

ARAC NEWS



The Newsletter of the Akatarawa Recreational Access Committee Inc

Issue 11, July 2016

AGM 2016

It's that time of year when we look to holding the ARAC AGM. This year it will be at our usual venue – the Upper Hutt Darts Club, Awakairani Park, Totara Park

Date is Thursday August 25th, from 7:00pm - make sure your Delegates are advised and the ARAC Secretary is advised of any changes – secretary@arac.org.nz

Akatarawa Forest

4WD Fees

Biggest news is probably the decision by Greater Wellington to drop all fees for Club 4WD trips to make all our motorised users equal. The 4WDs will still have to apply for permits in the usual way, but at least now access is free. They will also need to continue reporting participant numbers. Tag-a-longs and fund raisers etc still need to pay fees in the usual way

Many deserve recognition for this brilliant outcome, with representations made by ARAC, other Clubs and input from local Regional Council politician Paul Swain who holds their Transport Portfolio – taken literally this time just for us to include off-road transport! But most telling of all is a recognition by GW officers that ARAC's 4WD community are a valued asset to GW and as such worth more to GW than the \$15 fee that only 4WDs were paying anyhow.

Orange Hut Progress – Barbeque Now Completed and Officially Opened



Thanks to contributions from our many sponsors, with of course Transpower being our major sponsor, but here's the full list of those making it all happen for us – don't forget it wasn't just the hundreds of volunteer hours by ARAC and its Members – we couldn't have done it without the massive injection of monies, materials and professional services of all these businesses:-

Major Sponsor: - Transpower's Community Care Fund

Bunnings (Naenae) New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association	Goodmans Contractors Ltd Hardgrave Engineering	Wellington Trail Riders Club Petone Plumbers
Bean Brick & Block Limited	Marinan B M Consulting Engineer	Dimond
Wellington Mini Diggers Konnect	Firth Industries Allied Concrete	Mico Plumbing Howat Engineering
Greater Wellington Regional Council	Upper Hutt City Council	ARAC

Devil's Staircase

Much work has been done in the Staircase, and we again need to ensure it doesn't get cut up too much during the wet season. Accordingly it is currently closed with monthly inspections carried out jointly between GW and ARAC, Akatarawa Trip Leaders will be advised by e-mail as and when it has dried out sufficiently.

The Ruts



The Ruts remain fine, even during the wet weather.

Nonetheless, please exercise restraint when passing over the Eastern End until it has a chance to heal completely

Remember those impassable Bogs?

Rimu Road

Wire rope has been replaced on the picnic area and progress is being made on the shelter with materials assembled. Just looking for some fine weather and willing volunteers to get things completed.

Access into Battle Hill

It has come to both GW and our attention that some clubs and/or individuals are accessing Battle Hill Farm Forest Park as part of their trips.

The old water point west of Blowfly, Puketiro Loop and 'Sunset Ridge' are all part of Battle Hill and outside of Akatarawa Forest.

Under the Parks Network Plan motorised recreation in Battle Hill is a prohibited activity and these excursions into Battle Hill are a breach of the Akatarawa Forest access permit.

Would you please make sure that you do not access these areas in vehicles, quads or trail bikes on your trips?

It is fine to walk to 'Sunset Ridge' and admire the views.

Odlin's Road and Waiotauru Valley

More big news here - ARAC has finally entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with DOC to maintain Waiotauru Road.

Now that we have this agreement in place, we can progress to the next phase of formally adopting the Hut with a view to demolishing it and replacing with something brand new.

Our request for funds to TARH resulted in a pledge of \$6,000 – about 30% of what is needed. ARAC are full members of TARH (Tararua, Aorangi, Rimitaka Huts Committee) and we have ensured that these funds remain allocated to ARAC until we are ready to call on them.

Although FMC declined our previous bid on the basis that we had not yet entered into a formal MoU with DOC, now that we have the MoU for the road, a funding application will be lodged very shortly with FMC to raise the additional \$15,000 needed to complete the hut installation. Note however at present the MoU only covers the road, there is no harm in placing a bid on the basis that a MoU for the Hut is very close indeed.

Wellington South Coast

Unfortunately last year's education programme involving Council Park Rangers and Police failed to eventuate. On the positive side there is enthusiasm for something this summer. Those venturing out to Red Rocks and beyond need to remember access is via an unformed legal road and strictly speaking only REGISTERED vehicles are legally permitted

In late April Council again spent a few dollars to tidy up the track (from a safety perspective) between the old quarry and Red Rocks. The route beyond is "how you find it on the day".

ARAC Affiliate club "Cross Country Vehicle Club" have again been active in the area, this time extracting not one but two trashed vehicles from Cave Bay. A significant effort was required by teams using both winches and cutting gear.

Silly behaviour of a few continues to annoy both Council and adjoining land owners. There is NO EXCUSE to get involved in hill climbs and the like out there. If you do not have landowner approval keep off. Likewise there have been numerous cases of visitors leaving the area without extinguishing fires. Apart from being dangerous those involved potentially risk prosecution under the Forest and Rural Fires Act.



This from the local police:-



INFORMATION

re Vehicles on the Coast.

As specified in Section 12 of the Land Transport Act 1998, a road is defined as:

- a) *A Street*
- b) *A Motorway*
- c) *A Beach*
- d) *A place to which the public have access whether as of right or not*
- e) *All bridges, culverts, ferries and fords forming part of a road or street or motorway, or a place referred to in paragraph (d)*
- f) *All sites at which vehicles may be weighed for the purpose of this act or any other enactment.*

As you can see, a beach is specifically defined as a road under this act.

Accordingly all the road rules which apply to standard roads also apply to this beach and adjoining areas.

Due to continuing incidents of dangerous driving, damage to the environment and unruly driver behaviour in this area, Police in conjunction with the local council, have decided to fully enforce the road rules on the South coast.

As from May 27th 2006 you are not allowed to utilise unregistered and unwarranted vehicles on the beach.

You must also ensure that you are properly licensed to drive a motor vehicle.

'Motor Vehicle' includes off road vehicles, beach buggies, quad bikes, and motor bikes.

Your driving behaviour is also limited to what you would expect on a normal road. For example: Speeding and driving in a Careless or Dangerous Manner is not acceptable.

Aaorangi – aka Sutherlands

Work has been undertaken with a digger on the Hurupi side.

Just out of the Hurupi stream a land bridge has been formed and 3/4 of the way up the clay climb has been re-laid.

We are keeping traffic of the Hurupi side till the track dries out. You may still go in and out the Waikuku end of the track in all weather.

The gate at the Waikuku end has been welded back together after being cut in half twice and a 9 foot piece of railway track has been cemented 6 foot into the ground at the end of the gate.

However the track is rough enough to be interesting and should be good this summer. There is a drop out on the track below the Waikuku gate - still drivable but will need work this summer

Welcome to our new trip leaders. Hope to see you all this summer

Rod

Manawatu

DOC were preparing a discussion document regarding Takapari Road and the A-Frame Hut – submissions closed April 2015 but we've heard not a peep since.

Again watch this space – that is if we hear anything before you do.

Further South at Foxton along the McKenzie trail, the NZFWDA have been liaising with Horowhenua District Council to solidify agreements as to how 4WD access will be managed in future.

Thanks to Roger Seymour and Brent Samson for efforts in clarifying what had become a touchy subject with some. They will be in touch with affiliated Clubs to advise the methods and contacts etc to gain access.

Any Other News?

Anything we need to know about? Anything you want to know about? Email info@arac.org.nz