

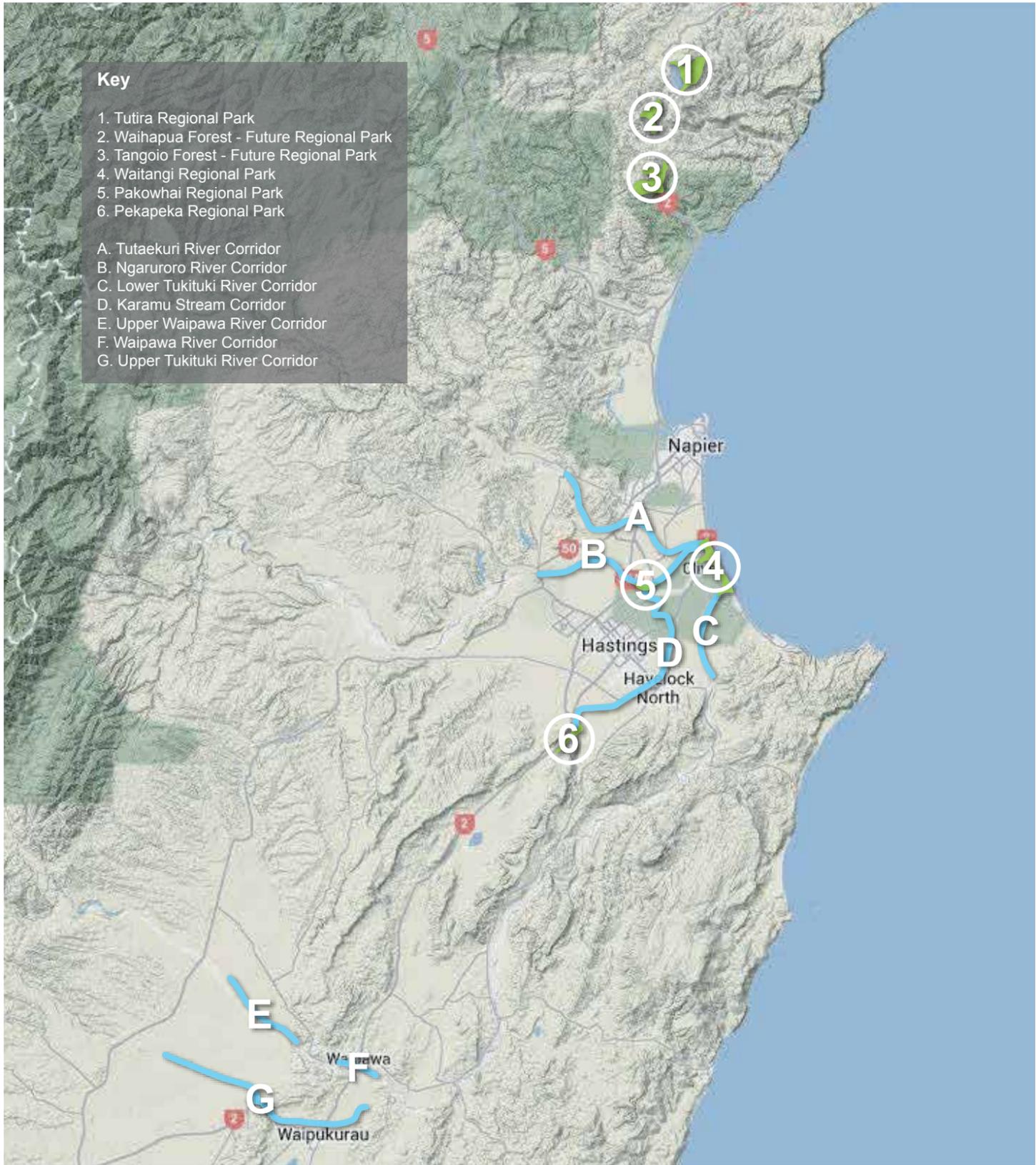
HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL PARK NETWORK PLAN

Introduction

Objectives and Policies

Background to the Plan





Contents

Foreword	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Plan Structure and Content	iii
Section One: Introduction	
1.0 Plan Rationale	01
1.1 Primary Functions	02
1.2 Scope of the Plan	02
1.3 Transition Phase	03
2.0 Plan Implementation	04
3.0 Relationship With Other Public Land	05
3.1 Definition of 'Regional Park'	05
3.2 Description of Regional Park Setting	05
4.0 Values	06
4.1 Natural	06
4.2 Cultural and Heritage	07
4.3 Recreation	07
4.4 Economic	07
5.0 Vision	08
6.0 Guiding Management Principles	09
6.1 Integrated Management	09
6.2 Sustainable Natural Environments	09
6.3 Tāngata Whenua	09
6.4 Heritage Recognition	10
6.5 Reasonable Access to Regional Parks	10
6.6 A Range of Outdoor Visitor Experiences	10
6.7 Partnership Approach	10

ISBN: 1-877405-81-7
 Published by: Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC Plan 4552)





Section Two: Objectives and Policies 11

7.0 Integrated Regional Park Network Management 12

- 7.1 Regional Park Classification 13
- 7.2 Design Principles 14
- 7.3 General Management Zones 16
- 7.4 Special Management Zones 16
- 7.5 River Corridors 17
- 7.6 Hawke's Bay Trails 19
- 7.7 Individual Park Plans 20
- 7.8 Future Parks and Park Expansions 22
- 7.9 Monitoring and Review 22

8.0 Environmental Management 24

- 8.1 Culture and Heritage 24
- 8.2 Landscape, Natural Character and Geology 25
- 8.3 Biodiversity and Ecosystems 26
- 8.4 Vegetation Enhancement and Management 28
- 8.5 Land and River Management 29
- 8.6 Strategic Environmental Partnerships 30
- 8.7 Community Engagement 31

9.0 Recreation And Visitor Management 32

- 9.1 Planning and Providing for Recreation Use 32
- 9.2 Visitor Services 34
- 9.3 Visitor Infrastructure 35
- 9.4 Strategic Recreational Partnerships 37
- 9.5 Community Partnerships and Volunteering 37
- 9.6 Concessions / Leases / Licenses 38
- 9.7 Visitor Safety and Well-Being 39
- 9.8 Smokefree and Use of Alcohol in Regional Parks 40
- 9.9 Ranger Service 40
- 9.10 Visitor Behaviour 41
- 9.11 Dogs and Horses in Parks 42

10.0 General Administration 43

- 10.1 Naming of Parks and Features 43
- 10.2 Park Closures 44
- 10.3 Transfer of Management 45
- 10.4 Gifts and Bequests 46
- 10.5 Plaques and Memorials 46
- 10.6 Land Tenure Acquisition, Disposal and Partnerships 47

Section Three: Background 49

11.0 Why 'Regional Parks'? 50

12.0 Key Elements of a Regional Park 52

- 12.1 Definition 52
- 12.2 Key Elements 52

13.0 Current Open Space Provision 53

14.0 Preliminary Stakeholder Consultation 54

- 14.1 Napier City and Hastings District Feedback 55
- 14.2 Central Hawke's Bay District Council (CHBDC) 56
- 14.3 Wairoa District Council (WDC) 56
- 14.4 Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Inc (NKII) 56
- 14.5 The Department of Conservation (DOC) 56
- 14.6 Tourism Hawke's Bay (THB) 56
- 14.7 Sport Hawke's Bay (SHB) 57
- 14.8 Te Mata Park Trust Board 57
- 14.9 Other Considerations 57
- 14.10 Support for Adopting a 'Regional Park' Approach 58

15.0 Regional Profile Summary 58

- 15.1 Key Land-Use Issues for the Napier and Hastings Urban Areas 59

16.0 Relevant Legislation 60

- 16.1 The Local Government Act 2002 60
- 16.2 The Reserves Act 1977 61
- 16.3 The Resource Management Act 1991 (The RMA) 62
- 16.4 Soil Conservation And Rivers Control Act 62

17.0 HBRC Open Space Framework 63

- 17.1 Open Space Policy Framework 63
- 17.2 Policy And Plan Detail 63
- 17.3 Summary 65

18.0 Conclusions 66

Note: Schedules are contained in the folder.

Foreword

Hawke's Bay Regional Council's (HBRC) strategic vision is for:
“A region with a vibrant community, a prosperous economy, a clean and healthy environment, now and for future generations.”

The benefits of parks are widely accepted throughout the world. Parks contribute to healthy communities by encouraging active lifestyles and providing opportunities for people to connect with nature and learn about the environment. The development of this Hawke's Bay Regional Parks Network Plan moves us closer to achieving our vision.

As a regional authority, HBRC owns or administers land for a wide range of purposes including flood control and drainage, soil conservation and investment. Over time, HBRC has improved public access to these areas, for both environmental engagement and recreational use, and while this is positive, it has raised the expectations of the community. Many of our parks are now loved and well-known such as the Pākōwhai and Tūtira Country Parks, the Pekapeka and Waitangi Wetlands, and many of the region's river corridors. The natural, cultural, recreational and economic values our community places on these areas makes them significant in the Hawke's Bay landscape.

Fenton Wilson
Chairman

The time is right to recognise these places for what they are - regional parks - and apply a management approach that considers these park assets collectively, not in isolation as has traditionally been the case. The Regional Park Network Plan will deliver benefits in terms of visitor recognition and enjoyment, national consistency and management efficiency. It will provide a framework to guide the maintenance of each park and ensure that developments, when appropriate, are consistent across the network.

By communicating a clear level of service expectations to the community, the Regional Park Network Plan will ensure that Hawke's Bay people and visitors to the region can enjoy quality regional park environments now, and for generations to come.

Acknowledgements

The development of a Regional Park Network Plan for HBRC's open space is based on the desire to recognise these areas for what they are – regional parks. Research of best practice from other regions has assisted in the development of the Plan and, in particular the project team is very grateful to the generosity of Auckland Council staff for sharing their expertise and knowledge.

The contribution from HBRC staff and encouragement of key stakeholders is also acknowledged.

Project Team

Stephen Cave	Manager Open Space Development - Operations Group Hawke's Bay Regional Council
Stella Morgan	Senior Environmental & Recreational Planner Opus International Consultants Limited
Shannon Bray	Landscape Planner Boffa Miskell



Plan Structure and Content

BOOKLET

1. Introduction – A Regional Park Network Plan for Hawke’s Bay

This section:

- Introduces the Plan and its function
- Provides a summary of the sites that make up the Regional Park Network
- Identifies Park network values and the Plan vision
- Sets out guiding management principles.

2. Policies and Objectives

This section sets out network wide objectives and policies for:

- Integrated management
- Environmental management
- Recreation and visitor management
- General administration.

3. Background and Philosophy of the Plan

To enable readers to fully understand the evolution of the Plan, this section includes:

- A greater level of detail on the thinking that led to the development of the Plan
- The key drivers that led to its development
- A summary of feedback from key stakeholders
- A regional profile
- An overview of relevant legislation and HBRC policy that has been taken into account.

FOLDER

Individual Park Plans and Schedules

For each park, an Individual Park Plan is provided that:

- Identifies a park vision and specific outcomes reflecting the park’s distinctive characteristics
- Includes a Park Inventory Plan identifying existing features and land use
- Includes a Concept Development Plan identifying future development opportunities.

A 3 year / 10 year budget also accompanies each Individual Park Plan.

Note: Individual Park Plans will be drafted as existing plans expire or at an appropriate time for review.

The Schedules contain a register of information which can be updated as plans and details change.

This section includes:

- Maps and a fact sheet of general and historic information dedicated to each individual park
- A Regional Parks and River Corridor overview
- A description of General Management Zones outlining the level of service and typical facilities to be found in the zones
- A current register of encouraged, limited or discouraged activities within each park.



1. INTRODUCTION

This section introduces the plan and its function, the sites in the Regional Park Network, and outlines the vision, values and management principles.

1.0 Plan Rationale

Hawke’s Bay Regional Council (HBRC) owns and administers a number of areas for ‘public good’ reasons including flood protection, river gravel management, environmental enhancement, and investment. The public access to many areas has been permitted and encouraged over the years resulting in a growing number of community partnerships. These in turn have enabled the restoration or enhancement of some areas. The evolution of these spaces into areas that the public now take pride in and make use of has encouraged HBRC to consider them as regional parks, for the benefit of the community and visitors to the region.

None of the areas identified as regional parks have any formal reserve status in terms of the Reserves Act 1977. Therefore, there is no legal requirement to provide management plans for them. HBRC does however have plans in place for most areas. These have guided development and management over the years and provided for public access to these areas. The existing management plans have been developed on a ‘site-by-site’ basis, with decisions about community access and use being made without specific consideration to the interconnectedness of the spaces with other parks in the region.

Recreational use has increased to a point where it is recognised as a significant value in many of these areas. HBRC’s role as a provider of recreation opportunity has been heightened by development of the pathway network, which utilises many of the region’s river berms.

Planning for and managing these open space assets in a coordinated and integrated way, as regional parks, will deliver significant benefits to the community. Regional parks will form a ‘network’ of spaces that are complementary to one another. They will offer a wide range and high quality of opportunities and visitor experiences, while still maintaining the underlying environmental or investment purpose. This approach also seeks to create a ‘brand’ that highlights the qualities of regional parks under a single set of management principles that can be applied over the whole network.



1.1 Primary Functions

Hawke's Bay Regional Park Network Plan ('the Plan') has three primary functions:

- Establishes a consistent framework for regional parks in Hawke's Bay
- Represents a contract with the general public as to how HBRC will manage the regional parks assets on their behalf
- Highlights the unique nature and values of each individual park and addresses the need for specific management of these areas.

1.2 Scope of the Plan

Regional parks, river corridors and future regional parks identified in this Plan include:

- Pekapeka Regional Park
- Waitangi Regional Park
- Pākōwhai Regional Park
- Tūtira Regional Park
- River Corridors
- Waihapua Forest - Future Regional Park
- Tangoio Forest - Future Regional Park
- Future Parks, general.

A detailed summary of these are provided in the Schedules. Most of these parks are within half an hour's drive of Napier or Hastings.

HBRC is mindful that other areas in the wider region may be considered for inclusion over time. This could occur either as a result of land purchase or agreement / partnerships with other agencies and organisations. When this does occur the Schedules can be updated and Individual Park Plans will be prepared and added to the Folder component of this Plan.



1.3 Transition Phase

The Plan recognises that HBRC has a range of existing plans for the management of land that is now considered part of the Regional Park Network. As these plans are due for review they will be replaced with an Individual Park Plan.

Until this happens HBRC management will defer to the policies and objectives for recreation in the Plan (section 9.0) when making decisions about the allocation of future recreation activities.

2.0 Plan Implementation

A range of stakeholders were consulted in developing the Plan. It is not intended that formal consultation will be undertaken on the Plan itself, however there will be stakeholder engagement as Individual Park Plans are developed.

Plan implementation will be under the open spaces portfolio of HBRC.

Adhering to the Plan does not avoid the need for consents or authorisation required by other plans or legislation, in particular District or Regional Plans, and the Historic Places Act 1993.

The plan will be reviewed at least once every 10 years.

3.0 Relationship with Other Public Land

3.1 Definition of 'Regional Park'

For the purpose of the Plan, a regional park is an area of land recognised for its natural, cultural and heritage, and recreation values, or other reason, and under the administration of HBRC.

It is important to note that, at the time of writing the Plan, none of these areas were afforded long term protection 'in perpetuity' under the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 or the Local Government Act 2002.

3.2 Description of Regional Park Setting

Regional parks are part of a wider spectrum of outdoor recreation opportunities. Generally they occupy a space between urban parks based in towns and cities, and conservation parks located in more remote areas.



Figure 1 Park Settings

Regional Parks also fill a different niche of recreational opportunity that is somewhere in between urban parks and conservation parks in terms of scale, accessibility and focus. For example, HBRC's regional parks provide a variety of conservation / restoration settings and recreation opportunities and their focus is on protecting values or characteristics of regional significance. They are used by people from the wider region as well as visitors to the region.

Urban parks by comparison tend to provide for local community recreational needs, and include smaller parks, sports fields, playgrounds, local reserves and coastal beaches in or near urban areas.

Often these parks provide higher levels of service, i.e. toilets, changing sheds, playgrounds, formal gardens, etc., and have more intensive local use.

At the other end of the spectrum are conservation parks and reserves, usually managed by the Department of Conservation. These areas offer a wide range of informal recreational opportunities such as walking, tramping, mountain biking, picnicking and camping in conservation settings. Conservation land is often (not always) remote from urban areas.

4.0 Values

The Plan is 'values based'. This means that decisions about future use and development of the parks will be based on identifying the core values for the network as a whole and then individually for each park. Identifying the values also supports the vision for the network. Together, these provide the over-arching philosophy and direction of this Plan.

The role of parks is recognised internationally for the significant contribution they make to protecting our natural environments and building healthy communities. Since the early days of industrialisation, parks were considered to provide a refuge from crowding associated with urbanisation.



4.1 Natural

HBRC's regional parks sit within a range of ecological systems and geological processes, generally in rural or semi-natural settings. Some of the parks feature iconic scenery or regionally significant ecosystems, while others have depleted or recovering systems. They all contribute to maintaining or increasing the quality and viability of natural environments in the region as a whole. This Plan recognises the importance of retaining and enhancing these natural values by:

- Protecting and / or enhancing sites of national and regional significance whether it is for their ecological, biodiversity or landscape values

Over time their contribution to healthy biodiversity, culture and heritage, recreation opportunities, and social and economic well-being are increasingly valued.

The key values that underpin HBRC's approach to management of the Regional Park Network are:

- Natural
- Cultural and heritage
- Recreation
- Economic.



4.2 Cultural and Heritage

HBRC's regional parks contain many sites of importance to tĀngata whenua. They provide an opportunity to reflect kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and the relationship between iwi and their ancestral land. They also include sites that have historically been used for European settlement and land-use practices, and provide an opportunity to reflect this through park management that values the region's heritage. Contemporary culture and heritage is also valued.

Built and non-built features, such as structures, buildings, landforms, land practices and locations associated with past events are reminders of this history for both pre- and post-colonial era communities.

The Plan respects the importance of these values and encourages preservation and / or enhancement of cultural and heritage landscapes and features, thereby ensuring the Hawke's Bay history is effectively communicated to current and future generations.

4.3 Recreation

HBRC's regional parks provide many settings for a wide range of outdoor recreation activities that contribute to healthy lifestyles. These could be physically active outdoor activities, enjoying the peace and quiet that these spaces offer, socialising with others, or simply connecting with nature. Community partnerships also offer opportunities for people to get involved and learn about nature, which in turn encourages a sense of community stewardship and belonging.

The Plan encourages a balance between the requirements of recreation and each individual park's natural, cultural and heritage values. It seeks to clearly identify suitable levels of recreation use and opportunity across the park network, recognising the diverse needs of the regional community and unique characteristics of individual parks.

4.4 Economic

HBRC's regional parks have potential to contribute to the region's economy in the following ways:

Supporting our tourism / recreation industries:

The Regional Park Network not only benefits the health and wellbeing of its regional communities, it also has potential to become part of the 'Hawke's Bay experience' for visitors to the region who can enjoy the outdoor environment.

Showcasing farming practices:

Some of the regional parks allow stock grazing (sheep and cattle) for pasture management and weed control. This also presents an opportunity to showcase sustainable good practice in farming and at the same time gain some income for the parks.

Investing in forestry and sustainable land management practices:

Some land included in the Regional Park Network has been purchased to demonstrate alternative land uses and sustainable land management practices. HBRC management of these sites aims to achieve an economic return and / or demonstrate sustainable land use.

5.0 Vision

Based on the values network approach, HBRC identifies the following vision for its Regional Park Network:



Achieving the Regional Park Network vision is dependent on Hawke’s Bay communities playing their part, including tāngata whenua, local councils, central government, volunteers, non-government organisations and commercial enterprises.

By working together in partnership, this vision can be realised and a park network will be provided that continues to enrich the community for generations to come.

6.0 Guiding Management Principles

The guiding management principles further outline key assumptions that underpin the Plan.

They are a response to the respective values and vision that have been identified for the network.



6.1 Integrated Management

The Plan uses a classification system:

- Class 1 - Conservation
- Class 2 - Mixed
- Class 3 - Recreation.

This system sets the scene for an integrated approach to management of the Regional Parks Network by reflecting and respecting the varied opportunities the individual parks have to offer.

Managing and maintaining park values and the quality of the visitor experience to be offered is a key principle of the Plan. This includes a minimalistic development approach to provision of infrastructure in some parks and a design approach that reflects individual park characteristics.

6.2 Sustainable Natural Environments

The Plan seeks to encourage sustainable land management practices. Where possible, local resources will be used and best practise in land management demonstrated.

6.3 Tāngata Whenua

Through the Plan, opportunities to recognise and conserve features and associations of value and significance to tāngata whenua will be promoted. The Plan also seeks to be consistent with traditional Māori values and concepts such as taonga katoa

(holistic approach), mauri (life force / special nature) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship and conservation). HBRC also recognises the special relationship between iwi and the regional parks as natural environments.





6.4 Heritage Recognition

The Plan recognises that the Regional Park Network is a storehouse for some of the region's history and heritage, such as historic places, structures and buildings, land uses and other historic associations.

The Plan will protect these and facilitate opportunities to tell the region's unique stories.

6.5 Reasonable Access to Regional Parks

Land in the Regional Park Network has been acquired and managed on behalf of the ratepayers of the Hawke's Bay region for their benefit, use and enjoyment. In recognition of this, the Plan promotes access to these areas unless there is a particular

management reason for not doing so, i.e. seasonal requirements of farming such as lambing, flood control, hazard areas, or regenerating areas of the network.

6.6 A Range of Outdoor Visitor Experiences

Regional parks are of a scale and diversity that can provide for a wide range of visitor experiences. The network provides coastal, river, lakeside and rural environments in outer-urban, rural and semi remote areas. The purpose of this Plan is to provide for a

range of activities across these settings in a manner that does not conflict with the natural, cultural or social values of these areas. HBRC will seek to minimise the impacts of development to preserve park values.

6.7 Partnership Approach

HBRC is not the only provider of publicly accessible open spaces and parks in Hawke's Bay. HBRC will seek to work with other providers to ensure the needs of the community are met in the most practical, effective and efficient way, and so that park values are recognised and maintained.

This may occur through; inclusion of areas managed by another provider within a regional park boundary; level of service agreements for provision of services in a park; or funding of areas not owned by HBRC but recognised as part of the regional park brand.



2. OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

This section sets out the management objectives and policies that apply across the Regional Park Network, in four main subject areas.

Figure 3.0 Regional Park Objectives and Policies



7.0 Integrated Regional Park Network Management

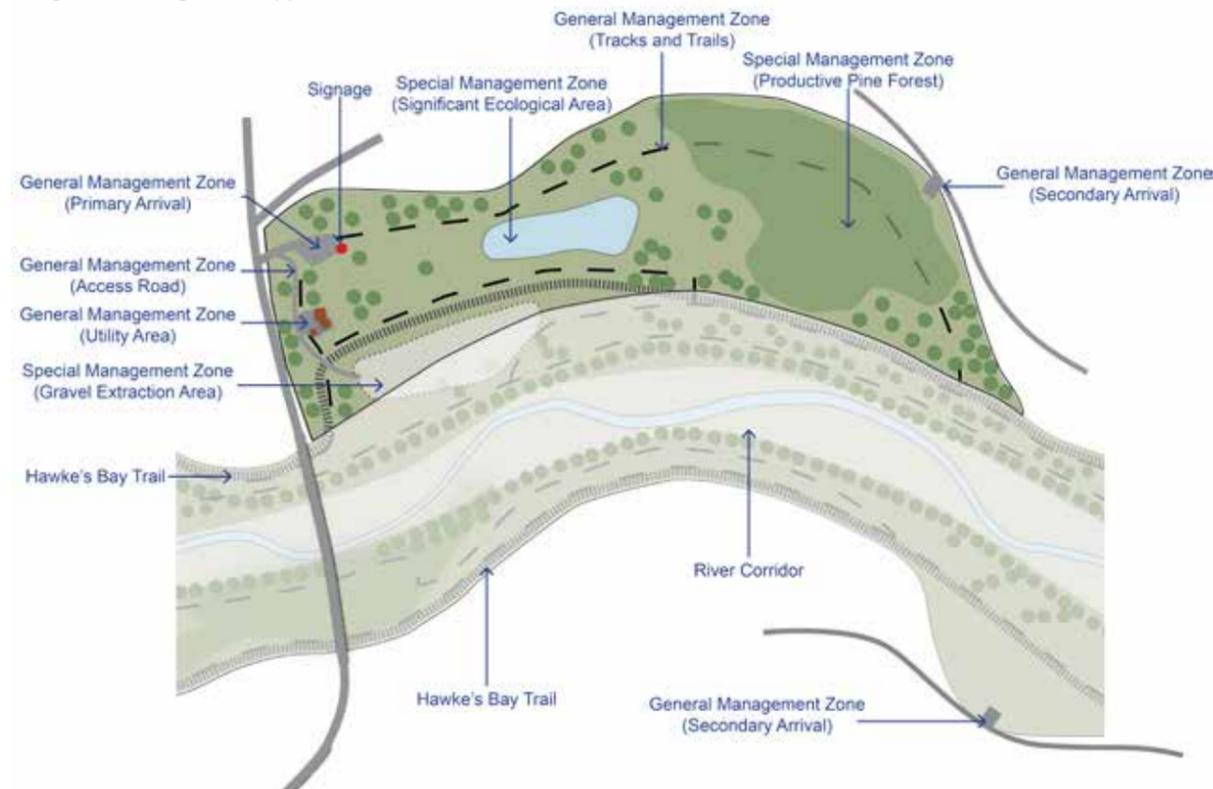
HBRC's integrated approach seeks to deliver coordinated and consistent management across the parks, river corridors and Hawke's Bay Trails that make up the Regional Park Network.

The approach relies on:

- Classifying each of the regional parks in the network as either Class 1 - Conservation, Class 2 - Mixed, or Class 3 - Recreation
- Identifying high level design principles that apply to the network
- Providing General Management Zones that ensure key activities are applied consistently across the network
- Identifying Special Management Zones in parks that allow for areas that may require a specific management approach
- Recognising the role of 'corridors' in the park network, including river corridors and areas that HBRC manages as part of the Hawke's Bay Trails
- Making provision for interim or future parks to be included in the network
- Developing and implementing Individual Park Plans for each regional park
- Defining appropriate activities in the individual parks.

Figure 4.0 below identifies the typical relationships between the Park Classification, General Management and Special Management Zones, and corridors in a hypothetical park.

Figure 4.0 Integrated Management Approach



Integrated Regional Park Network Management allows managers to balance desirable environmental outcomes with recreational activities and visitor use.

The plan will guide decisions about where activities take place and how these activities can be managed. Managers will be able to

legitimately say 'yes' to recreational activities or infrastructure that works with the overall network vision or individual park values. This also formally acknowledges that HBRC is unable to cater for every activity in every location.

7.1 Regional Park Classification

Objective

7.1.1 To provide a classification methodology for the Park Network that identifies the visitor experience, the management focus, and the type of recreation activity anticipated in each Class (refer to Schedule Two in the folder for more detail on individual Classes).

Policies

- 7.1.1.1 Classify each park according to:
- a. The visitor experience to be provided
 - b. The overall management focus to be adopted
 - c. The intensity and type of recreational activities envisaged
 - d. The level of development, existing and planned
 - e. The level of service.

7.1.1.2 Manage the Regional Park Network generally in accordance with the park classification allocated to individual parks.

Method

The following method will be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Apply the classification system in Schedule Two to each of the parks in the network.

Explanation

The primary purpose of the Regional Park Network is to protect and maintain park values and to allow people to appreciate and enjoy parks through appropriate leisure and recreation activities. To help achieve this, each park is grouped within one of three broad classes:

- Class 1 - Conservation;
- Class 2 - Mixed;
- and Class 3 - Recreation.

Class 1 parks have a higher conservation value and these parks would be expected to accommodate low intensity recreation activities with minimal levels of visitor infrastructure / services to minimise the potential for adverse environmental effects.

Conversely, a Class 3 park is envisaged to have a higher recreation value and will accommodate more intensive recreational activities and potentially higher levels of visitor infrastructure and accessibility. A Class 2 park sits somewhere in between and would be expected to provide for a balance of recreation opportunities and conservation opportunities. The level of infrastructure provided will reflect the classification.

Figure 5.0 (overleaf) identifies how HBRC has classified each of the regional parks currently managed under the Plan (also refer Schedule Four - Status of Activities within Parks). The classification influences the type of recreation activity envisaged in the park and how it is provided for, i.e. level of services and facilities.





Figure 5.0 Park Classification

Park classification is unlikely to change over time and is intended to ensure that the current and planned qualities of the individual parks will be retained and passed onto future generations.

7.2 Design Principles

Objectives

- 7.2.1 To ensure that all development in the Regional Park Network is designed to meet the vision for each individual park, in a manner that does not detract from park values and is in keeping with the park classification.
- 7.2.2 To ensure that all development in parks avoids or mitigates adverse environmental effects.
- 7.2.3 To provide for a consistent and recognisable regional park brand / level of service across the network.

Policies

- 7.2.1.1 Recognise the natural, landscape and cultural qualities of each individual park in the planning, design and development of the park.

- 7.2.1.2 Ensure that development, including infrastructure and any signs, in the park:
 - a. Recognises the special character and values of the individual park and any wider natural ecosystems and values to which the park contributes
 - b. Responds to the natural contours of the land, minimising land disturbance on ridgelines and the horizon, wherever practical
 - c. Incorporates material and colour palettes that are sympathetic to the park or locality when possible, or is appropriate to its historic context
 - d. Minimises vegetation clearance and avoids the disturbance of threatened plants or habitat of threatened indigenous birds or aquatic life
 - e. Uses material and plants sourced from within the region wherever practical
 - f. Adopts a sustainable approach to any built infrastructure to reduce environmental impact.
- 7.2.1.3 Avoid unnecessary disturbance of archaeological sites.
- 7.2.1.4 When considering design and layout of any development in parks, consider:
 - a. All possible alternatives to minimise the impact generated from the siting and location of facilities
 - b. The effective and efficient functioning of the park
 - c. Consistency across the network.
- 7.2.1.5 When considering placing signs in parks, take into account:
 - a. The impact of signs on park values and whether other means of communication could be as effective
 - b. How proposed signs fit with any other signs nearby
 - c. A minimalist approach to the placement of directional signs that is consistent with park values and the wider park network.
- 7.2.1.6 When considering placing signs outside of parks consider:
 - a. Consistency of provision in terms of branding and messaging.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Park values assessment
- Inventory Plans and Concept Development Plans
- HBRC Design Guidelines for signs
- New Zealand Building Council Green Star Rating Tools.

Explanation

Good design is an important method for maintaining quality regional parks and experiences that are consistent with identified park values. Consideration of location and layout, design, materials, quantity and colour palette is important to achieving this. Thoughtful design based on a sustainable and minimalist approach is also encouraged.

7.3 General Management Zones

Objective

- 7.3.1 To ensure consistent management across the Regional Park Network, particularly in relation to access and infrastructure associated with park visitor management.

Policy

- 7.3.1.1 Apply the following General Management Zones across the park network:
- Primary Arrival
 - Secondary Arrival
 - Tracks and Trails
 - Access Roads
 - Utility Areas.

A detailed description of the attributes of these zones is provided in Schedule Three (see folder).

Methods

The following methods will be employed to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Individual Park Concept Development Plans
- Standards New Zealand Hand Book SNZHB 8630:2004 (Department of Conservation Track construction and maintenance guidelines)
- HBRC Design Guidelines for signs
- Parks Interpretation Tools such as tba.co.nz/kete¹
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Explanation

The purpose of General Management Zones is to ensure consistency for visitor activities across the network. This will create a regional park identity that the community will be able to understand.

General Management Zones also allow for restricted access areas to be identified in Individual Park Plans, such as locations for ranger accommodation, water or land management infrastructure, etc.

7.4 Special Management Zones

Objective

- 7.4.1 To protect areas for special character or management reasons, such as:
- Significant natural character or heritage, i.e. an outstanding landscape area or area of significance to tāngata whenua
 - Other natural character or heritage reasons, i.e. regionally, locally or site significant, or for redevelopment or enhancement reasons
 - Where specific management is required, i.e. an area that has a long-term concession granted or is managed by an organisation other than HBRC.

Policies

- 7.4.1.1 Identify key features and values, including any special or sensitive values in the Special Management Zone and develop park specific outcomes if required.

¹ [Tba.co.nz/kete](http://tba.co.nz/kete) is an online tool providing guidance on interpretation methods in Parks

- 7.4.1.2 Impose specific limits on activities in a Special Management Zone if they pose a threat to park values or the quality and safety of the visitor experience.
- 7.4.1.3 Where infrastructure is necessary, provide for this in a manner that does not compromise the park's classification and values of the network or as detailed in the Individual Park Plan.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Specific methods identified within the Special Management Zone
- Concept Development Plan
- Memorandum of Understanding or contractual agreement with other provider
- Separate management plan where one exists prior to 1 January 2014.

Explanation

The purpose of a Special Management Zone is to cater for specific or unique areas in individual parks that require their own management approach. It also provides opportunities for HBRC to partner with other agencies where they share the regional park vision. This allows for other organisations to either provide services in a regional park or include their land in an Individual Park Plan. Special Management Zones may be subject to other HBRC plans that are not part of the Regional Park Network Plan.

The Ngaruroro and Tutaekuri River Ecological Management and Enhancement Plan² is an example of this. Where this is the case, only the recreation provisions as outlined in section 10 of this plan will apply to these areas. All other management mechanisms will be identified in the overarching management plan(s).



7.5 River Corridors

Objectives

- 7.5.1 To identify river corridors and the recreational activities undertaken in them that contribute to the Regional Park Network.
- 7.5.2 To deliver appropriate visitor access and recreation experiences in the region's river corridors, while maintaining their primary purpose of river control, flood and drainage management.
- 7.5.3 To allow higher levels of maintenance and enhancement where river corridors are located adjacent to regional parks.

² Ngaruroro River Ecological Management and Enhancement Plan prepared for HBRC March 2011 MWH



Policies

- 7.5.1.1 Unless otherwise provided for, manage recreation opportunities in river corridors in accordance with the guidelines for Class 2 - Mixed use regional parks, as detailed in Schedule Two.
- 7.5.1.2 Apply the appropriate level of service, consistent with the management functions required and visitor experience anticipated.
- 7.5.1.3 Provide public access and recreation consistent with the HBRC Environmental Code of Practice for River Control and Drainage Works.
- 7.5.1.4 Provide for new recreation activities in the river corridors only where the potential for conflict with other recreation and management activities can be avoided.

Methods

- The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:
- Regional Parks and River Corridor map identifying specific recreational features (refer Schedules)
 - Level of service for Class 2 - Mixed (refer Schedules)
 - Information / education for the public about the management role and expected behaviour when taking part in recreation in river corridors
 - HBRC Environmental Code of Practice for River Control and Drainage Works
 - Local river rules, i.e. Hawke's Bay Navigation Safety Bylaws sets out specific river use management areas and the restrictions that apply
 - Visitor and staff feedback.

Explanation

River corridors provide a range of opportunities for recreational pursuits and provide connections between or through our regional parks. They are a significant feature of the Regional Park Network but are not generally included in Individual Park Plans. River corridors are valued by a wide range of users including swimmers, jet boaters, picnickers, fishermen, hunters, motorbike enthusiasts, cyclists and dog walkers.

The purpose of identifying river corridors as a separate entity is to recognise that primary river control and flood management functions need to be maintained in these areas while allowing public access and recreation. It enables the management of recreation use in river corridors to be considered as part of the wider Regional Park Network.



7.6 Hawke's Bay Trails

Objective

- 7.6.1 To identify and provide for Hawke's Bay Trails³ as part of the Regional Park Network in a manner that is consistent with the guidance provided in this Plan.

Policies

- 7.6.1.1 When planning for future Hawke's Bay Trails in the Regional Park Network, ensure these are:
 - a. Consistent with the park class, regional park values and Individual Park Plan
 - b. Minimise or avoid, where possible, the displacement of any legitimate existing recreation activity unless an appropriate alternative provision is made elsewhere in the Regional Park Network for that activity
 - c. Implemented to minimise or avoid, where possible, any potential conflict with the management function of the areas they will pass through.
- 7.6.1.2 When providing for Hawke's Bay Trails in river corridors and regional parks, shared use may be accommodated by HBRC where practical. Reasons for being unable to accommodate shared use include:
 - a. The safety of visitors to the park is an issue
 - b. Sensitive areas (such as cultural or heritage sites or special ecological areas, etc.) are at risk
 - c. There is a clearly identified management reason for excluding the trails from certain areas.
- 7.6.1.3 Where the potential for conflict is identified between any existing Hawke's Bay Trails and existing recreation activities, encourage the following methods of resolution:
 - a. Appropriate signs / information to encourage shared use of the areas
 - b. Landscaping / design solutions
 - c. Consider alternative locations for the displaced recreation activities only when no other method can resolve the issue.

Methods

- The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:
- Concept Development Plans
 - Advocacy / monitoring / public and staff feedback
 - Signs / information
 - Hawke's Bay Trails Asset Management Plan
 - Guidelines for signs identified in visitor infrastructure (10.3 of this Plan).

Explanation

The Hawke's Bay Trails provide over 200 kilometres of cycleways, mostly on the Heretaunga Plains, and have become a valued asset both for locals and visitors to the area. HBRC is generally responsible for the development and maintenance of the rural sections of the Trails network.

The Trails cross land owned by numerous organisations, and long stretches are located on river berms or stopbanks or pass through regional parks managed by HBRC. A separate Asset Management Plan has been developed by HBRC for the management of the Trails (2013).

³Hawke's Bay Trails are a regional network of cycle trails and HBRC is a partner organisation in their planning, provision and maintenance.



Explanation continued

The approach of this plan is to identify the existing and planned Trails that form part of the Regional Park Network and to manage them in the same way as any other recreation activity in the network. The purpose of identifying them in this plan, separately to other recreation activities as identified in section 10, is because

they form a network requiring consistent management and maintenance and are a significant attraction in their own right for the local community and visitors. The purpose of this section is to ensure that consistency and compatibility of the Trails with the Regional Park Network can be achieved.



7.7 Individual Park Plans

Objective

7.7.1 To identify a vision, specific management focus and maintenance requirements for each of the parks that make up the Hawke's Bay Regional Park Network.

Policies

- 7.7.1.1 Develop a long term park vision and desired outcomes for each park in the Hawke's Bay Regional Park Network.
- 7.7.1.2 Prepare a detailed Park Inventory Plan for each park in the Hawke's Bay Regional Park Network, identifying the existing features and values of the park, including:
- Ecological context
 - Significant or outstanding natural features
 - Significant heritage or cultural sites
 - Existing vegetation or habitat, especially if it is indigenous or part of a wider ecosystem or wildlife corridor, or any notable tree specimens
 - Waterways
 - Existing and proposed structures or facilities, car parks, toilets, signs, fences, gates or other natural or built infrastructure
 - Recreation facilities including tracks (walking and cycling), campgrounds, swings, fishing and swimming spots, etc.
 - Connections to adjacent land or reserves including walkways / cycle ways
 - Education facilities or uses
 - Important features adjacent to the park.

7.7.1.3 Prepare a Concept Development Plan for each park in the Hawke's Bay Regional Park Network that reflects the long term vision and any park-specific outcomes, and identifies the development required to achieve that vision.

7.7.1.4 Develop a budgeted maintenance programme for each park that will be reviewed every 3 years (in detail) / 10 years (desired).

7.7.1.5 Where there is no Individual Park Plan, default to general objectives and policies (Part Two of the Plan).

Method

The following method may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

The Development of Individual Park Plans detailing Park specific vision and desired outcomes

- Park Inventory Plan identifying existing features, assets and areas of special value, i.e. cultural, heritage, farming, ecological areas, etc.
- Concept Development Plans
- Management programmes with budgets at a detailed level for 3 years and a broad level for 10 years
- Consultation with key stakeholders and communities on Concept Development Plans before they are finalised
- Relationships with key stakeholders and communities that are required for the ongoing effective management of the park.

Explanation

Each park has its own special characteristics as identified on Park Inventory and Concept Development Plans in each Individual Park Plan. The inventory plan identifies existing features and characteristics of a park and the Concept Development Plan identifies its long term direction.

Accompanying the plans are a long term park vision, desired outcomes and a 3 year / 10 year management programme and budget.

While the objectives and policies set out in Part Two of this Plan apply to all parks within the Regional Park Network, expressed outcomes for individual parks will direct park specific management that is not provided for by Part Two.

For example, pest control is undertaken in each regional park and therefore is not listed as a management objective in the Individual Park Plans unless there is a special programme of work required for that park. It is also intended that Individual Park Plans can apply to land not owned / administered by HBRC with the support and agreement of affected landowners.



7.8 Future Parks and Park Expansions

Objectives

- 7.8.1 To allow additional open spaces to be added to the Regional Park Network.
- 7.8.2 To provide appropriate time for planning / development of these spaces before allowing formal public access.

Policies

- 7.8.1.2 Identify open space that has been purchased as a ‘future park’ within Schedule One or Individual Park Plan.
- 7.8.1.3 Determine preliminary classification of any identified future parks an Individual Park Plan or, as a minimum, a Park Inventory Plan.
- 7.8.1.4 Provide formal public access only when appropriate planning has been completed and necessary infrastructure is in place.

Method

The following method will be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Regional Park Classification guidelines – Schedule Two.

Explanation

From time to time HBRC may add new parcels of land to the park network. To enable appropriate planning and development of these spaces, the interim status of ‘future park’ will be applied. Formal recreation and visitor activity in future parks will not be permitted until: 1) these sites have been classified (in terms of the classification system outlined in Schedule Two); 2) Individual Park Plans are completed; and 3) physical access is provided.

Example: The Waihapua block north of Napier was purchased primarily as a carbon investment property but its potential for recreation and linkages with Tūtira Regional Park was also recognised by HBRC. This site will remain as a ‘future park’ until appropriate planning and development has occurred (including resolving issues relating to public access).

7.9 Monitoring and Review

Objective

- 7.9.1 To regularly monitor and review the Regional Park Network Plan to ensure the values of the parks are effectively managed and community recreation needs are being met.

Policies

Review

- 7.9.1.1 Undertake a review of the plan at least once every 10 years unless a variation is required.

Monitor

- 7.9.1.2 Monitor the use and development of the park network and resulting effects of this, using existing measures where possible. A guide to potential key indicators is provided in Table 1.0.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Data collection through park user surveys, traffic counts, environmental testing and observation / recording of habitat, asset management, etc.
- Park user satisfaction surveys to be completed for individual parks once every five to ten years
- Consultation with key stakeholders on Individual Park Plans.

Explanation

A scheduled review provides the opportunity to assess park management in the light of any new issues and circumstances and to ensure that the plan continues to be relevant and provides clear direction for park management into the future.

HBRC will continue to monitor the park network, developments and visitor experience, to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of this plan. Monitoring programmes will be identified and implemented through HBRC’s annual planning process. Monitoring techniques may change over time in response to information needs and best practice.

Table 1 Key Indicators Guide

Key Indicators	
Areas	Indicators
Biodiversity and Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem health • Viability of populations of threatened species • Changes in animal and plant species over time • Environmental enhancements
Landscape and Feological Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape quality changes
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage quality changes
Visitor Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational assets condition • Recreational activity participation • Park user satisfaction • Community partnerships • Complaints register and response
General Park Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from staff and stakeholders • Complaints register

8.0 Environmental Management

This section of the plan sets out how HBRC seeks to manage the park environment with regard to:

- Culture and heritage
- Landscape, natural character and geology
- Biodiversity and ecosystems
- Vegetation enhancement and management
- Land and river management
- Strategic environmental partnerships.

8.1 Culture and Heritage

Objective

- 8.1.1 a. To recognise, provide for and promote culture and heritage throughout the Regional Park Network.
- b. To demonstrate greater cultural awareness and appreciation by identifying, protecting and managing significant cultural and heritage features and associated histories, stories and knowledge.

Policies

Protection and Management

- 8.1.1.1 Identify, protect and manage significant cultural and heritage features (including built heritage) taking into account:
- a. Tāngata whenua values and other cultural values
 - b. Historic values (as they relate to themes, people and past events)
 - c. Social values
 - d. Physical values (archaeological, architectural, technological, integrity, age, and any collective values, i.e. contributing to the heritage values of a wider group of features, places, or settings)
 - e. Surroundings, rarity and representativeness.

Information Gathering and Interpretation

- 8.1.1.2 Develop and maintain an inventory of cultural and heritage sites, including information on site type, significance and current condition.
- 8.1.1.3 Encourage greater public awareness of the range and significance of the cultural and heritage values and features of the regional parks.
- 8.1.1.4 Work with relevant tāngata whenua, community groups, historical societies and technical specialists to identify, assess and interpret cultural and heritage sites.
- 8.1.1.5 Present and interpret significant culture and heritage values to the community except where:
- a. Cultural and heritage features may be at risk from damage or vandalism through increased knowledge or access
 - b. Cultural and heritage features may be in sensitive areas (i.e. waahi tapū or grave sites) and where greater public access could degrade the areas physically or spiritually.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Individual Park Plans
- Conservation Plans
- Cultural and heritage inventories
- Interpretation
- Programmes and events.

Explanation

The Regional Park Network contains many sites of regional significance both to tāngata whenua and other cultural groups in the community. Sites of significance to iwi provide an opportunity to reflect kaitiakitanga (stewardship) and whakapapa (the relationship between iwi and their ancestral land). Through the plan, HBRC seeks to strengthen relationships with iwi by providing opportunities for practical expressions of kaitiaki and for tāngata whenua to have their traditional and cultural relationship to ancestral sites acknowledged and provided for.

Regional Parks also contain features, structures or buildings and land practices that are reminders of the history of European settlement and occupation in Hawke's Bay since the early 1800s. It is important that sites, historic farming practices and infrastructure that reflect the history and development of the region are equally recognised and acknowledged.

8.2 Landscape, Natural Character and Geology

Objective

- 8.2.1 To protect the landscape, natural character and geological features of regional parks from inappropriate use and development.

Policies

- 8.2.1.1 Identify:
- a. The diverse range of distinctive landscapes and geological features contained in each park
 - b. Areas of particular significance to tāngata whenua
 - c. Modified landscapes or features that have significant historic, cultural or social value.
- 8.2.1.2 Manage protected landscapes and geological features⁴ to ensure that they are free from inappropriate development and land use.
- 8.2.1.3 Give weight to the values of identified landscapes and geological features in considering what management methods are appropriate.
- 8.2.1.4 Protect and maintain vistas.

⁴ 'Protected' landscapes and geological features are those that are identified in the relevant District Plan and Regional Policy Statement in terms of the Resource Management Act 1991





Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Concept Development Plans
- Design principles (section 7.2)
- Education
- Research and inventory registers / plans
- Partnerships with other agencies and the community.



Explanation

HBRC seeks to protect or enhance significant landscapes and natural features in the park network wherever practical. They do this by employing appropriate management techniques that do not

compromise these features or values, and providing development in the parks that are appropriate to the setting.

8.3 Biodiversity and Ecosystems

Objective

- 8.3.1 To provide for biodiversity and ecosystems by:
- Restoring, enhancing and maintaining significant ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity in a healthy functioning state
 - Enhancing ecological connections between natural areas and in catchments of regional parks and adjoining lands
 - Integrating the management of significant areas of exotic plantings that have been identified as contributing to the parks network. This may include planting for investment, land management or ecological purposes.

Policies

Vegetation

- 8.3.1.1 Identify and protect significant indigenous or exotic systems and biodiversity where affordable and practical.
- 8.3.1.2 Identify key areas for enhancement or restoration that will contribute to biodiversity in the park network or the connectivity of biologically or ecologically diverse areas.
- 8.3.1.3 Ensure vegetation and natural systems enhance the overall values and settings of the park and respond to wider natural ecosystems and wildlife corridors.
- 8.3.1.4 Encourage partnerships with educators and stakeholders that:
- Inform the community about the importance of biodiversity and ecosystems
 - Increase opportunities for enhancement or development projects in parks.

Waterways

- 8.3.1.5 Maintain and enhance riparian margins and aquatic ecosystems in a manner that promotes healthy waterways where this is practical and affordable and in keeping with best practice.
- 8.3.1.6 Minimise the threats to water quality and quantity in streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands by controlling activities in the park that could compromise the ability of freshwater systems to function.

- 8.3.1.7 Balance protection, enhancement and maintenance of waterways with the need to maintain flood control systems that protect communities.

Pest Plants and Animals

- 8.3.1.8 Actively control plant and animal pests to assist the recovery of indigenous ecosystems and sustain their life-supporting capacity.
- 8.3.1.9 Provide additional levels of pest management in specified areas and protect sites or features of identified significant ecological value.
- 8.3.1.10 Take practical steps to prevent new infestations of plant and animal pests.
- 8.3.1.11 Control pest plants and animal impact using the most effective, efficient and affordable techniques available.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Species and habitat inventories (baseline) and monitoring
- Riparian management
- Ecological restoration
- Pest plant / animal control / Regional Pest Management Plan
- Permits (duck shooting, hunting, etc.)
- Collaboration with other parties
- Management methods as identified through other management plans
- Individual Park Plans.

Explanation

HBRC recognises that few areas of high biodiversity value remain in the region and that these are mostly inland mountain areas such as the Kaweka, Ruahine and Urewera Ranges (managed by the Department of Conservation). The parks in the network are generally located in the mid and lowland areas, and therefore have an important role to play in the enhancement and protection of indigenous species and ecosystems.

HBRC together with a number of partnering agencies is currently working towards the development of a regional Biodiversity Strategy. Once developed, this strategy will be an important influence on objectives and policies for biodiversity and ecosystems management. The plan therefore outlines objectives and policies that are likely to be consistent with Hawke's Bay's Biodiversity Strategy.

For these reasons, this Plan seeks to encourage biological and ecological diversity in its parks and to control and manage pests. Balanced against this is the need to provide a level of service that is practical and affordable for the region's ratepayers. HBRC will continue to use methods that are efficient, affordable and consistent with the desire to encourage diversity. Where a specific issue or approach is required for a park, this will be detailed within the Individual Park Plan.



8.4 Vegetation Enhancement and Management

Objective

- 8.4.1 To ensure vegetation enhances the overall values and setting of the park and that vegetation management does not compromise park values.

Policies

- 8.4.1.1 Give priority to planting and replanting indigenous vegetation and use introduced plants only where:
- They have a specific purpose such as flood protection, investment, amenity value, or ecological benefits
 - The area has existing low indigenous value
 - They pose a low threat to the indigenous ecosystem.
- 8.4.1.2 Remove introduced plants for ecological purposes unless:
- They contribute towards the characteristics of the park
 - They have a high amenity value
 - They are of historic or cultural significance
 - They are acting as a 'nursery crop' for native species
 - They are necessary for viable farming or plantation forestry activities
 - They provide another important function such as erosion control, investment or protection of heritage features
 - It is unaffordable to do so.
- 8.4.1.3 Leave fallen indigenous trees for ecological purposes, unless removal is required for management purposes or public safety reasons.
- 8.4.1.4 Provide for the removal or trimming of vegetation for management purposes as identified in Individual Park Plans.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Use of Special Management Zones within Individual Park Plans
- Planting / planting management plans
- Irrigation
- Fencing.

Explanation

The acquisition of many of the parks is due in part to HBRC's environmental management role in flood management, soil preservation and slope stability, etc. Vegetation enhancement and management is therefore a key feature of these areas. Habitat restoration, enhancement and maintenance through planting and revegetation programmes also help to restore indigenous habitat that has been removed in the past, and will potentially contribute to wildlife corridors or resolve issues from competing land-use.

This plan seeks to balance these outcomes with recreation use and enjoyment. Concept development plans contained within the Individual Park Plans will identify the required character of the planting in terms of its relationship to the rest of the park and the wider setting. This objective also provides for the removal of vegetation in certain circumstances, for example to improve view shafts, access or safety.

8.5 Land and River Management

Farming and Plantation Forestry

Objectives

- 8.5.1 To ensure a balance between sustainable land management, natural, heritage and cultural settings, as well as community use and enjoyment of regional park areas that are farmed or used for forestry.
- 8.5.2 To ensure that best practice for land and animal management is used in regional park areas.

Policies

- 8.5.1.1 Encourage public use, enjoyment and educational potential of farms and forests within regional parks in a way that allows for efficient and effective management of these areas.
- 8.5.1.2 Manage regional farm parks and forests in accordance with sustainable land management practices and best practice for animal husbandry, consistent with the outcomes for the protection of the natural and cultural resources of the park.

Lake, River and Wetland Management

Objective

- 8.5.3 To ensure that appropriate public access and opportunities for use and enjoyment of lakes, rivers and wetlands within regional parks is provided in a manner consistent with the management of these areas.

Policies

- 8.5.3.1 Where lakes, wetlands or river corridors form part of the park network, provide for recreational use in a way that allows river management practices to occur in an efficient and effective manner.
- 8.5.3.2 Where access is required to be restricted due to seasonal farming requirements or management reasons, limit these times to the most practical minimum and notify any restrictions to the public and users.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Information on HBRC's website, pamphlets and signs explaining management requirements of farming, forestry and waterways
- Community education about park management methods
- Seasonal or temporary restrictions – set and notified
- Management / lease arrangements that reflect these objectives and policies.

Explanation

Grazing and forestry are key management tools for many of the regional parks. Grazing is generally implemented through grazing and / or lease agreements with private agents. Through this plan, HBRC seeks to demonstrate best practice standards in environmental and animal care to the wider community and gain some economic return for the region's ratepayers. At the same time, recreation use of these areas will be encouraged unless there are clear management reasons for restricting access.



8.6 Strategic Environmental Partnerships

Objective

- 8.6.1 Where consistency with park values can be achieved, consider partnerships with key stakeholders to provide environmental stewardship of regional parks.

Policies

- 8.6.1.1 Engage with other providers of regional open space to identify and implement potential environmental collaborations, management efficiencies and enhancement projects.

- 8.6.1.2 Promote environmental park values to key stakeholders and encourage partnerships where a shared vision and values are identified.

- 8.6.1.3 Develop relationships with sponsoring organisations where sponsorship has a considered fit with the individual park vision and values for environmental enhancement.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Memorandums of understanding
- Funding arrangements
- Leasing or other appropriate land occupation arrangements
- Shared planning for open space
- Sponsorship agreements
- Advocacy and sharing of best practice with national professional associations and other park providers.

Explanation

HBRC recognises the importance of partnering with agencies, organisations and the community to achieve good environmental outcomes and will seek opportunities to work together with partners to maintain and enhance natural values in parks.

Other providers include iwi, the Department of Conservation, territorial local authorities and private providers. Opportunities include co-management of land, maintenance or operational contracts or funding of other agencies to undertake work that complements the regional park values.



8.7 Community Engagement

Objective

- 8.7.1 To promote community understanding of, and support for, regional parks through partnership and volunteer programmes.

Policies

- 8.7.1.1 Promote parks as a place to learn about the environment, cultural and social heritage, native ecosystems, and best practice for the sustainable management of land and water.

- 8.7.1.2 Support a wide range of opportunities to volunteer in parks where activities support the vision and values identified in the plan. This could include partnerships with volunteer groups, 'friends of the park' groups, or encouraging external experts to volunteer expertise to the park.

- 8.7.1.3 Develop relationships with schools / education providers to foster learning about park values and provide opportunities to engage with nature.

- 8.7.1.4 Continue to recognise the importance of volunteers through a range of initiatives.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Partnerships with schools and recognised outdoor education providers
- Education packs
- Planting days
- Ranger service
- Memoranda of Understanding
- Volunteer programmes / register
- Newsletters / media / website / social media.

Explanation

Communities, through volunteering, make a significant contribution to regional parks both in terms of planting days, caring for parks and sponsorship.

HBRC is keen to provide such opportunities for community engagement to support and foster improved community health and wellbeing outcomes and environmental awareness / education.



9.0 Recreation and Visitor Management

This part of the plan recognises the wide range of health and social benefits that parks bring to communities, as well as fostering custodianship and environmental awareness. It balances recreation and visitor use with other park values, recognising that not all activities need to be provided in every park and that, in certain situations, activities will be restricted where other values or activities are put at risk. When considering development of infrastructure to support recreation or visitor activities, preference will be given to opportunities that provide the greatest community benefit.

This approach relies on understanding the individual capacity of different parks to absorb recreation activities and visitor access, based on a clear understanding of the individual park's vision, values and character. Planning for activities that are increasingly difficult to locate in urban areas (such as recreational hunting, dog-walking, freedom camping, motorised recreation vehicles, mountain biking, horse riding, etc.) is also an important consideration.

9.1 Planning and Providing for Recreation Use

Objective

9.1.1 To protect the values of the park network and individual parks, while enabling visitors to enjoy a wide range of outdoor recreation and educational opportunities.

Policies

- 9.1.1.1 Provide for recreation activities that are consistent with the park classification and individual park vision and values using a variety of techniques, which include:
- Assessing the impacts of the activity on the park environment, demand for the activity and the compatibility of activities
 - Providing for activities according to their potential impact on park values and visitors as outlined in Activity Provision Guide (see Table 2).
- 9.1.1.2 Provide for conditions and / or temporary restrictions to be applied to activities in appropriate circumstances where it is necessary to protect park values and / or visitor enjoyment, taking into account:
- The size of the group
 - The location of the activity
 - The duration of the activity
 - The time of day, season or time of year the activity may be undertaken
 - Any specific permits required.
- 9.1.1.3 Consider all options for providing recreation activities taking into account the wider park network, the potential for partnerships or whether other providers may better be able to accommodate the activity.

Table 2 Activity Provision Guide

Activity Provision	
Activity Description	Assessment Guide
<p>Encouraged Activities</p> <p>Activities that are encouraged or allowed are those that are generally compatible with the park environment and of benefit to the wider community and / or visitors to the park.</p> 	<p>HBRC will encourage activities in regional parks where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use is consistent with park classification, individual park vision or park character The park has a high capacity to absorb activity (includes consideration of intensity and level of use, potential for conflict with other users, etc.) Use complements other activities provided across the park network Use derives high benefit to the wider community There is low potential for adverse impact on the park environment as a result of user activities It is affordable for HBRC to provide or facilitate.
<p>Limited Activities</p> <p>Activities that require some level of limit or control due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential for adverse impact on, or user's enjoyment of, the park environment Limited or selective community benefit. 	<p>HBRC may limit activities in regional parks where one or more of the following reasons apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential for adverse impact on the park environment as a result of user activity is medium to high and cannot be reasonably avoided, reduced or fixed. There is some inconsistency with park classification, individual park vision or park character There is limited or variable capacity for an individual park to absorb activity and / or the level of use (includes consideration of intensity and level of use, potential for conflict with other users, etc.) There is selective or limited benefit to the community Due to management reasons, the park may require temporary restriction, i.e. shooting season at Pekapeka Regional Park.
<p>Discouraged Activities</p> <p>Activities that are classified as discouraged or not allowed must be justified for good reasons. The activities could be: contrary to the park vision and / or values; have little community benefit; conflict with other uses; create a public nuisance; or are better provided for elsewhere.</p> 	<p>HBRC may exclude these activities from a regional park where one or more of the following reasons apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium to high potential for adverse impact on park environment which cannot be avoided or remedied Inconsistency or conflict with park classification, individual park vision or character Limited capacity for park to absorb activity and / or level of use (includes consideration of intensity and level of use, potential for conflict with other users, etc) Activity is better provided for elsewhere in the park network or other publicly accessible spaces Public health and safety is identified as a real and imminent risk.



Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Visitor surveys, staff observations and ongoing monitoring of activities
- Individual Park Plans with particular consideration of any park specific natural or heritage attributes
- Liaison with other providers, recreation groups and park stakeholders
- Provision of appropriate infrastructure to support, manage or limit activities, i.e. access and car parking, tracks and directional signs, shelters and park furniture, etc.
- Appropriate information and communication to educate users about activities in the parks, including providing clear reasons where activities are actively discouraged
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Concessions or licence agreements
- Special agreements for one-off events
- Codes of conduct.

Explanation

HBRC's approach to providing recreation activities is to ensure that the range, scope and intensity of recreation and visitor activity at each park is managed in a way that is appropriate to the classification, values and capacity of the park, while maintaining visitor enjoyment of the park environment. This is achieved through determining 'encourage', 'limit' or 'discourage' status for each activity based on its potential for adverse impact, consistency with park classification and value, and ability of the individual park to absorb that type of activity.

This approach considers the whole of the Regional Park Network when determining the most suitable location for an activity. It also considers whether activities may be better provided on sites outside of the network, i.e. on land owned by other providers.

It provides HBRC with the ability to say 'no' in a considered manner to requests for activities that may not be appropriate to the regional park environment. For example, dog walking may not be appropriate in all areas, horse-riding and mountain biking may conflict unless some limits are provided, and specialised competitive recreation activities may be better provided for elsewhere. The cost of infrastructure required to support these activities may also be considered in decision making, as it must be affordable for HBRC to provide and maintain these activities at safe levels of operation.

Schedule Four provides a summary of recreation activities and their draft status for each individual park. The activity status will be finalised once Individual Park Plans for each of the region's parks are completed.

9.2 Visitor Services

Objective

9.2.1 To provide a range of accessible, informative and enjoyable visitor experiences.

Policies

- 9.2.1.1 Identify opportunities for disabled access to key points within the park network.
- 9.2.1.2 Maintain a variety of recreational opportunities throughout the network that recognise the diversity of cultures, ages, fitness levels and physical abilities, while recognising that not all opportunities will be available at all parks.
- 9.2.1.3 Provide easy to moderate trails close to park entrances to allow better opportunities for the elderly, families and disabled people to enjoy the parks.

9.2.1.4 Give priority to providing linkages, circuits and loops when developing new tracks.

9.2.1.5 Encourage community use of regional parks by providing quality information to the public about the opportunities available and the shared responsibilities associated with these.

9.2.1.6 Support community events that increase awareness about park values and recreation opportunities.

9.2.1.7 Encourage responsible behaviour and stewardship of parks including a 'leave only footprints' approach.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Mapping of access points and types of access available (e.g. general access, bus access, disabled access, etc)
- Ranger service
- Marketing
- Interpretation features and signs
- Programmes and events
- Community partnerships
- Education
- Monitoring and research.

Explanation

HBRC recognises that an appropriate level of visitor services is required to assist in providing a satisfying visitor experience and to maintain healthy, well managed parks. The provision and promotion of quality information about the parks will also

encourage greater community involvement and access to the parks. HBRC's information and marketing services, ranger services and staff support services are a key component in achieving this.

9.3 Visitor Infrastructure

Objectives

- 9.3.1 To maintain and develop park infrastructure that is necessary to meet park visitor and operational needs while being cost effective and affordable.
- 9.3.2 To maintain and develop park infrastructure in a manner that does not compromise park values and the enjoyment of park users, incorporating best practice and sustainable development principles where practicable.

Policies

- 9.3.1.1 Concentrate intensive use and development of visitor facilities at existing developed areas and main park entrances wherever possible.
- 9.3.1.2 Keep visitor infrastructure to a minimum and at a level that services the optimum non-peak use of the park.





- 9.3.1.3 Ensure the location, design and construction of new infrastructure:
 - a. Recognises the special character and characteristics of its location as determined by the relevant park values, vision and management focus outlined for each park
 - b. Considers all feasible alternative locations and means of meeting the needs of the park
 - c. Avoids, wherever practical, archaeological sites and respects any historic features in the locality
 - d. Respects tāngata whenua values associated with the park
 - e. Considers the health, safety and convenience of visitors
 - f. Takes into account the needs of people with disabilities and limited mobility
 - g. Uses cost effective and sustainable design techniques and methods of construction
 - h. Groups built structures together to minimise vegetation clearance and visual intrusion to the landscape wherever possible and practical
 - i. Minimises the impacts of buildings (including their operations and maintenance) on the environment.
- 9.3.1.4 Retain or adapt park infrastructure wherever practicable and desirable, and only consider removal where it:
 - a. Adversely affects the natural and heritage resources in the park
 - b. Is not of historic or cultural importance, or of importance to tāngata whenua
 - c. Ceases to be necessary for any approved or foreseeable potential use in a park
 - d. Is demonstrably uneconomic to continue to upgrade or operate.
- 9.3.1.5 Provide for signs only where necessary and where these:
 - a. Are coordinated and consistent in content, style and type
 - b. Keep visual clutter to a minimum
 - c. Assist visitors to enjoy and be informed about the park
 - d. Are consistent with current HBRC sign policy.

Methods

- The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:
- Standards New Zealand Hand Book SNZHB 8630:2004 (Department of Conservation Track construction and maintenance guidelines)
 - Concept development plans
 - Advocacy / monitoring
 - Sustainable building concepts and best practice.

Explanation

Visitor infrastructure is necessary to make access and the recreational experience easy. Tracks are one of the main facilities that visitors use in parks, and need to be located and designed to be sympathetic to the environments they traverse. For this reason they may need to vary in design and treatment so that they are appropriate to the specific park environment rather than adhere to a fixed standard. Where suitable, parks and facilities will include recreation opportunities for people with disabilities and limited mobility. Unnecessary structures should be removed wherever possible.



As stewards of the environment, HBRC also seeks to be a leader in sustainable development by ensuring visitor infrastructure reflects current best practice and requirements for sustainability.

9.4 Strategic Recreational Partnerships

Objective

- 9.4.1 To 'expand' recreation opportunities and access to them through partnerships with other agencies and the business community.

Policies

- 9.4.1.1 Engage with other providers of regional open space to:
 - a. Identify and implement potential collaborations that provide for greater access to, enjoyment of, and linkages between, regional parks
 - b. Provide recreation or visitor services.
- 9.4.1.2 Where appropriate, work with partners such as clubs or other organisations to develop new recreation opportunities.
- 9.4.1.3 Develop relationships with sponsoring organisations where sponsorship has a considered 'fit' with park vision and values for recreation and community participation.

Methods

- The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:
- Memoranda of Understanding or other appropriate protocol
 - Strategic partnerships
 - Sponsorship agreements
 - Funding arrangements
 - Advocacy and sharing of best practice with national professional associations and other park providers.

Explanation

HBRC recognises the importance of developing and maintaining strategic partnerships to enhance recreation opportunities across the region. This may be to co-manage areas of land for maintenance or operational purposes, or may include funding of other agencies to undertake work that complements regional park values and philosophy.

There are many examples of where successful partnerships already exist, such as: the Department of Conservation and HBRC share responsibilities at Tūtira; HBRC funds Te Mata Park Trust Board for services at Te Mata Peak; hapū and HBRC have partnered to redevelop and provide information at Pekapeka Regional Park. HBRC believes that partnerships will continue to be important for outdoor recreation provision in the future.

9.5 Community Partnerships and Volunteering

Objective

- 9.5.1 To promote community understanding of, and support for, regional parks through partnership and volunteer programmes.

Policies

- 9.5.1.1 Support a wide range of opportunities to volunteer in parks where activities support the vision and values identified in this plan. This could include partnerships with volunteer groups, park 'friends' groups, or encouraging external experts to volunteer expertise to the park.
- 9.5.1.2 Continue to recognise the importance of volunteers through a range of initiatives.



Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Volunteer programmes / registers
- Memoranda of Understanding or other appropriate protocol
- Strategic Partnerships
- Care Groups
- Sponsorship.



Explanation

Partnerships and volunteering promote community ownership of open space areas and also make a valuable contribution to the upkeep and well-being of the Regional Park Network.

9.6 Concessions / Leases / Licenses

Objective

- 9.6.1 To provide opportunities for concessions, leases or licences where they contribute to the recreation or visitor experience and are consistent with the plan.

Policies

- 9.6.1.1 Facilitate concession, lease or licence agreements where they enhance the recreation opportunities available in the Regional Park Network and reflect the environmental, recreation and visitor management approach identified in the plan.
- 9.6.1.2 When renewing existing agreements, align provision for these with the aspirations for environmental, recreation and visitor management in the plan.

Method

The following method may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Formal agreements such as lease, license or concession agreements consistent with this Plan.

Explanation

HBRC may consider concession operations or licenses where operators can demonstrate that their business is consistent with the approach identified in this Plan. Leasing arrangements exist in many of the parks for grazing purposes and HBRC will endeavour

to ensure these are consistent with the approach taken in this Plan as they come up for renewal. Where concessions, leases or licenses apply, HBRC will encourage adoption of best practice principles that are consistent with the regional park's vision and values.

9.7 Visitor Safety and Well-Being

Objectives

- 9.7.1 To ensure the safe use of regional parks.
- 9.7.2 To enable visitors to enjoy the regional parks safely and in a manner that promotes self-reliance and self-confidence.
- 9.7.3 To encourage responsible behaviour in regional parks.

Policies

- 9.7.2.1 Advise and educate visitors about specific management activities or natural hazards that may pose a significant risk to visitor safety through signs, public notices in newspapers or information available on HBRC's website.
- 9.7.2.2 Limit and / or manage public access (either temporarily or permanently) to areas, facilities or structures that pose a risk to health and safety as a result of an identified hazard.
- 9.7.2.3 Advise visitors that they are responsible for their own health and safety while undertaking recreational activity in the parks.
- 9.7.2.4 Should an incident occur, respond and liaise with emergency services and affected persons, in a timely and effective manner, to minimise risks to park visitors.
- 9.7.2.5 Establish:
 - a. Appropriate procedures for risk auditing, monitoring, assessment and mitigation
 - b. Develop appropriate response procedures to address emergency incidents
 - c. Review procedures developed in a. and b. annually.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Education
- Park ranger service
- Hazard risk management and complaints register
- Appropriate signs and leaflets displaying details of hazards, emergency contact numbers and evacuation points
- Regular inspections to identify new or developing hazards and a biennial inspection by a qualified professional health and safety person
- Appropriate procedures to deal with a range of foreseeable emergencies.

Explanation

The Plan seeks to implement appropriate methods and procedures for ensuring visitor safety and well-being in the parks network. This includes providing appropriate information about any likely risk and promoting self-reliance and self-responsibility in the outdoor environment.

HBRC has appropriate auditing and monitoring procedures in place to ensure the safety of infrastructure used by visitors to the parks. It is important to note that not all risks will be eliminated, and individuals and groups are expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and safety within the parks. This includes not causing a nuisance to others.

9.8 Smokefree and Use of Alcohol in Regional Parks

Objective

9.8.1 To encourage healthy and safe behaviour by visitors using regional parks.

Policies

9.8.1.1 Promote Smokefree regional parks through appropriate information, complementing the government's Smokefree 2025 initiative for New Zealand.

9.8.1.2 Monitor alcohol-related incidents and investigate the best approach to manage problem individuals or groups.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Monitoring
- Information via website, pamphlets, signs, etc.

Explanation

HBRC seeks to reinforce the opportunities that regional parks contribute to healthy lifestyles by providing appropriate messages about being Smokefree and the responsible use of alcohol in the parks.

In addition, smoking is a potential fire hazard and for this reason it is discouraged. These messages also support a Regional Park Network that is attractive and safe for families, children and young people.

9.9 Ranger Service

Objective

9.9.1 To provide a ranger service to protect, maintain and enhance park values, and maximise visitor access to and safe enjoyment of regional parks.

Policy

9.9.1.1 Provide a park ranger service that:

- Manages the parks and opportunities for recreation and public use as well as visitor behaviour
- Maintains park infrastructure
- Fosters an ethic of stewardship in park visitors
- Provides or facilitates volunteering programmes
- Models the behaviour HBRC expects of park visitors
- Increases the visibility of HBRC in parks and provides a point of contact for the public
- Facilitates and supports emergency responses in and adjacent to regional parks in accordance with the objectives and policies for the plan.

Method

The following method may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Adequately resourced ranger provision across the Regional Park Network.

Explanation

Park rangers can have an important role in both managing and looking after the park and providing a point of contact for visitors. Park rangers can also provide opportunities to encourage care of

the park environments and share information and stories about the parks themselves. Rangers can be an important point of contact in case of any emergency.

9.10 Visitor Behaviour

Objective

9.10.1 To encourage responsible visitor behaviour through design, education, and monitoring to prevent littering, dumping of rubbish and other antisocial behaviours.

Policies

9.10.1.1 Promote visitor responsibility to park users and the general public by establishing a 'leave only footprints' culture in regional parks.

9.10.1.2 Promote a 'no rubbish' culture by not providing rubbish bins in general and expecting visitors to carry out their own rubbish.

9.10.1.3 Have a zero tolerance of illegally dumped goods and graffiti by:

- Removing any offensive material as soon as possible
- Using design methods to discourage access to popular dumping spots.

9.10.1.4 Monitor and evaluate litter levels and other illegal activities that occur in regional parks to facilitate appropriate responses.

Methods

The following methods are used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Education, signs, care codes, etc.
- Ranger presence in 'hot spots'
- Monitoring of staff and visitor feedback
- Immediate removal of illegally dumped matter or graffiti
- Reporting mechanism for the public.

Explanation

Regional parks are natural environments for all the community and visitors to the area to enjoy. Litter, graffiti or illegally dumped material detracts from these environments, can be a health hazard and negatively affects visitors' enjoyment.

HBRC is keen to prevent these kinds of activities from taking place and to encourage visitors to be responsible for their own rubbish.

9.11 Dogs and Horses in Parks

Objective

9.11.1 To provide opportunities for park visitors to bring dogs and horses into regional parks in a manner that does not conflict with park values, other activities or the visitor experience.

Policies

- 9.11.1.1 Allow dogs and horses in parks:
- Where they are under the owner's control at all times
 - In areas designated specifically for dog walking or horse riding.
- 9.11.1.2 Exclude dogs and horses from any areas that may compromise individual park values, farm management requirements, or licensed areas.
- 9.11.1.3 Monitor and evaluate the dog walking and horse riding opportunities in parks and work with other key stakeholders to meet community demand.

Methods

The following methods are used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Individual Park Plans
- Staff and visitor feedback
- Education and messages about responsible visitor behaviour
- Identification of opportunities for dog walking and horse riding in promotional material.

Explanation

Demand for dog-walking areas, particularly close to urban areas, is high as reflected in the popularity of places such as Pākōwhai Regional Park and the river berms. Horse-riding opportunities are also increasingly being sought by the community.

HBRC recognises this and aims to provide opportunities where these activities will not interfere with park values. HBRC is also keen to work with other providers such as territorial local authorities and the community to ensure that demand is appropriately catered for.



10.0 General Administration

This section deals with matters relating to regional park administration. It covers the criteria for naming parks and features, park closures, the potential to transfer park management and how

It also provides guidance on HBRC's approach to concessions, leases and licences, animals on parks and management of rubbish and waste on parks.

HBRC will work with adjoining landowners and managers to achieve the best outcomes for regional parks.

10.1 Naming of Parks and Features

Objective

10.1.1 To ensure the names of parks and the features within them are appropriate, geographically correct and reflect tāngata whenua, cultural, historical and natural associations, features or events.

Policies

- 10.1.1.1 Naming new parks, features or facilities will require HBRC's approval.
- 10.1.1.2 Naming a new park, feature or facility will be based on the following preferences (in no particular order):
- Tāngata whenua values
 - A natural feature within the park
 - A historic name for the land
 - A historic feature or association with the park
 - Historic or culturally significant individual or event
 - An individual or organisation that significantly contributes, or has contributed, to the park or facility through gifting or sponsorship.

Method

The following method may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Appropriate Council process and protocol for naming.

Explanation

Naming of regional parks and features within them are often defined by historical associations or the natural or cultural resource that is being protected. In this respect, names have an important role in defining the identity of the park.

Therefore, giving due consideration to park names is appropriate and HBRC will ensure appropriate processes are followed to provide a suitable and relevant name to features as required.

10.2 Park Closures

Objective

10.2.1 To provide appropriate protocol for park closures or restrictions.

Policies

- 10.2.1.1 Regional parks will generally be open and accessible to park visitors all year round, except where the following circumstances require restrictions:
- An event or activity has been granted the right to restrict public access as part of its approval conditions
 - There are visitor safety or environmental reasons for restrictions
 - Park operations require temporary closure of a park area to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the operation
 - Existing obligations to other individuals, organisations or agencies allow for public access to be restricted
 - Restricting access is an obligation under a specific Act, such as the Biosecurity Act, Forest Rural Fire Act or the Public Health Act.
- 10.2.1.2 Where restrictions on access to a park or park closures are required, the public will be notified as early and widely as possible.
- 10.2.1.3 If an unforeseen event results in the closure of a park, i.e. flooding, fire, etc., the public and any key stakeholders will be notified as early as possible.

Method

The following method may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Use of public notices, signs, website and newspaper / radio notices and / or other appropriate methods will be used to inform the public of park closures.

Explanation

While some parks will close gates to stop vehicle access at night, all park land remains accessible to the public unless special restrictions exist. Restrictions on access to entire parks or areas of parks are warranted on occasion. Where this involves a planned operation, such as an integrated pest control programme, HBRC will try to ensure this will not impact on periods of peak visitor use.

Where restrictions on access are proposed, appropriate notice will be given as soon as possible. In some circumstances restrictions may occur at short notice due to natural events or unforeseen circumstances; where this occurs, all known affected parties will be contacted as soon as practical.

10.3 Transfer of Management

Objective

10.3.1 To ensure that regional park land or public land adjoining regional parks is managed in an efficient and effective manner by the most appropriate agency.

Policy

- 10.3.1.1 Consider the transfer of management in whole or in part, of:
- Regional park land to a relevant public agency or iwi authority, or
 - Adjoining open space land to HBRC to form part of regional park land, where the proposed transfer:
 - Is demonstrated to be in the interests of the regional community
 - Promotes effective and efficient management of resources
 - Will not compromise recreational use or the integrity of natural and cultural resources in a park
 - Enables tāngata whenua to practically express kaitiakitanga over sites and landscapes of significance.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Strategic Partnerships
- Memorandum of understanding or other appropriate protocol.

Explanation

Regional park land can be best managed by HBRC, there may be circumstances when alternative management could be appropriate. For example, where small parcels of land are isolated from the bulk of the park network, they may be more effectively managed by other agencies. Alternatively, where there are parcels of land owned by another agency which is not sufficiently resourced to optimise these spaces, the land owner may enter an agreement with HBRC to manage these as part of the Regional Park Network.

Transfer of management does not necessarily include or imply that ownership will be formally transferred. This section identifies those circumstances where transfers may be contemplated. Any transfers will need to be undertaken following consultation with the community and in accordance with appropriate processes under the Reserves Act where applicable (refer also to Chapters 9.6 and 10.4).



10.4 Gifts and Bequests

Objective

10.4.1 To honour commitments resulting from the gifting, bequeathing or transfer of land to HBRC for regional park purposes.

Policy

10.4.1.1 Promptly carry out and maintain undertakings entered into by HBRC relating to the transfer of land for regional park purposes, and maintain these for the duration of the agreement.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Appropriate legal documentation such as lease, licence to occupy, etc.
- Memoranda of Understanding.

Explanation

In instances where land is gifted, bequeathed or transferred to HBRC for regional park purposes, HBRC will endeavour to honour the intentions of the donor or transferor included in the terms of any formal document confirming the gift, bequest or transfer.



10.5 Plaques and Memorials

Objective

10.5.1 To provide for commemorative memorials, plaques and dedicated structures and plantings in regional parks in appropriate circumstances.

Policies

- 10.5.1.1 Allow memorials, plaques and dedicated structures in parks in special circumstances, where they acknowledge:
- People who have significantly contributed to the development of the Hawke's Bay Regional Park Network
 - Events within the regional parks that are of historic, environmental or cultural significance, or the opening or naming of a park or a major facility in the park
 - The gifting of significant land to the Hawke's Bay Regional Park Network
 - A collective community action for the park
 - Tāngata whenua considerations.
- 10.5.1.2 Enable memorial plantings (without plaques) on parks where they are part of an HBRC approved planting programme.
- 10.5.1.3 Unless specifically agreed by HBRC as part of the approval, HBRC will not be liable for the structure, installation, maintenance and replacement of any memorials, plaques, dedicated structures or memorial planting.
- 10.5.1.4 Ensure that the design and location of any memorial, commemorative plaque or structure will not detract from the park values or landscapes, or cause the displacement of other park activities.

Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- Memorandum of Understanding
- Appropriate HBRC decision making processes.

Explanation

Locating memorials, commemorative plaques and dedicated structures within regional parks is appropriate in certain circumstances, but should not detract from the park setting or prevent visitors from enjoying the park. HBRC is keen to ensure

such structures are kept to a minimum and encourages the use of commemorative planting as a preference. Determining the design, maintenance, naming and potential removal of plaques and memorials will be made as part of the decision making process.

10.6 Land Tenure Acquisition, Disposal and Partnerships

Objectives

- 10.6.1 To provide a variety of regional park settings through a variety of means including strategic acquisition and partnerships that meet the needs of the regional community.
- 10.6.1.1 To consider the disposal of regional park land only where it is no longer considered necessary or does not serve a specific purpose that meets the needs of the regional community.

Policies

- 10.6.1.2 When acquiring or disposing of land, to consider how the proposal will:
- Enhance the benefit, enjoyment and use of parks by the public
 - Improve public access to, or use of, open space
 - Further protect the character of existing parks
 - Protect the important environmental and cultural heritage values
 - Enhance or add to existing recreational opportunities
 - Rationalise boundaries to achieve better linkages to other open spaces and benefit the future management of the park
 - Enhance or add to ecological corridor opportunities
 - Occur only where no other mechanism (such as a management agreement by another agency) can achieve the purpose.
- 10.6.1.3 Consider the acquisition of new parks where:
- There is deficiency in large open space (greater than 150 hectares) within the area and acquisition has the potential to provide a variety of recreational opportunities that will benefit the region
 - This will provide protection to areas that have regionally or nationally significant ecological, landscape or heritage values
 - This complements the wider park network and does not compete with other open space opportunities in the area.
- 10.6.1.4 Manage any land acquired using the objectives and policies of this Plan alongside any relevant legislative requirements.





Methods

The following methods may be used to achieve the objectives and policies of this section:

- HBRC land purchase policy
- Strategic partnerships
- Memorandum of understanding.

Explanation

The Regional Park Network includes a variety of land areas that HBRC has acquired or inherited for a wide range of purposes including soil conservation, river management and wetland enhancement. These areas increasingly valued by the public for their recreation opportunity. In its review of regional public open space in 2007⁵, HBRC identified a shortage of urban periphery, coastal areas for recreation and has prioritised this in its Public Open Space Investment policy⁶.

HBRC also seeks to address identified community recreation needs on an ongoing basis through partnerships with other agencies or land acquisitions and disposal where appropriate. Through the plan, HBRC will continue to monitor recreation activity and opportunities to ensure that the park values are being maintained and community needs are being met.

⁵ EMS Open Space Review 2007

⁶ HBRC Public Open Space Investment Policy (2008)



3. BACKGROUND



This section provides the background and context to the development of the Plan. In particular it addresses the following matters:

- Why 'regional parks'?
- Key elements of a regional park
- Current HBRC open space provision
- Preliminary consultation with key stakeholders
- Regional profile summary detailing current and future trends as well as key land use issues
- Relevant legislation
- HBRC open space policy framework.



11.0 Why 'Regional Parks'?

In 2010 HBRC staff began investigating how a parks-focused approach to management of its open space portfolio could benefit the regional public.

The key drivers are:

- In 2007 a rural open space inventory and report¹ identified the opportunity for regional parks and acknowledged the need for a strategic approach to investment in, or support of, open space in the region. This report highlighted a shortage of public access to beaches and acknowledged the role of areas such as Te Mata Park, Department of Conservation Reserves, Kaweka and Ruahine Forest Parks, Te Urewera National Park and rural pathways in providing regional recreational opportunities. A funding strategy for the acquisition of regional open space was subsequently developed.
- A need was identified for a clear vision for regional open space areas that would deliver on the environmental and management requirements and the passive / active recreational desires of the public.
- Management of public access to HBRC's open space areas was on a site-by-site basis, without an overarching, consistent approach towards levels of service, long term management or public access.
- There was an opportunity to develop relationships with iwi and hapū to reflect their aspirations in the on-going management of regional park space.
- Parks offered opportunity to display 'best practice' in restoration, enhancement and land management and share this with our regional communities.

In particular, staff were interested in understanding whether adopting a 'regional park' methodology would work for the Hawke's Bay region.

- There was seen to be a need to accommodate a range of activities that are becoming displaced in ecologically sensitive areas, such as 4-wheel driving and mountain biking, and for managing competing uses, for example duck-shooting versus cycling, or jet-boating versus white-baiting.
- Investment in *Nga Haerenga, The New Zealand Cycle Trails* and the additional development of regional pathways / cycleways has created assets that are very popular with the community. This has significantly increased HBRC's interface with the public around open space and recreation. These facilities provide benefits for recreation, tourism, business and health.
- There is a need to preserve and enhance the region's conservation and recreation values for future generations.
- Parks offer an opportunity to enhance and build positive community relationships through education, volunteering and experiencing the region's diverse landscapes.
- Parks offer the opportunity for economic benefits through farming / forestry activity and visitor activities.
- Parks contribute to improved health and well-being of communities.
- There are ecological benefits in managing open spaces and contributing to biodiversity in the region.

To understand the benefits of implementing a regional park approach, HBRC staff visited the Bay of Plenty and Auckland regional parks and were inspired by 'best practice' in terms of the level of services provided and the identifiable benefits to the regions.

In moving towards a 'regional park-focused' approach to management of these spaces, HBRC is seeking to balance the wide range of opportunities associated with HBRC open space, with the specific underlying management purpose of these areas to achieve multiple benefits for its regional communities. It is expected that the result of this will raise the profile of these areas. This, in turn, will contribute to community well-being through increased opportunity to be active, and learn about the region's special characteristics, environments and landscapes.

This approach is supported by HBRC's Strategic Plan which recognises that, if HBRC is going to continue to make a contribution of significant value to the community, it needs to focus on more innovative ways to undertake its role.

HBRC is also involved in an initiative known as 'Nature Central' that is actively investigating alliance opportunities with the Department of Conservation, Horizons Regional Council (Manawatu-Wanganui) and Greater Wellington Regional Council. 'Nature Central' is assessing options for jointly delivering services across areas such as biosecurity, biodiversity, regional park management and science delivery for greater efficiency and effectiveness. The preparation of this Plan for HBRC's open space areas will assist in identifying potential partnering and cross boundary opportunities with these organisations.



¹ Hawke's Bay Rural Open Space Study 2007 EMS



12.0 Key Elements of a Regional Park

12.1 Definition

For the purpose of the Plan, a regional park is an area of land that is recognised for its natural, cultural and heritage, and recreational values, or other reason, and is under the administration of HBRC. This definition is adapted from section 139A of the Local Government Act 2002.

It is important to note that the parks managed in this network are not administered in terms of the Reserves Act 1977 and therefore the reserve planning provisions of that Act do not apply.

12.2 Key Elements

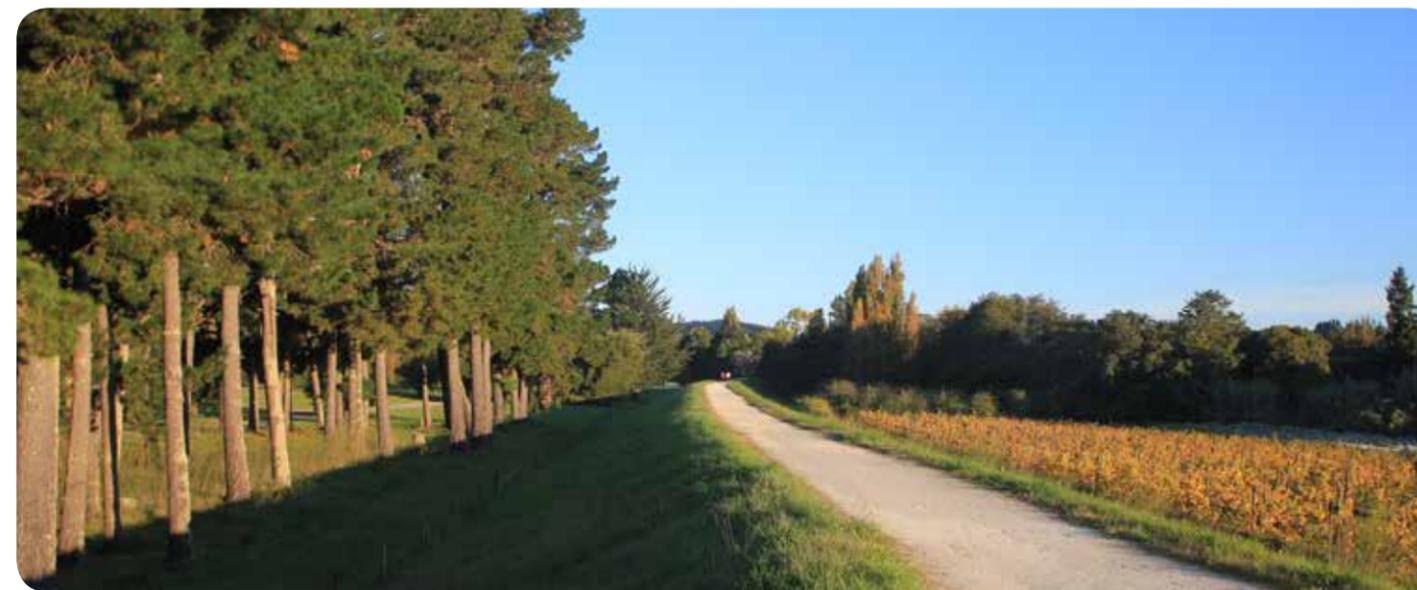
After looking at some examples of 'best practice' in the North Island, staff identified a number of key elements that make up regional parks including:

- Potential for long term protection
- Provision of open and accessible spaces
- Respectful and integrated management of key values
- Continuous improvement
- 'Contract with the community' to engage in providing regional parks.

The following is an explanation about each of these elements:

- Long term protection – Often regional parks are protected through gazetting³ via the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 and the Local Government Act 2002. This protects them in perpetuity for the long term benefit of communities. None of the spaces being proposed for inclusion in the Plan currently have this level of protection. While HBRC may consider this approach for key parks in the future, the guidelines developed in the Plan will ensure its regional park network is developed and maintained in a manner that is consistent with best practice. (Further detail on the Reserves Act 1977 and Local Government Act 2002 is provided in s 16.1 and 16.2).
- Provision of open and accessible spaces – Currently public access to HBRC open spaces are managed in an ad-hoc way or on a case-by-case basis. The Plan seeks to provide a consistent approach across the network with access being a key assumption (unless primary park values provide reason why an area would not be accessible to the public). An 'open network' also encompasses the notion of good dialogue with the public about the long term management of areas owned by the community. Therefore engagement with communities on individual park plans and aspirations for the network will be part of HBRC's approach
- Respectful and integrated management of key values – Regional parks include many areas of special significance to the community. This could be owing to a strong connection between hapū and their ancestral land, or more recent European history. Regional parks celebrate these values and HBRC staff strive to manage them in a respectful and positive way
- Continuous improvement – As budgets allow, HBRC will continually improve its regional parks to provide a high standard of amenity, management and activity in accordance with this Plan. This does not mean the most expensive provision but provision that is suitable for the type of park and its associated classification. It also means HBRC will continue to seek management practices that demonstrate the best of land management, taking into account the environmental, social, cultural and economic needs of the community
- 'Contract with the community' – In recognising its open space assets as regional parks, HBRC is making a contract with the community about how it will manage these spaces by seeking innovative ways to undertake its traditional role of land protection and management.

³ *Gazetting under the Reserves Act 1977 is the official issuing of notice in the government gazette of a reserves legal status. Once gazetted the legal provisions of the Reserves Act for producing management plans applies.*



13.0 Current Open Space Provision

HBRC currently owns, manages and / or administers on behalf of other agencies multiple open space assets which provide varying degrees of public access. These areas include:

- River margins (32 river entry points)
- Wetlands (Pekapeka and Waitangi Estuary)
- Soil / water conservation areas (Tangoio and Karamū Stream)
- Commercial investment properties (Waihapua)
- Country parks (Pākōwhai and Tūtira)
- 198 km of bike and walk trails across a mix of public and privately owned land

The ownership and / or management of these open spaces has been acquired by HBRC over many years for a range of reasons including flood risk management, soil conservation, ecological enhancement and more recently, investment purposes. To date, each geographic area has been managed on a case-by-case basis with individual management plans applying to each separate area.

Currently management relies on informal integration of, rather than an holistic approach to, the whole of the regional park network. The development of a network plan will provide the basis for a more coordinated approach towards planning and management of the public use of such areas.

In recent years the community has realised the opportunities associated with these pieces of land. HBRC regularly receives

requests for use of land for an increasingly diverse range of recreation activities including horse-riding, motorised sport, dog walking, etc. Some of these activities are being displaced from urban and coastal environments, while other users are increasingly looking to HBRC for opportunities to provide for their activities.

Projects currently being planned, such as the proposed Ruataniwha Water Storage Scheme on the Makaroro River, a tributary of the Tukituki River, may also result in further land being available for recreational use and ecological enhancement purposes.

The opportunity to manage these areas as a network with a regional park focus will provide for a strategic management approach resulting in greater value accruing to the public through multiple benefits from conservation, restoration, appropriate management as

well as providing recreation opportunity, public use and access to a wide range of natural areas across Hawke's Bay.

The Regional Park Network Plan seeks to identify clear guidelines and standards for the management of these spaces, as well as clearly set out what the public can expect in terms of use of these areas. Recreation is also intended to be a key focus of the Plan.

This approach is consistent with HBRC's commitment to provide the regional community with recreational opportunities and facilities, including bush or rural environments which have multiple benefits.⁴

⁴ HBRC Long Term Plan 'Activity 6 Open Spaces' p44



14.0 Preliminary Stakeholder Consultation

HBRC recognises that it is not the only provider of parks and public open space in the region. The four local authorities in the Hawke's Bay region and the Department of Conservation also provide significant park space across a diverse scale of settings.

As Treaty of Waitangi settlements reach conclusion, local hapū are also expected to have responsibility for large tracts of land, including areas that have historically been available to the public. Hapū and iwi are therefore likely to have a far greater

co-management role across a range of publicly owned areas. There are also private Trusts that own and manage some significant public areas, such as the iconic Te Mata Peak Park.

In the initial stages of progressing this Plan, HBRC consulted with a number of key stakeholders in the region. The purpose of these conversations was to gain an understanding of open space / park issues in the region and identify the level of support for the shift to a regional park approach.

The following stakeholders were consulted:

- Napier City Council – Parks and Reserves Manager
- Hastings District Council – Parks and Reserves Manager and Planner
- Wairoa District Council – District Planner
- Central Hawke's Bay District Council – District Planner
- Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated - Resource Management Advisor
- The Department of Conservation – District Ecological Advisor
- Tourism Hawke's Bay – Manager
- Sport Hawke's Bay – Chief Executive
- Te Mata Park Trust – Chairman

A summary of issues highlighted through these discussions is provided.

14.1 Napier City and Hastings District Feedback

Napier City and Hastings District Councils highlighted the following issues and opportunities:

- Cycle / walk ways - There has been a push in the last 10 years to increase cycle / walking networks across Napier and Hastings cities and an expectation that any public land is available for this purpose. This has resulted in issues for wildlife reserves, other sensitive areas, and some negative response from members of the public who do not embrace cycling in their 'back yard'.
- Horseriding - Napier's population has a significant number of horse-riders / pony clubbers yet the City does not have a lot of rural reserve areas available for this purpose. City by-laws prevent horse-riding in parks, yet the Napier City Council do not have the resources to police this, which can result in conflicting use of park areas.
- Motorbikes - There are issues with motorbikes both on foreshore reserves and some of the urban reserves. Motorbikes create problems for the most highly sensitive foreshore ecosystems through extensive tracking and the open grass spaces of urban reserves, which get cut up through motorbike use. There are also noise and safety issues with other legitimate users of these areas.
- Mountain bikes and BMX - There is constant demand for accessible mountain bike areas and an expectation that any open hillside area can be used for this purpose. This has placed pressure on sensitive areas such as the Napier City cemeteries at Park Island. There is also high demand for areas to develop BMX facilities, both formal and informal. Napier City Council has sought to provide for these uses where possible but is limited in the areas it has available that do not conflict with other uses of those areas.
- Dogs - There is on-going pressure on urban spaces for dog walking areas.
- Freedom Camping - This is an important issue for the region and there is a need to identify areas where it is permitted. Tourist vehicles that are not self-contained are creating problems. The Freedom Camping Act (2011) seeks to assist the Department of Conservation and local authorities to effectively deter the negative behaviour associated with freedom camping and there is a need for the region to address what this means for Hawke's Bay. Each local authority is at different stages of dealing with this issue. Napier City Council currently does not have any policy regarding freedom camping. Wairoa District Council is about to publicly notify proposed policy. Central Hawke's Bay has identified areas for freedom camping and currently do not experience any significant problems in relation to this. Hastings District Council provides a number of designated sites around the District where freedom camping is permitted but only in certified self-contained vehicles⁵. The Councils acknowledge that with limited resources, enforcement and monitoring is likely to be a problem

⁵ Designed to completely meet the ablutionary and sanitary needs of the occupants for a minimum of three days www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/camping

14.2 Central Hawke's Bay District Council Feedback (CHBDC)

CHBDC staff identified lack of funding as its key issue for the Parks under its control. CHBDC own some key areas of open space, for example Oepoto, a coastal stretch of land with significant ecological and recreational values at Aramoana Beach, and Lindsay's Bush, a block of native bush close to both Waipukurau and Waipawa.

However these areas are not being maintained and there is no funding allocated by CHBDC. CHBDC is struggling to maintain their large urban and highly utilised Parks let alone the rural parks, many of which have important ecological values.

14.3 Wairoa District Council (WDC)

WDC identified issues with motorbikes and cars on reserves, including both river and beach reserves. Specific issues include damage to the grounds and cultural concerns about impacts on reserve sites, more particularly the beach sites. Other issues include safe access to beaches and rubbish dumping at some reserves.

WDC is reserve management plans identify support to further develop BBQ areas / picnic tables, although it is acknowledged that this may create problems with littering / dumping of rubbish. Most reserves are identified on the Wairoa District Plan maps and generally have a 'conservation and reserves' zoning.

14.4 Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Inc (NKII)

NKII provided information summarising affirmation of their iwi values as identified through recent consultation with their people. Of relevance to the Plan is their desire to have meaningful input

into strategies, policies and practices addressing natural resource management carried out by Regional Councils and Territorial Authorities.

Common values across the Ngāti Kahungunu area include:

- Rangatiratanga, Kaitiakitanga - the right of tangata whenua to exercise 'ownership'
- Whakapapa, whanaungatanga - we are part of the water; it is integral to our practices, connections and identity
- Mauri - life principle, special nature.

14.5 The Department of Conservation (DOC)

DOC is supportive of the Plan and advised that a regional biodiversity strategy is also about to be developed. This strategy would inform any biodiversity aspects of this Plan.

14.6 Tourism Hawke's Bay (THB)

THB are very supportive of the approach being taken and consider a network approach based around Hawke's Bay's cycle networks would provide added value and interest in terms of activities available in the region.

Destinations such as Lake Tūtira, within an easy half hour's drive of Napier, have potential for tourism as they are considered to be easily accessible by tourists.

14.7 Sport Hawke's Bay (SHB)

SHB is one of 17 regional sports trusts across New Zealand and is responsible for the development of sport and active recreation in the region. SHB recognises that regional parks provide a significant recreation opportunity. It is keen to partner with HBRC

at a strategic and operational level to encourage the community to see parks as a valuable resource for physical activity. SHB have regularly made submissions to HBRC on this basis.

14.8 Te Mata Park Trust Board

Te Mata Park Trust Board administers Te Mata Park, which encompasses 98 hectares of land including Te Mata Peak, a major landmark of the Heretaunga Plains. This land was gifted by the Chambers family to the people of Hawke's Bay in 1927 and has been administered by the Trust since that time. Currently HBRC funds the Trust via an annual operating grant that contributes

to the employment of a part-time park custodian. Te Mata Park has over 200,000 visitors a year and has increasingly become an important tourist destination for local and foreign visitors to the region. The Trust is fundraising to develop an information and education centre at the park and HBRC has approved a grant towards the development of the centre.

14.9 Other Considerations

Chief Executives of the Greater Wellington, Hawke's Bay and Horizons Regional Councils, as well as DOC's Director-General, have agreed to formal collaboration in the management of natural resources and recreation across the lower North Island.

This initiative, called 'Nature Central' seeks to find greater working efficiencies between these organisations. 'Nature Central' will focus on combining efforts in the areas of recreation, biodiversity, regional park management, biosecurity issues and the sharing of technical advice and expertise.

The agencies have agreed to a framework for working together and an action plan to put specific initiatives in place including:

- A large scale joint management approach for regional parks and conservation land in the southeast Wairarapa region.
- Joint promotion of recreational opportunities, more collaborative management of the forest and regional parks around the development of a shared biodiversity strategy in Hawke's Bay and a wilding pine strategy for the lower North Island.
- An assessment of collaborative opportunities for environmental education, and the establishment of more shared training opportunities, and staff secondments and swaps between agencies.

The Councils and DOC already have a good history of working together and are looking to build on that to achieve greater results in natural resource management. The partners will also look at opportunities to work with the community, iwi / hapū and business groups in the region.

This is a shift away from the traditional management which was based on geographic and administrative boundaries, however it is only the first step in the process and the 'Nature Central' partners will be exploring more initiatives in the near future.

The development of a park network plan for HBRC is seen as consistent with this approach.

14.10 Support for Adopting a Regional Park Approach

Early consultation with key stakeholders overwhelmingly demonstrated support for a regional park approach to the management of HBRC's open spaces. The many benefits of providing regional parks are easily understood and the environmental, cultural and recreation opportunities offered through such an approach is seen as important for Hawke's Bay communities as well as for visitors to the region.

In developing the Plan HBRC will be mindful of the issues and opportunities raised by these organisations. On-going dialogue will be a key part of developing and operating the Plan to ensure good outcomes for the community can be realised.

15.0 Regional Profile Summary

The region's population, economy and trends are well documented and, in developing a regional park network plan, the writers have been mindful of issues identified in the following documents:

- Land Rivers Us – Hawke's Bay 2050 (HBRC publication)
- Hawke's Bay Region – Socio-Demographic Profile 1986-2011 (NZ Govt)
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council Long Term Plan 2012-2022
- Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Study 2011 (joint Council Study)

Key trends and issues from these documents that have relevance to planning for regional parks in Hawke's Bay are summarised as follows:

- Overall our regional population is stable with existing decline in Wairoa, forecast decline in Central Hawke's Bay, slight growth in Hastings and stable in Napier.
- Our population is generally ageing and the demographic mix is continued to expect to diversify with increasing numbers of Maori and Pacific Islanders.
- The Hawke's Bay economy is dominated by primary production and this will continue to be our major business.
- Changing workplace trends will continue to impact on people's recreation.
- Smaller sections, larger houses, and reduced household size will continue to drive demand for residential space.
- Increasing cost of travel will impact on people's recreational choices. Therefore areas located closer to the urban periphery will come under more pressure.
- Pressure on our coastline for development will continue to affect people's opportunities for accessible coastal recreation.

HBRC acknowledge that while open spaces are not under significant pressure from population growth and its associated demands on community space, there is nevertheless increasing expectation from the community of HBRC's open spaces and how these are used.

HBRC therefore consider that it is timely to forward plan for its open spaces and adopt a regional parks brand to ensure affordable and quality provision is provided.

15.1 Key Land-use Issues for the Napier and Hastings Urban Areas

The Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy 2011 (HPUDS) identified a number of issues in relation to urban development that are relevant to provision of regional parks. It also identified some key actions.

Key issues and opportunities relevant to this Plan include the:

- Use of open space to both manage urban growth and provide a multi-purpose urban edge, including recreational, ecological, landscape, and surface water drainage opportunities.
- Use of open space to maintain greenbelts between urban areas.
- Protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes, and providing a wide range of recreational opportunities that builds on the features of the landscape
- Need to provide appropriate levels of new open space as intensification occurs.
- Provision of leisure and recreational facilities that are sufficiently adaptable and multi-purpose to meet changing lifestyle patterns and expectations in the right location and at the right time.
- Retention of open space appropriate for intensification.

A number of key approaches relevant to the management of open space were identified. These include to:

- Provide a wide range of types of open space
- Design and provide appropriate open space and walking and cycling linkages in intensification areas and greenfield developments
- Co-ordinate the identification, planning and maintenance of an open space network so that it integrates with and enhances ground and surface water and biodiversity resources
- Promote the multi-functional use of large areas of open space
- Use open space to provide green corridors between core habitats, which are designed to contain ecological and recreational values as well as providing walk ways and cycle ways
- Use open space to assist in the provision of greenbelts between urban, sub-urban and rural areas
- Design parks, cycle-ways and walkways to encourage community use and to be safe.
- Use open space to reflect local ecological heritage
- Where practicable, acquire open space in advance of urban development
- Design open space to reflect the heritage and cultural history of the area and create a sense of place and identity
- Build on the existing open space network and ensure accessibility for all residents
- Link habitats between natural areas.

These issues and approaches indicate that planned and managed provision of open space and the associated opportunities is one of a range of methods required to satisfy the needs of urban communities into the future.

The development of the Plan is consistent with this approach and potentially central to the implementation of the open space outcomes of HPUDS.

16.0 Relevant Legislation

16.1 The Local Government Act 2002

Prior to 2002 only the Auckland and Wellington Regional Councils' had a legislative mandate to create regional parks. This occurred under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1974 for the purpose of protecting natural, historic and cultural features and to provide for the recreational needs of the community. These provisions required both authorities to produce management plans in a prescriptive manner and to invite public comment on these in a process similar to that prescribed under the Reserves Act 1977.

While other regional authorities have encouraged recreational use of their open spaces, these have been owned and administered for other primary purposes such as flood protection, wetland restoration or soil conservation. Recreational use of these areas has only been provided as a secondary use. The opportunity for regional councils to purchase land was restricted to limited and specific purposes until the Local Government Act 2002.

Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 states that the purpose of local government is:

- (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
- (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.

Section 11A of the Act identifies the following core services to be considered in performing a local authority's role:

'In performing its role, a local authority must have particular regard to the contribution that the following core services make to its communities:

- a) network infrastructure
- b) public transport services
- c) solid waste collection and disposal
- d) the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards
- e) libraries, museums, reserves, recreational facilities, and other community infrastructure.'

Sections 138, 139 and 139A of this Act also provide restrictions on any proposed disposal of parks (by sale or otherwise), protection of regional parks and further provision in relation to regional parks. Section 138 provides for public consultation on the sale of:

- (a) land acquired or used principally for community, recreational, environmental, cultural, or spiritual purposes; but
- (b) does not include land that is held as a reserve, or part of a reserve, under the Reserves Act 1977.

Sections 139 and 139A provide the option of protecting regional parks in perpetuity from disposition by Order in Council where these parks are also a reserve within the meaning of the Reserves Act 1977.



16.2 The Reserves Act 1977

The purpose of the Reserves Act 1977 is to provide for acquisition, control, management, maintenance, preservation (including the protection of the natural environment), development and use of Reserves. The Act provides the basis under which the Council (or other authority) must manage its reserves purchased under this Act.

Classifications include reserves for the following purposes:

- Recreation
- Historic
- Scenic
- Nature
- Scientific
- Local purpose reserves.

Sections 53-61 of the Act give certain powers to local authorities in relation to reserves, in terms of what activities can take place, layout, buildings and structures, and specific leasing powers.

The Reserves Act provides long term protection for parks, certainty about use and management of these areas, and requires community consultation on the development and changes to any Reserve Management Plans. This process is sometimes seen as restrictive, costly and not suitable for all publicly-owned land, particularly land that may not be available in the long term.

Among the key requirements is the preparation of Reserve Management Plans under Section 41. The purpose of Reserve Management Plans is to provide for and ensure that the objectives and policies in the plan are in line with the park classification in accordance with sections 17 - 23 of the Act.

For HBRC and their communities it is a balancing act in deciding which parks require protection in perpetuity and making land publicly available for a limited period of time.

Currently none of HBRC's open spaces are protected under the Reserves Act and the development of a Plan as proposed will not compromise the ability to do this in the future. Where this option is pursued, it can also be strengthened using provisions of the Local Government Act.

16.3 The Resource Management Act 1991 (The RMA)

The RMA is currently undergoing a significant review, however the purpose of this Act 'to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources' will remain unchanged.

Under Section 5 (2) of the Act, sustainable management means

- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and
- (b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and
- (c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.'

District Plans are prepared by territorial local authorities to give effect to the purpose of the RMA and under the review greater emphasis is being placed on joint planning between local authorities.

In the Hawke's Bay region, individual local authorities have approached the treatment of open space, parks and reserves as follows:

- The Napier City District Plan applies a range of different zones to its open space environments, with objectives, policies, rules and other methods for each of these areas. Zones include a 'Foreshore Reserve' zone, 'Marine Parade Recreation Reserve' zone, 'Reserve' zone, 'River Conservation' zone and 'Sports Park' zone.
- The Hastings District Plan lists its local authority reserves in a schedule to the 'District Wide Activity for Community Facilities, Recreation and Marae'. Rules place restrictions on buildings, recreation, hours of operation, noise, parking, etc.

It is noted that generally HBRC open spaces / regional parks are not identified in these District Plans but, as they are reviewed, HBRC will seek to have them formally identified. The development

'managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while:

Reserves are often identified in District Plans through a schedule of reserves and respective identification on the planning maps and / or associated reserves / open space zones.

- Wairoa District Plan provides a schedule of reserves and notation on their planning maps and has a 'Conservation and Reserves' zone with associated objectives, policies, rules and other methods.
- Central Hawke's Bay District Council designates its reserves and public open spaces in their District Plan, and underlying zoning rules apply. Issues, objectives and policies relating to open space and recreation are identified in the Plan.

of a regional park network plan does not preclude the need to obtain resource consent for activities within a park area where it is required under a District Plan.

16.4 Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941

Flood protection works and soil conservation activities are undertaken under the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941. This is the reason for HBRC's administration of flood control

and drainage areas (for example, Pekapeka Wetland), river corridors (Ngaruroro, Tūtaekuri, etc.) and soil conservation reserves (Tūtira, Tangoio, etc.).

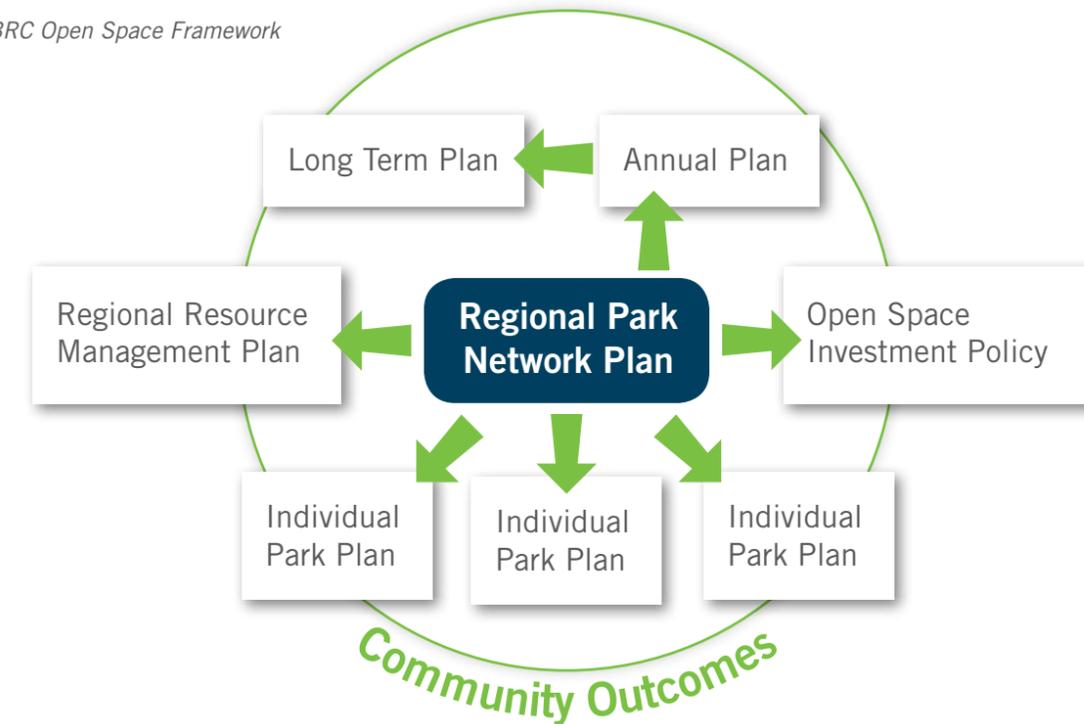
17.0 HBRC Open Space Framework

17.1 Open Space Policy Framework

Figure 6.0 below shows the relationship between these documents and the proposed Plan. This framework is not intended to add another layer of planning and / or reporting, but will provide a single set of consistent policies and objectives for HBRC's park

network and enable more consistent planning and management of these spaces. Existing management plans will be brought into line with the Plan at the time they are due to be revised.

Figure 6.0 HBRC Open Space Framework



17.2 Policy and Plan Detail

HBRC has a number of policies and plans that currently support and guide the way it manages open spaces. These include:

Long Term and Annual Plans

Through its Long Term Plan (LTP) 2012-22, HBRC has identified the following values and vision for its organisation:

Values

- Excellence – we aim high and take pride in providing an exceptional service
- Forward thinking – we anticipate and prepare for the future
- Innovation – we are open to change and seek new ways of doing things
- Integrity – we demonstrate openness, honesty and respect in our relationships
- Partnerships – we build strong partnerships to achieve common goals.

Vision

‘A region with a vibrant community, a prosperous economy, a clean and healthy environment, now and for future generations.’⁹

This vision incorporates the concept of ‘sustainable development’ as defined by the Bruntland Report, which is ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’¹⁰.

The LTP sets out the HBRC’s future direction. It is guided by identified community outcomes¹¹ and its own strategic goal areas that are based around building ‘resilient ecosystems, resilient economy and resilient communities’¹². The Annual Plan sets out HBRC’s annual priorities and work programmes.

HBRC has highlighted in the LTP and Annual Plans that it will continue to look for ways to provide the regional community with additional access to areas of coast, bush or rural environments which have multiple benefits where there is an opportunity.

Methods for achieving this could include partnerships with landowners, land purchase, or negotiating access rights. These Plans clearly state HBRC’s intention to provide public access to, and manage existing HBRC owned parks and wetlands for multi-purpose benefits.

Rural Open Space Assessment 2007¹³

In 2007 HBRC completed an assessment of rural open space and identified the following issues:

- Lack of near urban open space
- Coastal access needs attention
- Marginal strips not required along the whole of the coast
- River access is generally good
- Coastal camping space is short and in high demand.

There is an on-going need to invest in a regional park network to ensure a quality experience is provided and to demonstrate best practice in management, conservation and enhancement.

This may mean acquisition or divestment of open spaces or better investment in our existing spaces to meet the challenges of the future. These may include the need to protect valued open space and coastline from development, or to provide for changing

community needs such as emerging or displaced recreational activities from urban areas.

It could also mean developing partnerships with iwi, or other regional open space providers such as local councils, DOC, private trusts, etc, and / or supporting other community groups who contribute to regional park outcomes.

Public Open Space Investment Policy

HBRC’s Public Open Space Investment Policy was developed as a result of the Rural Open Space Assessment and provides a method for HBRC to assess any future open space acquisition.

The Plan will further support that policy by identifying a long term vision for HBRC’s development and management of regional parks. It will also assist in identifying land for divestment.

Hawke’s Bay Regional Resource Management Plan (RRMP)

The RRMP is a statutory document prepared in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991. It includes the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and sets out a policy framework for managing the regions natural resources in an integrated manner and focusses on the sustainable management of coasts, air, water, rivers and lakes resources.

The development of the Plan is consistent with the RRMP, however it does not replace the need for resource consents to undertake activities under the control of the RRMP.

Existing Management Plans

A number of existing management plans are in place for HBRC owned public space. The Plan seeks to link these all together under

a strategic approach and provide opportunity for realignment with as they come up for renewal.

Proposed Regional Biodiversity Strategy

HBRC, together with a number of partnering agencies, is currently working on a Regional Biodiversity Strategy. Once developed, this Strategy will be an important influence on objectives and policies for biodiversity and ecosystems management.

Relevant objectives and policies will be developed taking this into account. It is anticipated that the objectives and policies relating to biodiversity in the RPNP will be consistent with the Biodiversity Strategy.

Proposed Funding Policy to Support the Regional Parks Network

HBRC has also identified a need to develop a policy tool to assist in making decisions for funding other organisations who contribute to the regional park network.

Availability of funds will depend on how organisations can demonstrate a commitment to and consistency with HBRC’s identified values for the regional park network. This tool will likely be developed concurrently with the development of this Plan.

17.3 Summary

In summary the development of a regional park network plan is seen as consistent with relevant legislation and HBRC policy documents.

⁹ HBRC Draft Long Term Plan 2012-2022

¹⁰ HBRC Strategic Plan 2011

¹¹ The determination of community outcomes is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2002. Community outcomes for the Hawke’s Bay were determined through a joint consultation process between Napier City, Hastings, Wairoa and Central Hawke’s Bay District Councils.

¹² HBRC Long Term Plan 2012-2022 p6

¹³ Hawke’s Bay Rural Open Space Assessment EMS (July 2007)

¹⁴ Hawke’s Bay Regional HBRC Public Open Space Investment Policy (2008)

18.0 Conclusions

It is clear that there is support for the development of a coordinated approach to providing regional parks in Hawke's Bay. Taking a 'network' approach means that management will be in terms of what is best for the whole of the regional park collective

(or network) and decisions will be made to ensure consistency, the most appropriate locations for services and infrastructure, and building a body of knowledge about the whole network that enables best provision and best practise to prevail.

The process for developing the Plan is outlined as follows:

Figure 7.0 Plan Development Process



