Park is a fantastic asset for this region – I don't think we can quantify its potential fully yet, but there are very few places like it in New Zealand."**

fantastic time and they'll think – I want to try that!"

Capitalising on a growing interest in mountain biking nationwide, the club is excited at the potential the park offers.

Club executive member Craig Davies is under no illusion that creating their patch will take a lot of work, but he says club members are keen and you can't beat "blokes with spades" to build mountain bike tracks.

"The park is a fantastic asset for this region – I don't think we can quantify its potential fully yet, but there are very few places like it in New Zealand."

With 10 per cent of Auckland's population alone listing mountain biking as a hobby in a recent survey, Craig says there's great potential to develop Tauranga as a mountain bike destination – along with the



Mountainbike Tauranga founder Steve Barker (right) and executive member Craig Davies see the TECT All Terrain Park as a fantastic asset for the region.