

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

-Greg Martin

Greetings to you all. We are emerging from the depths of the New Zealand winter and Mount Ruapehu has this week rumbled and burst into some minor activity just as the ski season is in full swing and only a day or so after the public access restrictions to the crater area had been reduced! I have recently taken up the appointment as Conservator for the Waikato Region of the Department of Conservation. This promotion puts me at the forefront of bringing the Conservancy through a re-organisation of staff and systems, needless to say the next few months will be challenging and demanding.

CONFERENCE WIND-UP AT WAITOMO

The Waitomo Conference Organising Committee celebrated the event with a wind-up dinner at the Black Water Rafting Cafe. Notes from the debrief have been forwarded on to Brian Clark and Ken Heyne to assist with their preparations for the Naracoorte Conference.

APPOINTMENT OF KARST RESOURCE OFFICER AT GLOWWORM CAVE

I am pleased to report that Tourism Holdings Ltd have appointed Kate Banbury as the Karst Resource Officer at the Glowworm Cave. Kate takes up a full time position at the Caves and will be responsible for the monitoring systems. The Glowworm Cave Science Advisory Group has been re-established and will now meet on a more frequent basis.

KARST FEATURING IN DISTRICT & REGIONAL PLANS

Progress has also been made with the Otorohanga and Waitomo District Council planning documents. The number of listed caves in the WDC plan has gone from about 10 to 50. These are ranked A to E for significance with various conditions for each group. I have also heard that the Waikato Regional Council, (Environment Waikato) are drafting some karst specific material for the draft Regional Plan. The Conference Workshop/Forum involving these Authorities is obviously paying dividends.

SOUTH ISLAND REPORT - NELSON KARST REGION

Ian Millar has reported to me from the Nelson Karst Region saying that nothing has happened yet in resolving the management issues at Harwoods Hole. The loose rock at the top and the placement or desirability of the proposed safety structure being the key issues at this site. Ian has also been continuing his work with land

developers and engineers in the subdivision of land on the hills behind Pohara, looking at more environmentally acceptable solutions to stormwater discharges in karst country. He has also studied some rare cave critters and has found new amphipods and snails. The snail represents a new northern species, the amphipod is as yet unidentified. He is also studying a protected cave spider by marking a few adults and large juveniles to follow these elusive but fascinating critters.

SOUTH ISLAND - WEST COAST

Deborah Carden from Punakaiki on the West Coast of the South Island reports that the West Coast Conservancy is intent on coming to the fore again in cave and karst management. Punakaiki Field Centre has a nucleus of staff who are recreational cavers and others who will willingly work underground. The 1992 Cave and Karst Strategy document is being reactivated and three interesting projects are planned for implementation in the Paparoa National Park over the next twelve months. These include taping and retaping Metro cave on the Nile River system, initiating a clean-up of the Fox River tourist cave and installing gates and /or signs as per the Cave and Karst Strategy. All these projects will be with the help and advice of the New Zealand Speleological Society, local cavers and other expertise both from within and outside of the Department of Conservation.

CONSERVATION CAVE CLEAN-UP

The Department of Conservation has also initiated a programme several years ago whereby women in conservation are able to work together on specific projects. This programme was called Kaupapa Wahine. (Kaupapa = platform Wahine = women). Deborah has planned a clean-up of the Fox River Tourist Cave this financial year, probably in February or March. Women from inside and outside the Department are welcome. If you are the correct gender and interested in joining in on this project then write to the Department of Conservation, P O Box 1, Punakaiki, New Zealand, Attention Deborah Carden.

WAITOMO CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

We are endeavouring to get the Waitomo Conference Proceedings to the publisher at the earliest opportunity. If you presented a paper and have not yet forwarded your material can I make a plea that you do so with some urgency. Either Dave Smith or Peter Dimond would be pleased to receive your papers now.