



Chair – Derrick Field

Secretary – Wendy Gray

Treasurer – Ed Trotter

TARHC September 2021 Newsletter

Kia ora koutou

Welcome to this newsletter of the TARHC. This will be published every few months, depending on what activities the TARHC members have been up to in the forest parks.

We're looking forward to the end of the spring weather that's hammering the forest parks are currently getting, so some huts and tracks can get attention. The committee is funding member clubs and volunteer groups to do maintenance on six huts this year, in the Tararua's. Along with hut maintenance that may be funded by the backcountry trust, members of the TARHC are going to have a busy summer.

The committee is reviewing the future role of the TARHC, following a Special Meeting held there was strong support to continue the TARHC in the role of supporting hut upkeep in the forest parks. There was also support for extending the scope of the TARHC into backcountry track upkeep. Also important was involving the wider community in supporting backcountry recreation and promoting backcountry recreation in the forest parks. The review is looking at a smaller and more active formal committee supporting affiliate members in track and hut upkeep. There's more on this below.

Part of the committee's aim is to increase communication with the wider backcountry community. Our Discussions Email Group has been setup to support this. If you are interested in what the TARHC is up to, and/or want to volunteer to help us in the forest parks, join our email group [here...](#)

Hats off the Wairarapa and Wellington SAR teams that battled the extreme conditions to rescue the two tramping in Tararua recently. Even on a typical windy Tararua day, that ridge can be a hands and knees trip. Were it not for the dedication of the SAR volunteers, the results may have been a lot different.

The Tararua range has been highlighted as a "hot spot" for tramping fatalities by the Mountain Safety Council, being among the three highest areas for fatalities in the country. Hypothermia related fatalities in particular. From what I have seen, most hypothermia cases are primarily caused by poor decision making. Embarking on trips when weather forecasts indicate alpine tops travel will not be safe, failing to stay put at shelter if caught out, or failing to turn back / change route before it's too late. The one thing that these incidents have again shown, don't go without a PLB. It could save your life.

Derrick Field Chair TARHC

TARHC Review

This process has taken some time, since the initial discussions on the future of the TARHC. The TARHC is an Incorporated Society and Registered Charity.

In order to achieve future directions for the committee, the stages we are going through are;

- Determine changes needed to the TARHC Rules and develop a revised set of Rules.

- Identify the committee structure, including how members are nominated, voted, how many, do they represent clubs/or not?
 - Determine the purpose and structure of an Affiliate membership
 - Develop an MOU with DOC that defines the relationship, communications, support
 - Develop Community Agreements for the TARHC to take on management responsibilities of some huts and tracks
 - Register the revised TARHC Rules with the Companies Office
 - Elect TARHC committee members, chair etc.
 - Enable the backcountry community to become affiliate members of the TARHC
 - Get on with fixing huts and tracks
-

Volunteer Track Programme

The planning for a track maintenance programme has been underway in discussions with DOC Wairarapa who are positive about this programme the TARHC is taking on. We are now at the stage of finalizing a “Community Agreement” with DOC that will allow TARHC volunteers to work on a large number of tracks in the Tararua and Aorangi forest parks

Accessible road end tracks and also tracks that give access to huts that are managed by clubs will be included in programme. Also on the list, are a number of remote tracks that will need helicopter access to work on. The tracks will be grouped into “catchments” and over the course of the next 4-5 years, each “catchment” will be recut.

An initially we are considering a two year programme of 23 tracks, totalling up to 50 kms in the first year. The programme may continue over a further 3-4 years. Regular re-cutting will then commence to keep tracks up to standard in the long term. Where use of helicopter transport is needed, funding will be sought from the BC Trust or other sources. The result will be, a large part of the track network being managed by volunteers in partnership with DOC.

It is hoped that not only existing club members will help with this programme, but also other volunteers who are keen and have the time to help. [Watch this space](#).

Huts Maintenance

The Tararua and Aorangi hut maintenance programme is going to be bigger this year, than has happened for many years. The TARHC receive a grant annually from DOC, which began 33 years ago. Local DOC Wairarapa pass on much of their available hut funding so that the TARHC can maintain the majority of the public backcountry hut network in the three forest parks.

The TARHC is funding work on six huts (Andersons, Nichols, Waiotauru, Dorset Ridge, Waitewaewae huts and sharing the cost at Alpha with the BC Trust. Inspections are still needed, to confirm work at most all of these huts. The BC Trust is also looking at funding up number of huts, if proposals are approved by the BC Trust board.

Clubs and other volunteers manage 42 of the 47 public non Serviced huts in the forest parks. Over the last 5 years, 70 percent of those huts have had maintenance work done. By the end of summer, 90 percent of the huts will be up to date with maintenance.

New MSC Trip Planning App

The Mountain Safety Council (MSC) have launched an app to help trampers plan their trip. The MSC say the development is “A new app to ensuring the safety of walkers and trampers in New Zealand.

[Plan My Walk](#) is designed to make planning easier by bringing the most important information needed in one place, in what is believed to be a world first”.

The app, available for iOS and Android users, was developed by the MSC, and includes Met Service weather forecasts and gear lists as well as more than 1000 DoC tracks.

LocallyAt this stage, the only the Southern Crossing in Tararua Forest park listed on the app. Along with route descriptions, levels of experience needed to undertake the track are shown, as is current weather forecasts. Gear list, trip dates and emergency contacts can be provided.

[Check out the Southern Crossing on Plan My Walk here](#)

Managatoetoe hut

Meanwhile, at the bottom of the North Island in Aorangi Forest Park, Mike Mulder has been caring for one of the huts in the area. Mangatoetoe isnt far from the roadend, and like many others similarly situated, suffers a fair amount of use. Mike had signed up to a DOC management agreement to look after the hut. Along with his brother Johnno, they have been quietly working away, making repairs and and keeping it tidy despite the occasional visit from untidy visitors. Carrying out their rubbish left behind is a regular chore.



Mangatoetoe hut began life as a shelter, but was converted into a hut by the NZ Forest Service.

Some of the work they have done on the hut is replace the skylite , clean and repaint the interior, fill some holes in the floor, fix a window , fixed spouting, fixed the water tank, and cleaned it out (there was a deerskin in the roof courtesy of some idiot) . Next task is replace the open fire with an internal firebox, and a tidy up of the exterior.



[TARHC website](#)

[Subscribe to our newsletter](#)

 Find us on
Facebook

To subscribe to our newsletter, and join our TARHC Discussions email group, click the button above.

This newsletter is published by the Tararua Aorangi Remutaka Huts Committee Inc.
To contact us, email is info@tarhc.org.nz