

5. Community Relations

Objectives

To encourage land use and land management practices on areas adjacent to the park that are, as far as possible, compatible with those of the park.

To establish and maintain a constructive relationship with local communities and associates and promote opportunities for them to be involved in park management.

The local authority with responsibility for the park is the Tasman District Council. The Marlborough, Buller and Hurunui District Councils are responsible for areas that adjoin the park (map 12).

The park has two small communities located close to its boundaries at St Arnaud and Lake Rotoroa. Both communities are intricately linked with the park and ongoing consultation with the residents is essential.

Consultation is an ongoing and evolving process that calls for regular meetings with affected and interested parties in order to achieve effective management of the park and public support for that management regime.

Wildlife and ecosystems do not recognise ownership or administrative boundaries. Actions on land adjacent to the park can be just as significant as those within the park, often more so because of the intensity and extent of the impacts on the values of the park. Where the Department manages the adjacent land, sympathetic management is readily achieved. Where adjacent land is not managed by the Department, advocacy, both directly and through the Resource Management Act 1991, is required.

The area to the north of St Arnaud between the Wairau Saddle and the village is being subdivided into alpine village areas and lifestyle blocks. Benefits to the area may include better services, infrastructure and increased business activity. Benefits to the park could include an increased awareness of park values and the commitment of a wider group of people to preserve those values.

Subdivisions could have several impacts on the park. Firstly, the impacts are environmental. In particular, increased population and visitor numbers could place stress on sewage systems and rubbish disposal, and hence the water quality of Black Valley Stream which drains through St Arnaud village to Lake Rotoiti. Water quality problems are being alleviated by the new sewerage reticulation system that discharges polluted waters outside the lake catchment.

Secondly, subdivisions change the landscape. The filling in of open space leads to a loss of vistas and inappropriate tall buildings or building styles can detract from the character of the area. Within the village, further subdivision or larger, taller buildings could dramatically change the landscape quality and destroy much of the forest and shrubland vegetation that gives the area a "cosy" character.

In addition, increased numbers make more demands on recreational facilities and desire or require better visitor opportunities. The changing nature of visitors, encompassing a greater range of types, from conference goers to backpackers, also places demands on a wider range of facilities.

Finally, subdivisions can lead to biotic impacts from the introduction of new weed sources (gardens), pet escapes, and the release of animals such as Koi carp and goldfish.

Public participation in conservation activities can help raise awareness of the potential problems. On adjacent land, some control can be achieved through advocating specific by-laws or rules in the district plan, especially as they apply to the village area.

Rules within the district plan can constrain building development and should be aimed at preserving the current landscape and vegetation to provide a buffer for the park. Sound planning of run-off and wastewater development, including changes outside the lake catchment, can reduce sedimentation and pollution. By raising public awareness of the issues and supporting sound proposals, positive changes to the way in which the village is managed and developed can be effected.

Plantation pines, Douglas fir and a few other species have the potential to be spread long distances by wind or birds. Alpine areas above the natural tree line could be colonised by pines and Douglas fir, and sycamore and rowan may invade forested areas.

The development of a tourist village at Rotoroa could greatly increase the use of the lake and create demands for a wider range of facilities and services, ultimately destroying the values for which the area is currently treasured. Consequently, any expansion of the community at Rotoroa, and in particular increased accommodation for longer stay visitors, will be opposed. On the other hand a need exists to provide low-key accommodation for visitors exiting from the park.

The Rotoroa Management Area is bounded by parts of Tutaki and Howard Forests in the north and Waiau Forest and St James Station in the south. The forests are managed in a similar way to the park and although much of the land to the south is leasehold, areas close to the park are not grazed and act as a buffer to the park. These are effectively an extension of the remote experience area of that part of the park.

The management of grazing licences on the conservation areas adjacent to the park has a major impact on the use of the Mātakitaki/Glenroy valleys, since the valleys provide the main access and communication links. The intensity and nature of stocking influences the browsing impact on the forest margins. The terms and conditions of the grazing licences need to assure hunting and off-road vehicular access to the park. Stocking rates, stocking times and the stock used should be specified to minimise the browsing and trampling impacts on the park fringes (see also section 4.3).

Implementation

5.0.1 The Department will work with Tasman, Marlborough, Buller and Hurunui District Councils, particularly on local planning issues that may have an impact on the park, to maintain the largely natural character of the park and its surrounding buffer areas.

5.0.2 Appropriate protection provisions will be sought in local authority plans and strategies and as conditions on resource consent applications to preserve landscapes, water quality, natural peace and tranquility and other natural values within the park.

- 5.0.3** *Appropriate rules to provide a buffer zone to the park will be sought in the district plan.*
- 5.0.4** *Appropriate rules will be sought in the district plan to preserve park values from the adverse impacts of any urban expansion at Rotoroa.*
- 5.0.5** *Public awareness initiatives will aim to reduce threats to park values from neighbouring lands.*
- 5.0.6** *Public involvement in habitat management in the park will be used to raise general awareness of the conservation issues.*
- 5.0.7** *Wherever possible, adjacent conservation areas will be managed to produce a substantial buffer to the park.*
- 5.0.8** *Management of the area around Rainbow and Mt Robert skifields will be in keeping with that within the Travers Valley Management Area.*
- 5.0.9** *Set stocking rates and stock management conditions will be placed on any grazing concessions adjacent to the park, to ensure minimal impact on the park margins.*
- 5.0.10** *Free foot access into the park will be guaranteed and the use of off-road vehicles allowed for in conditions on any grazing concessions on adjacent land administered by the Department.*
- 5.0.11** *The Department will consult and meet with local communities and associates with an interest in the park on a regular basis, with regard to the implementation of this management plan.*

CMS REFERENCES:

Community Participation,	p355
Community Liaison,	p357
Statutory Planning,	p359