

Report 07.241
Date 26 April 2007
File PK/02/03/01

Committee Landcare
Author Catherine Hunt Events Advisor

Regional Outdoors Programme 2007

1. Purpose

To report on the 2007 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 2007 Regional Outdoors Programme was the sixth in the series of annual summer event programmes. This year's programme started on 31 December with the Anything Vintage Festival, and concluded with the Porirua Grand Traverse on 1 April. There were a total of 49 events, 41 organised by GW, 4 organised by outside providers and 4 events organised by volunteer groups with GW input if required.

Only one event was cancelled, a new record. The Big Coast which is organised by an outside provider did not go ahead due to lack of registrations. All other events went ahead as planned.

4. Objectives

The Regional Outdoors Programme contributes to two LTCCP success factors:

- More people visit the regional Parks
- More people taking positive action for a sustainable region

4.1 More people visiting the regional parks

The success of the programme stems from the variety of free/low cost events which are interesting and diverse in their content.

We are able to:

- Increase the profile of Greater Wellington within the Wellington region
- Create a positive and memorable experience for the community
- Provide an opportunity for rangers and other GW staff to interact with the public enhancing the participants experience.
- Create a platform to promote volunteers' causes and their reasoning for linking with the parks network whether environmental or social.
- Promote the opportunities for people to come back to utilise the parks facilities including picnic areas and walking tracks etc.

4.2 More people taking positive action for a sustainable region

4.2.1 Volunteers

The programme provides an opportunity to work with our volunteer network and to gain their input into the programme. Through the programme we have worked with the following groups and individuals:

- Friends of Maara Roa – 3 guided walks on the Porirua side of Belmont Regional Park
- Friends of Belmont Regional Park – involved with the Old Coach Road History Trail, Over the Tops Open Day, Clean Green and Goats, and Creek to Peak.
- Chris Horne and Barbara Mitcalfe – Botany of the Dunes
- Gail Abel and MIRO – Giant Rata Journey
- Ray Smith and Eastbourne Forest Rangers – Butterfly Creek Heritage Trail
- Tony Edwards – Landforms of the Park
- George Gibbs and Helen Beaglehole – Lighthouse and Lakes
- Graeme Jupp and the Featherston Fell Museum – Rimutaka Rail Trail

Greater Wellington head office staff was given the opportunity to volunteer at events. Members from Water Supply, Communications, Transport and Support Services supported the events throughout the programme. The initiative enabled staff who are not regularly involved with parks to gain further understanding as well as a chance to interact with the public and promote different areas of Greater Wellington.

We would like to record our thanks to all the people who assisted with this years programme.

4.2.2 Territorial Authorities

One of the outcomes of the Wellington Regional Strategy is to provide a quality lifestyle. The population of the Wellington Region is fortunate that each Territorial Authority has an extensive, diverse and low cost summer programme. By establishing positive and ongoing relationships with other TA's we are able to cross promote and work on joint projects together as well as ensuring events are spread out.

We have worked on the following events with other TA's and partners:

- “Kev the Kiwi” – run with Upper Hutt City Council and Hutt City Council. Kev the Kiwi was held every Thursday in January and targeted families with young children.
- “Paws in the Park”- a joint initiative with the Upper Hutt City Council promotions team targeting people and their dogs.
- Greater Wellington Buggy Walks – an ongoing joint promotion with Sport Wellington Regional Sports Trust aimed at parents and caregivers with babies.

Over 2007 we will continue to nurture relationships with TA’s and look for opportunities to create positive and sustainable events.

5. Promotion

The programme has a budget of \$20,000 which is applied to advertising, other promotional materials and event supplies. The budget excludes the cost of Greater Wellington staff time. Any charge to participants is to cover direct costs such as transport and portals.

Promotion for 2007 included

- A four page lift out in Elements, distributed in December to all households in the Wellington region
- A direct mailout to approximately 1,340 people and organisations such as libraries and information centres on our database
- Radio advertising through the Radio Network
- Listings on the GW website
- Public notices were placed in the Wellingtonian, Family Times, Kapi mana, Hutt News and the Observer at the beginning of January
- TAs promoted GW events specific to their area within their summer programme

Promotion was targeted for December and January, a period which proves to be effective. The popular events such as the 4WD sunset trips, Battle Hill Heli tramps and others booked out in the first week. Media releases are sent out closer to the time of an event if it is not quite booked up or if it is a ‘just turn up’ type event.

Total expenditure for the programme was \$24,267, with participant revenue at \$8,027. The 2007 programme ran \$3,760 under budget. Both higher participant levels and better cost control contributed to this final result.

6. Attendance

Records show that 10,843 people took part in the Regional Outdoors Programme for 2007.

Attachment 1 shows the full break down of numbers at Greater Wellington events.

Key Result Areas	2007	2006
Total number of events in Regional Outdoors Programme	49	52
Events run by GW	41	37
Events run by other agencies	4	6
Events run by volunteer group with GW support (if required)	4	(not calculated)
Participants at GW events	3881	3449
Average participation at GW events	95	66

Events organised by outside providers totalled 6,962 attendees, “Anything Vintage Festival” (5,000), “Karapoti Classic” (1,300), “Mt Lowry Challenge” (338), and the “Porirua Grand Traverse” (270). We will continue to promote these events run on our parks for the 2008 programme.

After reviewing last year’s Regional Outdoors Programme, it was decided that we would decrease the number of events within the programme. As the average participant numbers have increased, it would appear that we are on the right track with the combination of events.

6.1 New events

The following events were new to the 2007 programme

- Anything Vintage Festival – A four day festival held at Queen Elizabeth Park organised by the Tramways Museum with support from the ranger and event management input from the Events Advisor. Over the four days an estimated 5,000 attended the festival. An organising committee has been set up with the aim of making this an iconic annual event. 2008 will see the event run over three days.
- Creek to Peak – an ecology walk at Belmont Regional Park lead by Mary McIntyre from the Friends of Belmont Regional Park. (Fully booked out, 25 attendees)
- Kapiti Gravel Grab – repeat of the Hutt Gravel Grab except on Otaki River (150 cars turned up). Organised by Flood Protection and the Hutt River Ranger.
- Project Pateke Pest Patrol – Battle Hill – Turn up style event which explores the Project Pateke project and the pest management involved. Lead by Dean Scott, Mobile Ranger and the Project Pateke volunteer group. (20 attendees).
- Over the Tops Open Day - Belmont Regional Park – A fundraiser for the upgrade of the Shearers quarters organised by Friends of Belmont Regional Park in conjunction with GW. A variety of activities were

available including ecology walks, a guided walk to Cannons Creek (linking with Friends of Maara Roa) and 4WD trips. (60 attendees).

6.2 Refreshed events

The following event has been refreshed from the 2006 programme:

- Greater Wellington Buggy Walks (formerly known as Buggies and Backpacks).

The programme offers an opportunity for parents and caregivers to be physically active whilst meeting new people and learning about our parks and forests. The monthly walks were promoted through the Regional Outdoors Programme and Sport Wellington networks including the website, www.buggywalk.co.nz. The January and February walks were jointly run with Kev the Kiwi events. The first Buggy Walk and Kev the Kiwi event at Tunnel Gully in January had 330 people attend with the second event at Wainuiomata drawing 97 people (rain affected), compared with 47 and 38 in 2006.

6.3 Old favourites

We have a number of events which are repeats from previous years which continue to be fully booked out and some within the first few days of bookings opening. These include the Rimutaka Rail Trail, Lighthouse and Lakes, 4WD sunset tours and the Battle Hill Heli tramps.

7. Feedback

The opportunity for participants to provide feedback is very important to the running of a successful programme. Feedback from 2007 has been extremely positive and a good opportunity for the rangers and volunteers work to be acknowledged. We have received additional feedback through phone calls, emails and letters.

We have received no negative feedback although there have been comments on what could be improved on such as accuracy of times, ability to hear speakers and event descriptions. Where attendance was low we will review event content and whether the event has run its course.

As in previous years we only ask for feedback from new events and events which needed a bit of “tweaking” from last year. **Attachment 2** provides examples of some of the feedback received for 2007.

8. Sponsorship

The programme received sponsorship from two main areas:

- Cancer Society of Wellington – supplied funding for two new ezy up tents. The ezy ups include Greater Wellington logos and Cancer Society logos. We promoted the Sunsmart message through promotional material where appropriate and having sunblock at all events. The two new ezy

ups were located at Battle Hill depot for use for events in the Western Sector so there was less coordination of gear required.

- Dwights Outdoors – Dwights sponsored 26 events within the programme. At each of these sponsored events, 20% off vouchers were available for participants redeemable at one of four stores in the Wellington region. Each participant was eligible to win a Karrimor day pack. It was of added value that Karrimor is a top class brand of pack. Dwights also supplied a full sized tramping pack as a spot prize for the Go Bush – Mountain Safety course. Spot prizes were drawn at the conclusion of the event by one of three ways, either by use of a written quiz, verbal quiz or by a draw with the feedback forms. All these three methods worked well.

Dwights also contributed funding towards the cost of six ‘tear drop’ flags with the Greater Wellington logo. Three of the six flags also featured the Dwights logo. These flags were useful in that they are light weight, easy to transport and assemble. They were used as a focal point for registrations and to point people towards the meeting points in the parks.

9. Regional Outdoors Programme 2008

A review is currently underway of the 2007 programme. It is important to look at what went well, what could be improved and new ideas for 2008. Currently we are not anticipating growing the programme; if anything it is about refining events, seeing if some have run their course and whether others should change their focus, routes etc. It is important to have a spread across the parks and to ensure that we continue to provide events which cater to a wide audience and is cost effective.

We will continue to strengthen relationships with volunteer groups and partners in the Territorial Authorities and to get their input into the programme.

10. Communications

A media release has been completed outlining key results and number of people attending during the Regional Outdoors Programme as well as recognising the volunteers involved.

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:

Catherine Hunt
Events Advisor

Amanda Cox
Manager, Marketing & Design

Murray Kennedy
Divisional Manager, Water
Supply, Parks & Forests

Attachment 1: Table of attendance numbers

Attachment 2: Table of event feedback