



The Akatarawa Recreational Action Committee are:-

FRIENDS OF AKATARAWA

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Susan Edwards
Manager
Parks & Forests (Strategy & Planning)
Wellington Regional Council
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Wellington

25 October 2000

Dear Susan

Draft Policy for Recreation and Tourism in Wellington Regional Council Parks & Forests

The Akatarawa Recreational Access Committee have already made arrangements to provide a detailed verbal submission to this policy document at its meeting with Wellington Regional Council due on 14th November 2000.

However, not to completely pre-empt that presentation, yet still to allow our thoughts to be crystallised along with those of other users groups, the main points we will be making are as follows:-

1. In general, we support Council in its aims and objectives, and the manner in which these are applied to the draft policy.
2. Our interest is vested mainly with recreational use of the Akatarawa Forest and its surrounds.
3. An excellent working relationship has been forged between the seemingly disparate user groups of trail bikes, horse riders, quad and 4WD users, and the Forestry Management teams within Council.
4. In forging these relationships, users have given significant amounts of time to managing and controlling access, improving facilities within the Forest, and planning for future co-operative ventures with both Council and other users.
5. Whilst we are pleased to see Council confirming its stated intention to retain a zero cost for casual users within the forest, the charges proposed for more organised recreational (non-commercial) operations seems a little excessive. Especially in light of the work done by many of these groups as detailed in (4) above.
6. We would urge Council to take a more liberal approach to the question of cost recovery for these groups, and recognise the tremendous progress that has been achieved by fostering a sense of "ownership", "pride" and "belonging".
7. Our suggestion therefore is to
 - (a) Reduce the cost burden slightly to say \$10 per vehicle, with no booking fees

- (b) Recognise work done by volunteers, and allow the generation of a “green” economy, whereby work done in the Forest can be recompensed by a “green-dollar” payment of say \$10 per hour. This would allow users in effect to gain a day’s recreation for 1 hour’s work. The “green dollars” would naturally be notional only, but could be accumulated by Clubs to provide ongoing incentives to respect and cherish the Forest values.

In all other matters, we find Council’s draft policy an excellent framework from which to build towards a more co-operative and cost-effective direction for the management of the Forests and Regional Parks.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to make this submission, and as stated earlier, we will be making a more formal presentation to Council on 14 November to clarify any issues raised.

For and on behalf of
Akatarawa Recreational Access Committee

Andy Cockroft
4WD Co-Ordinator