

TERRAIN NEWS

the official newsletter of the TECT ALL TERRAIN PARK

all terrain
TECTpark

Ranger's house up, up and away

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All's go for the building of the Park ranger's house.

Newly-appointed park ranger Jarron McInnes, his wife Julie and their two sons, Sam, 6, and Charlie, 4, are looking forward to moving into their new three-bedroom forest house at the end of June.

The Skyline designed and built home features wood and stone and has been specially adapted to the park environment. A separate garage attached by a covered walkway will be built next to the house.

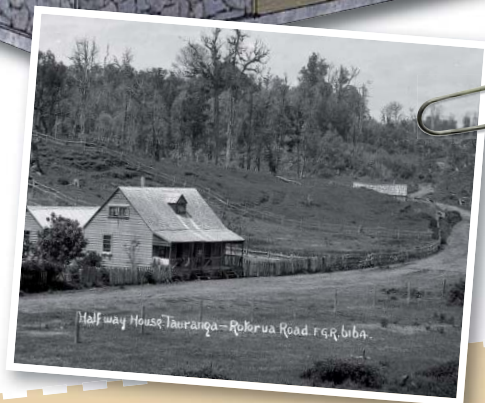
The design features a pitched roof, verandah and colonial windows

reminiscent of the historic Halfway House on the original Rotorua-Tauranga road that served as a hotel and travellers' stopover in the 1800s.

A workshop will also be built nearby to house equipment and vehicles, including a fire truck.

The building of a visitor shelter and caretaker/worker cottage is planned for next summer.

For more on the Park's new ranger, check out page 3.



Halfway House Tauranga - Rotorua Road. F.G.R. Gibb.



Site preparation for the rangers house

It's all go around the hub too

The sound of big trucks and diggers has been resounding through the park in recent weeks as earthmoving and site preparation for the hub is completed before winter. The hub at this stage will include rangers house, carpark and other facilities.

Contractors Harrison Grierson, HEB Smithbridge and Mike Sheeley are finishing the Darrin Road link that runs from the hub site, beneath the underpass to Darrin Road. This creates safe access off the State Highway near the Whataroa Road intersection and allows visitors to drive to the western side of the park where shooters and mountain bikers are planning to develop their sites.

Tonkin and Taylor with Higgins contractors are completing the Darrin

Road upgrade and reconstruction of the old Ngawaro Road to the shooting range area. This contract will also build the hub site roads, carpark and the building platforms for the ranger station.

Independent contractors Ross Phillips (mulching) and Glen Stewart (stump grinding, chipping and mulching) have completed site preparation of the ranger station area.

Carl Hanna of Wood Marketing has coordinated removal and thinning of pines around the hub site and has moved his logging crew to road clearing in the Te Matai Road block where thinning will start soon.

Design work on the visitor kiosk will be done this winter with construction planned for summer 2010.



The massive job of linking Darrin Road to the underpass is getting nearer to completion.



Tough hurdle for Park funding

Future funding for the **TECT All Terrain Park** is under threat with the possibility that the Tauranga Energy Consumer Trust (TECT) may scrap their annual funding of community projects and community organisations.

Trustees are evenly split in terms of either retaining community funding or distributing all TECT funds to individual consumers through annual cheques.

In the last financial year TECT allocated \$4.1 million to community groups, events, projects and scholarships and distributed \$20.7m to 61,000 individual consumers.

Changing the current distribution approach would equate to each consumer receiving approximately an extra \$60 a year.

TECT is presently contacting its 61,000 consumers with a postal survey asking them to vote for or against the status quo.

The Trust holds naming rights to the **TECT All Terrain Park** and to date has contributed \$2.5m to the park's development.

Last year TECT contributed \$1 million to the Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Tauranga City Council for the Whataroa Road intersection and underpass project.

Without ongoing TECT funding progress of the park would be severely compromised and user groups would be without a significant local source of funds for their recreational projects.



Welcome to the latest Terrain News

While it has been all go up at the park, back at the office, the project team have been focussed on user group leases and working with councillors from Western Bay District Council and Tauranga City Council to progress development.

Having just completed essential assessments of cultural and ecological resources at the park, the project team is also in a position to finalise the overall park management plan and have the means to review user group management plan proposals. As outlined in the user group

Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) packs, this process precedes the development of leases, licences to occupy and other permits that clubs may need to get established in the Park. The project team recognises that site occupation agreements are desirable to have in hand for fundraising and we are working hard to get these finalised.

Over the next few months we will be developing a user group advisory committee to help gain feedback on park operations, events and other matters related to user group activities.

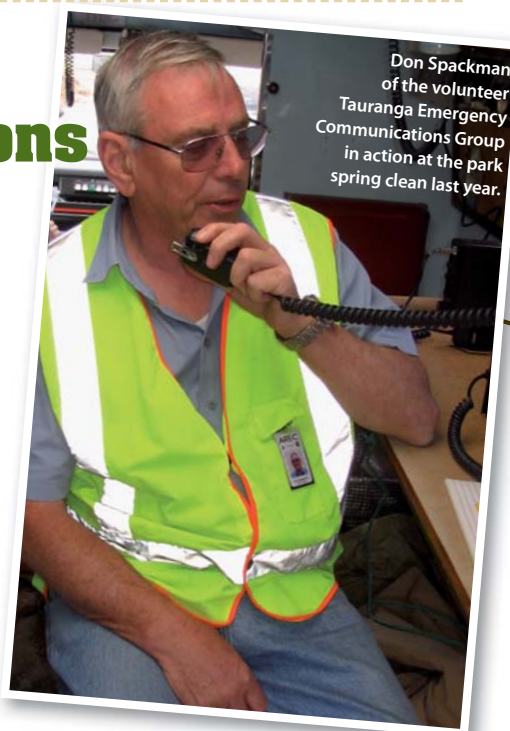
Radio Communications coming soon

Park Manager Ric Balfour is working with Mike Nielsen of Baywide Communications to put the finishing touches on the radio installation plan that will see the park connected to the outside world next month.

"It has been a black hole up there as far as getting help or contacting each other," says Ric. "There is no cellphone coverage and none likely for a long time so having the means to communicate is essential."

A small radio repeater will be installed on a high point in the park and, after the ranger's house is built, a base station will be installed that will link staff across the park and also back to Western Bay of Plenty District Council's Headquarters at Barks Corner in Greerton. This will effectively halve the response time in the event of an emergency or the reporting of a crime. It will also make day-to-day operations more efficient.

Don Spackman, Tauranga Emergency Communications Group AREC section leader, hopes to establish a VHF and UHF Amateur radio repeater alongside the park radio site. Don and others provided support for the November 16



Don Spackman of the volunteer Tauranga Emergency Communications Group in action at the park spring clean last year.

"It has been a black hole up there as far as getting help or contacting each other"

Clean up day last year and have assisted in search and rescue efforts throughout the region. Piggybacking on the site would help extend radio coverage over areas that have been blind spots in past searches.

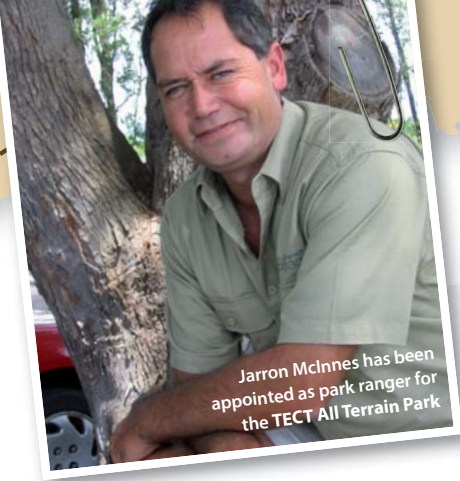


Nissan support helps new Ranger take the wheel

Bay Nissan and the Farmer Autovillage have come to the party with a good deal for the Western Bay of Plenty District Council to buy a vehicle for the new **TECT All Terrain Park** ranger.

The Park Manager also has a new Nissan Navara and both will be specially sign-written to promote the park and to acknowledge the generosity of the Nissan dealership for their support of the All Terrain Park.

"Bay Nissan and the Farmer Autovillage are proud to be a part of the **TECT All Terrain Park**. We feel it will be a huge success, a place for all to enjoy," says Roger Matthews New Vehicle Manager.



Ranger takes on All Terrain Park

Not too many jobs come with a house, let alone a very large forest park as its garden.

But Jarron McInnes, his wife Julie and their two young sons will soon be the sole permanent residents in the **TECT All Terrain Park** in Upper Pyes Pa.

to-day running and supervision of the park 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

A dream job?

“Yes, it sure is,” says Jarron who comes to the role with 24 years of forestry, logging and fire fighting experience under his belt, helicopter flight training and skills in youth training and forestry management.

16. He will spend his first few months becoming oriented to the diversity of the 1638-hectare park, meeting with user groups and developing a fire protection plan for the park.

He will be personally visiting Pyes Pa residents in the park “neighbourhood” to introduce himself and he will host visitors and groups to the park as well as working alongside the many volunteers on planting and track building projects.

Park Manager Ric Balfour says Jarron won the job from a strong set of candidates.

“We are very fortunate to have found someone of Jarron’s calibre. He brings a wealth of experience managing forests and people. He has a particularly strong background in rural fire fighting and is only two hours away from his private helicopter pilot licence.”

“We are very fortunate to have found someone of Jarron’s calibre. He brings a wealth of experience managing forests and people”

Jarron, 40, from Napier has been selected from 27 applicants for the position of Park Ranger, employed by the Council.

A ranger’s house and a 4WD ute come with the job, as does responsibility for the day-

Jarron’s appointment gives the public of the Western Bay region a sure signal that planning is on track for the park’s opening.

It’s early days yet for Jarron, who only joined the Council team on February



Ferocious ferrets on hit list

Ferocious ferrets (*Mustela furo*) have been spotted in the park, confirming fears that we have another introduced pest to add to our hit list.

These fierce predators were introduced to New Zealand from Europe in the 1800s to control an exploding rabbit population. It didn’t work and since then our native birds have taken a hammering from ferrets and their close relations stoats, especially ground-nesting and flightless birds, including kiwi.

Ferrets are largely nocturnal and eat rodents and scavenge other dead animals.

In forest and scrubland, a male’s home range averages 30 hectares and a female’s 12 hectares.

One female ferret can produce as many as three litters of up to 15 young a year.

Ferrets are also strong swimmers, so creeks and rivers pose no barrier in their search for food or new homes.

Park Manager, Ric Balfour is consulting with Environment Bay of Plenty (the Regional Council) on a pest control plan to tackle possums, ferrets, stoats and feral cats.

Monitoring will be put in place to survey



the presence of these and other pests. Kuaka New Zealand recently initiated a bird survey that will help project staff understand the impact of control programs.

If you see such pests in the park, please report them to Western Bay of Plenty District Council. You can call them on 5718008 or send an email to tectpark@westernbay.govt.nz

PLEASE NOTE

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



Kuaka volunteers blaze first park trail

The first leg of a loop trail is almost ready to walk in the **TECT All Terrain Park** thanks to the work of visiting Australian high school and university students.

The students were brought to the park as part of the volunteer conservation programme run by the Tauranga-based company Kuaka New Zealand (KNZ), and they spent hours cutting the trail towards the historic tunnel.

The KNZ volunteer groups of students also conducted monitoring at points along the new trail where they recorded birdcalls and photographed plant regeneration as a baseline test for future assessment as the park develops.

This winter more groups of volunteers will plant trees around the same area and be involved in monitoring biodiversity and pests.

Capturing and protecting the beauty and diversity of the park environment through education-based and conservation programmes is the main aim of KNZ.

Kuaka has signed an agreement with the Western Bay of Plenty District Council to help manage conservation projects and promote the park in the best interests of all user groups and the wider community.

In recent years Kuaka volunteers have planted more than 80,000 trees throughout the Bay of Plenty.

Since Kuaka's work in the park was promoted through the *Terrain News* late last year, they have begun a fund to provide 6,000 native plants for Western Bay primary school students to plant each year.

The fund was offered following a Kuaka delegation from Michigan, USA, visiting the park last year while studying sustainable practices in New Zealand. The delegation consisted of sustainability experts, university professors and the mayor of Grand Rapids.

Kuaka is also working with businesses that are searching for ways to offset their carbon production by planting trees in the park.



The Kuaka Group

Kuaka has a group of specialist staff, purpose-trained outdoor educators and volunteers who professionally manage people working in the outdoors. Kuaka has been bringing local and international groups into the park for some time to provide voluntary labour and build resources. Since 2002 Kuaka has brought an average of 400 international student volunteers to New Zealand every year.

This winter alone Kuaka will be providing 27,000 volunteer hours in the Bay of Plenty.

Park projects already completed by Kuaka:

- **Winter 2008:** Volunteers planted 5000 plants around the pond and verges at the Whataroa Road junction.
- Removal of invasive weeds and rubbish.
- Managed a group of Oropi School students as the first school to plant native trees in the park.
- **Summer 2009:** First access track to the historic tunnel and future hub site.
- Bird "listening posts" set up, photos were taken of birds sighted at these points and all birdcalls were recorded.
- Vegetation photographs and data collected from monitoring sites.

Want more information?

If you'd like more information about the **TECT All Terrain Park** visit:
<http://www.westernbay.govt.nz/Projects/AllTerrainPark/>
or call Ric Balfour at the Western Bay of Plenty District Council
on 07 571 8008, email ric.balfour@westernbay.govt.nz

