Social and economic impacts of Kahurangi National Park

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CONTENTS

Abstract

Kahurangi National Park was gazetted in 1996. This report considers the social and economic effects of the Park on local economies, tourism and recreational use, management issues and interactions with communities. The research develops longitudinal data on the effects of the Park which can be used in management of effects and for building relationships between the Park and its neighbouring communities. The results will also be of use as a comparative case in the investigation of future park proposals.

The key communities around the Park are Collingwood and Takaka (Golden Bay), Tapawera, Murchison and Karamea. Demographic profiles of these using 1996 census data provide a baseline for future analysis. Most had declining populations during the mid to late 1980s as a result of economic restructuring, but since 1991 populations have been relatively stable, although they are ageing and have a loss of young people that is typical of rural communities. Relatively high numbers of self employed and employers in these communities reflect industries based on family farming and small businesses such as tourism.

Since the Park was gazetted there has been an increase in demand for all types of walks, including lesser-known tracks and short walks, from both domestic and international visitors. It is widely considered that use of the Park will continue to grow. Corresponding impacts will need to be managed to protect the visitor experience and limit damage to natural values. There is concern about inadequate funding of facilities by the Department of Conservation (DOC), including the creation of new amenities. Issues for Park management—which are being tackled by the draft management plan for the Park—include helicopter access, particularly around the Wilderness area, mountain bike access, road proposals, hunting policy, water use and eeling.

Tourism businesses have grown in Golden Bay, Karamea and, to a lesser extent, Murchison in the five years since 1993. Kahurangi is now a key feature in the promotion of the top of the South Island. Tourism growth means that the original estimate of 50 direct and 30 indirect jobs created by the Park in the five years following its establishment should prove conservative.

Visitor centres need more information about the Park. The Takaka, Karamea and Murchison communities have plans to improve their information centres in collaboration with DOC. A more professional and coordinated approach was advocated to promote the Park and areas around the Park. To maximise social and economic benefits of the Park there needs to be investment in amenities and information, from private, public and community sources. DOC has shown a willingness to work with communities and attitudes to the Park have become more positive. This proactive approach and close community liaison is supported by the neighbouring communities.

1. Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

Kahurangi, gazetted in 1996, is New Zealand's newest national park. It is also the second largest, at 452 000 ha, stretching from the northwestern corner of the South Island to Murchison in the south (Fig. 1). It is known for its diverse landscape and geology, wide biodiversity and extensive wilderness area. It also has numerous tracks and walks, including the well-known Heaphy Track, which crosses the north of the Park. Rafting, kayaking and fishing activities are centred on the Karamea River catchment, but there are numerous other rivers and also tidal streams running into Whanganui Inlet. (Fig. 1) A Kahurangi National Park Draft Management Plan 1998–2008 (henceforth referred to as the Draft Management Plan) has been prepared by the Department of Conservation (DOC), (Department of Conservation, 1997). The Plan includes a detailed description of the Park, its Maori heritage and current management issues.

Previously a Forest Park administered by the New Zealand Forest Service, the Park and adjoining areas became public conservation land administered by DOC in 1987. By this time a national park in the area had been proposed. The Department conducted an ongoing investigation from June 1991 that included consultation with communities and interested groups and individuals on the West Coast, and in Golden Bay and Nelson. As part of its investigation DOC was also required by the general policy of the New Zealand Conservation Authority to prepare an assessment of the likely social and economic impacts.

The social and economic impact assessment was commissioned in April 1993 and conducted by the Institute for Social Research and Development and Taylor Baines and Associates (Warren & Taylor 1993). This is henceforth referred to as the 1993 assessment. It was a 'scoping' exercise, which included profiling of communities, identification of issues and assessment of likely impacts. It built on the existing work of the Department and, where possible, existing data. Methods included the review of reports examining social and economic impacts from other national parks, and background material relating to the northwest South Island proposal; profiling of communities around the Park using existing reports and information, and census material from 1986 and 1991; key interviews to identify issues and possible impacts; and assessment of economic impacts including effects on existing or possible future resource uses, roading, tourism and recreation, and the effects of new facilities or infrastructure. Summaries of the report were included in a public discussion document released by the Department in 1993. Subsequently there was an opportunity for public submissions and further community consultation.

Previous assessments of social and economic effects of national parks in New Zealand are limited in numbers and coverage. They include studies of proposed parks including Wanganui (Department of Lands and Survey, 1984), Paparoa (Department of Lands and Survey, 1985; Stephens and Wells, 1983), Northland Kauri (Northland Regional Council, 1991), and additions to existing parks, including Waitutu (Wilson et al., 1985) and Red Hills (Department of Conservation, 1987). There have also been studies of existing parks such as Mt

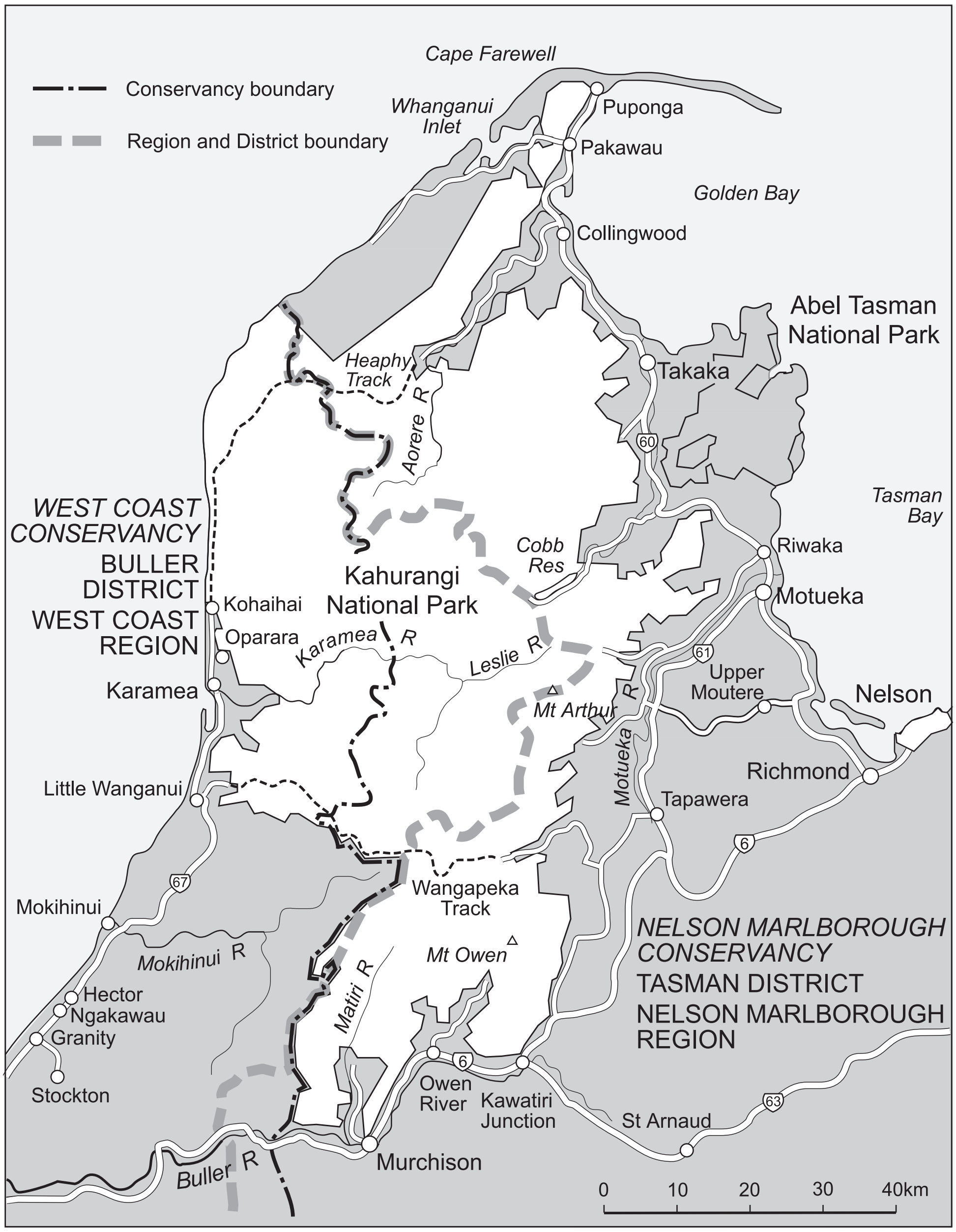

Figure 1. Map of Kahurangi National Park showing communities surrounding the park and administrative boundaries.

Cook (Kerr et al., 1986), Westland (Pearce, 1982) and Fiordland (Kerr et al., 1990), and of conservation lands in general (Gough et al., 1995). These various reports provide information on changes in land use and economic effects in neighbouring communities, including employment and expenditure, created by a park and its workforce, and by the visitors to a park. There is, however, a lack of longitudinal studies[1]. Social effects are only covered very lightly in respect to issues such as changes in lifestyle. 'Consultation' usually relies heavily on a process of public submissions. None of the reports investigate the mitigation or management of effects.

There are a number of townships and small communities around the extensive border of the new Park. These include Collingwood, Takaka, Tapawera, Murchison and Karamea. At greater distance from the park are the larger towns and provincial centres of Westport, Motueka, Nelson and Greymouth. The 1993 assessment identified that communities affected by the Park are traditionally

[1] Longitudinal studies examine impacts over time by revisiting sites at intervals.

resource-based and have experienced a series of ups and downs in their utilisation of resources, including pastoral farming, forestry, fishing and mining. Since the early 1980s they have generally experienced losses of services, employment and population as a result of economic restructuring. They have also built up a tourist industry, and the new Park now plays a central role in their tourism strategies. Their continued economic viability is fragile, however, and the loss or gain of a few jobs, or of a small business or service, can have an exaggerated influence on their future. These boundary communities are the ones most likely to be affected by the Park in the longer term.

The 1993 assessment also identified a number of issues for the new Park, and it was considered that some would require ongoing mitigation and management. Issues then included access roads, the proposed Nelson-Marlborough to West Coast road link across the Park, tourism concessions, helicopter operations, recreational hunting and fishing, pest and weed control, restrictions on mining, hydro-electric development, forestry and logging, and sphagnum moss collection. There were particular issues related to the setting and management of Park boundaries, and recreational and other activities in the boundary areas. All these issues are reviewed and updated below.

The purpose of this report is to update the 1993 assessment, focussing on the impacts and management issues created by the Park in its adjoining communities. The research on which the report is based was undertaken for the Department of Conservation by Taylor Baines and Associates.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND OUTPUTS

The objective of the research was:

- to conduct an analysis of the social and economic impacts of Kahurangi National Park including tourism and recreational use, Park expenditure and employment, and an examination of Park interactions with local communities.

Outputs from the research were to include:

- the development of longitudinal data on the social and economic effects of the new Park soon after it has been gazetted. These data will be useful either for future analysis of the impacts of this national park, or as comparative information for the investigation of any new park proposals in New Zealand;
- conclusions from the analysis that contribute to the management of effects from the new Park and particularly to the developing relationships between the Park and adjacent communities.

1.3 THE FRST RURAL TOURISM STUDY

In the period 1996 to 1998 Taylor Baines and Associates worked on a rural tourism research project in association with a contract to the Centre for Research, Evaluation and Social Assessment (CRESA) from the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST)[2].

The working definition of rural tourism is tourism that relies on the natural and heritage resources and people of rural communities. There is little information about such tourism in New Zealand, despite there being over 3000 rural tourism operators and the potential for rural tourism to contribute to the tourism industry and rural communities by:

- expanding the range of tourism products and tourist types in New Zealand,
- distributing tourism benefits more widely around regions,
- diversifying rural economic activity,
- adding value to existing economic activity (both rural and urban),
- increasing rural employment,
- fostering conservation and sustainable resource management practices,
- maintaining rural populations and services.

The FRST research has developed a database of rural tourism operators to profile existing activity and demand and show its geographical distribution. The database, with over 3000 entries, provides a basis for future rural tourism planning and development. It shows the diversity of enterprises, ranging from accommodation (home-based and others), adventure and other activities (mostly natural resource based), retailers (often crafts people), gardens, food outlets, wineries and heritage products. A sample was drawn from the database to conduct a national survey of rural tourism operators. The survey has provided a profile of the businesses, their operators and their visitors. Key findings are that the businesses were often operated in conjunction with other economic activity, such as farming or other businesses, and paid employment. Domestic tourists are the mainstay of this sector, and both domestic and international visitors are attracted to natural environment, lifestyles and associated activities. Businesses tend to be poor users of information and advice, lack formal planning and are under-capitalised. Both the data base and survey results from the rural tourism research were used for the analysis of tourism development associated with the Kahurangi National Park.

A major component of the rural tourism research was eight community or sub-regional case studies of rural tourism development. One of the case study areas was Golden Bay. Others in the South Island were Wairau Valley, Mt Somers and the Maniototo. The case studies have examined the potential for tourism development, opportunities and constraints, and local strategic issues. The Golden Bay case study was selected for the potential to examine the effects of the new Park on tourism development in that area. It also provided a unique opportunity to extend the result of the preliminary, investigative studies of the proposed Park into further baseline work and an investigation of actual effects, as described in this report.

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[2] RES601—Rural tourism for sustainable rural economic development.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODS

The methods used for the assessment were common to the Golden Bay study and the other Park communities. They are typical of social assessment work (Taylor et al. 1995). They were:

- **Community profiling** Profiling is used in social assessment to describe baseline conditions and also, periodically, to establish the extent of social change. Profiles of the communities around the Park were updated from the 1993 assessment using secondary (existing) data and statistics, especially 1996 census data[3]. For the West Coast there is also considerable documentation profiling the social and economic characteristics of the Region and Buller District. The Buller District Council has prepared a set of resource material and discussion documents for the preparation of a district plan ('Towards 2011'). There is also a set of community profiles prepared by the West Coast Regional Council for towns, townships and localities.
- **Analysis of other Park data** Park-related data such as information on DOC employment and expenditure, visitor centre numbers, hut and track use data were examined for trends and changes, along with tourism sector data such as visitor monitoring information from centres run as part of the Visitor Information Network (VIN).
- **Employment estimates** Estimates of direct and indirect employment generated by the Park were made from secondary and primary (field interview) data and cross checked using employment multipliers estimated by Narayan (1993).
- **Personal interviews and small meetings** Interviews and small meetings were held with key people in communities and interest groups across different sectors. These covered DOC staff, tourism sector people such as business operators and staff of visitor centres, other businesses, local and regional government staff and representatives, central government agencies, recreation groups, and people involved in community activities. Notes on interviews and meetings were key-worded (see Appendix 1) and the content analysed using a qualitative database programme.

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[3] Problems were encountered because the 1996 census was released much later than expected, and there have been technical problems obtaining accurate, local-level data using Supermap 3— the Statistics New Zealand computer package.

2. Community profiles

There are a number of townships and small communities along the extensive border of the Park. The key small communities are Collingwood and Takaka (Golden Bay), Tapawera, Murchison and Karamea. These communities are profiled in detail in this section, using variables that allow some comparison to the profiling done in the original assessment. The detailed demographic analysis is based, however, on 1996 data rather than 1991 data as used in the original assessment. As 1996 was the year the Kahurangi National Park was gazetted, these 1996 data could therefore become the baseline for future analysis. Population trend data are provided as well.

2.1 GOLDEN BAY

There are many recent immigrants to Golden Bay. There was a wave of immigrants in the 1970s, seeking alternative lifestyles. More recent immigrants also come for the lifestyle, but they tend to be wealthy, and some are regarded as 'very rich', as evidenced by their substantial homes. Some have hired labour, and they spend considerable amounts of money in the local economy. Tourism continues to grow. The dairy industry is also strong. As a result, Golden Bay has experienced steady population growth over the last 10 years, despite the economic downturn, public service restructuring, and closures such as that of the Tarakoe cement works. These changes have been reflected in the loss of power by farmers on the local council, its merger with the much larger Tasman District Council[4]; and a change in planning philosophy, with greater subdivision of rural land.

Population changes from 1986 to 1996

Golden Bay's population grew by 381 persons (12%) between 1986 and 1996, despite a decline in the late 1980s. The population grew rapidly between 1991 and 1996. In comparison, the rate of population growth in Tasman District as a whole was 5% between 1986 and 1991, doubling to a growth rate of around 12% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 2.1.1).

TABLE 2.1.1. GOLDEN BAY—POPULATION CHANGES FROM 1986 TO 1996.

CENSUS YEAR	GOLDEN BAY		TASMAN DISTRICT	
	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION
1986	3093	-	32 403	-
1991	3027	-2.1	34 029	5.0
1996	3474	14.8	37 974	11.6

4 Golden Bay District was incorporated into the Tasman District with local government restructuring.

Age-sex structure

The age structure of Golden Bay's population was slightly younger than that of Tasman District in 1996 (Table 2.1.2).

The sex ratio M/F 1996 was: 1.04 (Golden Bay), 1.02 (Tasman District).

The dependency ratio (ratio of those under 15 and over 64 to those aged between 15 and 64) in 1996 was 0.54 for Golden Bay and 0.56 for Tasman District.

TABLE 2.1.2. AGE STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF GOLDEN BAY—1996.

	GOLDEN BAY	TASMAN DISTRICT
% 0–14 years	24.7	23.4
% 15–64 years	65.1	64.3
% 65 years & over	10.2	12.3
Total number of persons	3462	37 953

Ethnic Composition

Maori comprised about 5% of Golden Bay's population in 1996, while they were almost 7% of the population of Tasman District.

Employment status

Self-employed persons and employers were a higher proportion of the workforce in Golden Bay (35%) in 1996 than in Tasman District (22%) as shown in Table 2.1.3. Wage and salary earners were a lower proportion of the workforce in Golden Bay than at district level (48% cf. 65%). The rate of unemployment in Golden Bay, moreover, was higher than that for Tasman District.

TABLE 2.1.3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF GOLDEN BAY—1996.

AREA UNIT	WAGE OR SALARY %	SELF-EMPLOYED & EMPLOYER OF OTHERS %	UNEMPLOYED %
Golden Bay	47.7	34.6	5.9
Tasman District	65.1	22.1	4.2

Occupational status

The major differences between the occupational status of the Golden Bay and Tasman District workforces in 1996 (Table 2.1.4) were the higher proportion of agriculture and fishery workers (37% cf. 28%) and the lower proportion of trade workers, machine operators etc. (18% cf. 25%) among the workforce of the former area.

TABLE 2.1.4. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF GOLDEN BAY—1996.

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	GOLDEN BAY % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Administrators/managers	8.6	8.5
Professionals & technicians	15.8	15.2
Clerks	5.0	8.1
Service/sales	9.1	10.6
Agriculture & fishery	37.3	28.2
Trades workers/machine operators/elementary occupations	18.4	25.2
Not specified	5.9	4.2
Total number of persons	1575	18 729

Industry—major divisions

The main sources of employment for the workforce of Golden Bay in 1996 (Table 2.1.5) were the agriculture/forestry and fishing (36%), commercial/social/personal services (16%) and the wholesale/retail/accommodation (14%) sectors of the economy. These sectors were also major sources of jobs for the workforce of Tasman District; although the agriculture/forestry and fishing sector provided a lower proportion of employment at the district level.

TABLE 2.1.5. SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKFORCE OF GOLDEN BAY—1996.

SECTOR	GOLDEN BAY % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Agriculture/forestry & fishing	36.4	30.5
Mining/quarrying	0.8	0.2
Manufacturing	8.0	12.5
Electricity/gas/water	0.2	0.3
Construction	3.8	5.7
Wholesale/retail/accommodation	14.0	17.2
Transport/communications	3.8	4.0
Business/financial	4.4	7.4
Govt administration & defence	1.7	2.0
Community/social/personal services	15.6	13.5
Not specified	11.4	6.6
Total number of persons	1 581	18 723

Household incomes

Household incomes in Golden Bay in 1996 (Table 2.1.6) were lower than in the wider Tasman District. Just over half of the households reported incomes below $30 001 per annum, while at district level only 43% of households were in this category.

TABLE 2.1.6. DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOMES IN GOLDEN BAY—1996.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE	GOLDEN BAY % OF HOUSEHOLDS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF HOUSEHOLDS
$10 000 & under	8.7	5.9
$10 001–$30 000	41.8	37.0
$30 001 & over	27.5	40.3

Income support

Residents of Golden Bay (46% of the population aged 15 years and over) had a slightly higher dependency on income support than the population of Tasman District (43%). The main forms of income support received in 1996 were national superannuation (36% of all benefits), the unemployment benefit (27%) and the domestic purposes benefit (10%).

Education

In 1996 the population of Golden Bay (aged over 15 years) held slightly more formal qualifications at tertiary and secondary level (Table 2.1.7) than did the district population.

TABLE 2.1.7. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY RESIDENTS OF GOLDEN BAY—1996.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	GOLDEN BAY % OF RESIDENTS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF RESIDENTS
University	8.0	5.1
Other tertiary	26.6	26.4
Secondary	30.9	30.1
No qualifications	29.0	34.2

Household tenure

Nine percent of dwellings were provided rent free to their occupiers in Golden Bay in 1996. The higher incidence of this type of tenure (cf. 4% for Tasman District) probably reflects the greater role of the agricultural sector in Golden Bay's economy, compared with the Tasman District as a whole (Table 2.1.8).

TABLE 2.1.8. TENURE OF DWELLINGS IN GOLDEN BAY—1996.

FORM OF TENURE	GOLDEN BAY % OF DWELLINGS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF DWELLINGS
Provided rent free	9.0	4.3
Rented	15.8	18.2
Owned with a mortgage	30.4	35.8
Owned without a mortgage	38.1	36.1
Total number of dwellings	1401	14 163

Social and economic development

There are distinct social groupings in Golden Bay. The alternative lifestylers have distinct networks and 'nodes of energy' that tend to be very personal, rather than put into wider community issues. A lot of people are reclusive, getting away from the main culture. This leads to a 'locals vs natives' mentality. Furthermore, 27% of land holders are not resident and there is concern about the conflicts brought about by the sale of land to foreigners, which pushes up the value of land. Because of the restrictions on building on the coastal fringe, the price of coastal properties has gone up considerably. It is also acknowledged that foreigners bring capital and money into the Bay. While land has been subdivided into 'unproductive' uses, this also means that more land is protected from development or left to revert to native bush.

2.2 COLLINGWOOD

Collingwood[5] is the northernmost township bordering Kahurangi National Park and the closest to the Eastern end of the Heaphy Track and Cape Farewell. It had a population of 126 people in 1996. Over recent years the township's population has grown at a much faster rate than the rest of Tasman District (Table 2.2.1).

TABLE 2.2.1. COLLINGWOOD—POPULATION CHANGES FROM 1986 TO 1996.

CENSUS YEAR	COLLINGWOOD		TASMAN DISTRICT	
	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION
1986	81	–	32 403	–
1991	99	22.2	34 029	5.0
1996	126	27.2	37 974	11.6

Ethnic composition

The entire population of Collingwood identified themselves as being of European descent in 1996.

Employment status

In 1996 self-employed persons and employers, as shown by Table 2.2.2, comprised a much higher proportion of Collingwood's workforce (48%) than they did for Tasman District (22%). Wage and salary earners were a lower proportion of the workforce in Collingwood than at district level (30% cf. 65%). The rate of unemployment in Collingwood, moreover, was more than twice that of Tasman District (Table 2.2.2).

5 These statistics for Collingwood have been obtained by combining data from mesh block numbers 2348500 and 2348500. It has not been possible to present data relating to the age-sex structure of Collingwood's population as these statistics are not available at the mesh block level.

TABLE 2.2.2. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF COLLINGWOOD—1996.

AREA UNIT	WAGE OR SALARY %	SELF-EMPLOYED & EMPLOYER OF OTHERS %	UNEMPLOYED %
Collingwood	30.4	47.8	8.7
Tasman District	65.1	22.1	4.2

Occupational status

The major differences between the occupational status of Collingwood and the District workforces in 1996 (Table 2.2.3) were the higher proportion of trade workers, machine operators etc. (35% cf. 25%) and the lower proportion of agriculture and fishery workers (20% cf. 28%) among the township's residents.

TABLE 2.2.3. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF COLLINGWOOD—1996.

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	COLLINGWOOD % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Administrators/managers	10.0	8.5
Professionals & technicians	15.0	15.2
Clerks	–	8.1
Service/sales	10.0	10.6
Agriculture & fishery	20.0	28.2
Trades workers/machine operators/elementary occupations	35.0	25.2
Not specified	10.0	4.2
Total number of persons	60	18 729

Industry—major divisions

The main sources of employment for Collingwood's workforce were the agriculture/forestry and fishing (22%), wholesale/retail/accommodation (22%), and commercial/social/personal services sectors (22%) (Table 2.2.4).

TABLE 2.2.4. SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKFORCE OF COLLINGWOOD—1996.

SECTOR	COLLINGWOOD % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Agriculture/forestry & fishing	22.2	30.5
Mining/quarrying	–	0.2
Manufacturing	5.6	12.5
Electricity/gas/water	–	0.3
Construction	11.1	5.7
Wholesale/retail/accommodation	22.2	17.2
Transport/communications	–	4.0
Business/financial	–	7.4
Govt administration & defence	–	2.0
Community/social/personal services	22.2	13.5
Not specified	16.7	6.6
Total number of persons	54	18 723

Household incomes

Household incomes in Collingwood in 1996 (Table 2.2.5) were lower than in the District as a whole. Half of the households in the township reported incomes between $10 001 and $30 000 per annum, while only 37% of the households of Tasman District indicated they had incomes within this range.

TABLE 2.2.5. DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOMES IN COLLINGWOOD—1996.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE	COLLINGWOOD % OF HOUSEHOLDS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF HOUSEHOLDS
$10 000 & under	5.0	5.9
$10 001-$30 000	50.0	37.0
$30 001 & over	30.0	40.3

Income support

The major forms of income support the residents of Collingwood received in 1996 were national superannuation (47% of all benefits), the unemployment benefit (18%) and the domestic purposes benefit (18%).

Education

The residents of Collingwood (aged over 15 years) held proportionally more formal qualifications at tertiary and secondary levels in 1996 than did the District's population (Table 2.2.6).

TABLE 2.2.6. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY RESIDENTS OF COLLINGWOOD—1996.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	COLLINGWOOD % OF RESIDENTS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF RESIDENTS
University	9.4	5.1
Other tertiary	34.4	26.4
Secondary	31.3	30.1
No qualifications	21.9	34.2

Household tenure

There was a slightly higher incidence of home ownership in Collingwood (76%) when compared with Tasman District (72%). Furthermore, a higher proportion of the township's housing stock was owned without a mortgage (43% cf. 36% for the district) (Table 2.2.7).

TABLE 2.2.7. TENURE OF DWELLINGS IN COLLINGWOOD—1996.

FORM OF TENURE	COLLINGWOOD % OF DWELLINGS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF DWELLINGS
Provided rent free	4.8	4.3
Rented	19.1	18.2
Owned with a mortgage	33.3	35.8
Owned without a mortgage	42.9	36.1
Total number of dwellings	63	14 163

2.3 TAKAKA

Takaka is the principal town in Golden Bay, with a population of 1224 in 1996.

Population changes from 1986 to 1996

The town had strong population growth between 1976 and 1986 (an increase of 255 persons or 27%). The population increased slightly by 1991 and since then has remained relatively stable (Table 2.3.1). The increase of 3% between 1986 and 1996 was much lower that the 17% increase recorded over the same period by Tasman District.

TABLE 2.3.1. TAKAKA—POPULATION CHANGES FROM 1986 TO 1996.

CENSUS YEAR	TAKAKA		TASMAN DISTRICT	
	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION
1986	1185	–	32 403	–
1991	1218	2.8	34 029	5.0
1996	1224	0.5	37 974	11.6

Age-sex structure

Takaka's population has a slightly older age structure than the wider Tasman district population with one sixth of its residents aged 65 years and over. The town has a high dependency ratio, and females outnumber males (Table 2.3.2).

Sex ratio M/F 1996: 0.97 (Takaka), 1.02 (Tasman District).

Dependency ratio 1996: 0.67 (Takaka), 0.56 (Tasman District).

TABLE 2.3.2. AGE STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF TAKAKA—1996.

	TAKAKA	TASMAN DISTRICT
% 0–14 years	23.7	23.4
% 15–64 years	59.8	64.3
% 65 years & over	16.5	12.3
Total number of persons	1239	37 953

Ethnic composition

Maori made up 11% of Takaka's population in 1996, which is a higher proportion than for surrounding areas of Golden Bay (5%).

Employment status

Almost two-thirds of the workforce of Takaka were wage and salary earners in 1996, with another fifth being either employers or self-employed persons. The unemployment rate in the town (6%) was higher that for the District (4%) (Table 2.3.3).

TABLE 2.3.3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF TAKAKA—1996.

AREA UNIT	WAGE OR SALARY %	SELF-EMPLOYED & EMPLOYER OF OTHERS %	UNEMPLOYED %
Takaka	63.6	22.5	6.4
Tasman District	65.1	22.1	4.2

Occupational status

Takaka had a higher proportion of its workforce pursuing white collar occupations in 1996 than the district workforce (39% cf. 32%). Furthermore, only 15% of the town's workforce were engaged in agriculture and fishery occupations, while 28% of Tasman District's workers were employed in these occupations (Table 2.3.4).

TABLE 2.3.4. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF TAKAKA—1996.

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	TAKAKA % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Administrators/managers	12.1	8.5
Professionals & technicians	17.3	15.2
Clerks	9.2	8.1
Service/sales	17.9	10.6
Agriculture & fishery	14.5	28.2
Trades workers/machine operators/elementary occupations	25.4	25.2
Not specified	3.5	4.2
Total number of persons	519	18 729

Industry—major divisions

The main sources of employment for the workforce of Takaka in 1996 were the wholesale/retail/accommodation (28%), agriculture/forestry and fishery (15%), manufacturing (14%) and community/social/personal services (14%) sectors of the economy (Table 2.3.5).

TABLE 2.3.5. SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKFORCE OF TAKAKA—1996.

SECTOR	TAKAKA % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Agriculture/forestry & fishing	14.5	30.5
Mining/quarrying	–	0.2
Manufacturing	13.9	12.5
Electricity/gas/water	–	0.3
Construction	8.7	5.7
Wholesale/retail/accommodation	27.7	17.2
Transport/communications	5.8	4.0
Business/financial	6.9	7.4
Govt administration & defence	1.7	2.0
Community/social/personal services	13.9	13.5
Not specified	6.9	6.6
Total number of persons	519	18 723

Household incomes

Household incomes in Takaka in 1996 were lower than those for households in the greater Tasman District (Table 2.3.6).

TABLE 2.1.6. DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOMES IN TAKAKA—1996.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE	TAKAKA % OF HOUSEHOLDS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF HOUSEHOLDS
$10 000 & under	6.8	5.9
$10 001–$30 000	38.8	37.0
$30 001 & over	38.8	40.3

Income support

There was a higher degree of dependence on income support amongst the residents of Takaka (50% of the population aged 15 years and over) than amongst the population of Tasman District as a whole (43%). The main forms of income support received by the town's residents in 1996 were national superannuation (44% of total benefits) and the unemployment benefit (22% of benefits).

Education

The formal educational qualifications held by Takaka's residents in 1996 were lower than in the population of Tasman District as a whole (Table 2.3.7).

Household tenure

There was a slightly higher incidence of home ownership in Takaka (74%) than in Tasman District (72%) in 1996 (Table 2.3.8).

TABLE 2.3.7. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY RESIDENTS OF TAKAKA—1996.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	TAKAKA % OF RESIDENTS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF RESIDENTS
University	3.5	5.1
Other tertiary	26.8	26.4
Secondary	25.8	30.1
No qualifications	38.1	34.2

TABLE 2.1.8. TENURE OF DWELLINGS IN TAKAKA—1996.

FORM OF TENURE	TAKAKA % OF DWELLINGS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF DWELLINGS
Provided rent free	4.1	4.3
Rented	15.6	18.2
Owned with a mortgage	36.7	35.8
Owned without a mortgage	37.4	36.1
Total number of dwellings	441	14 163

Social and economic development

Several community groups active in social and economic development are based in Takaka. These include Golden Bay Enterprise Action Inc., which concentrates on employment and business development; Focus Golden Bay, which looks at social and economic planning; and groups active in tourism promotion.

2.4 TAPAWERA

Population changes from 1986 to 1996

Tapawera's population fell by 3% between 1986 and 1996. There was a significant decline in population in the late 1980s (9%) as a result of restructuring of the forestry sector and consequent redundancies. But during the 1991–96 period the population grew by 6%. Over the entire decade, however, the population changes in the township did not reflect the general pattern of growth that occurred in Tasman District (Table 2.4.1).

TABLE 2.4.1. TAPAWERA—POPULATION CHANGES FROM 1986 TO 1996.

CENSUS YEAR	TAPAWERA		TASMAN DISTRICT	
	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION
1986	423	–	32 403	–
1991	387	–8.5	34 029	5.0
1996	411	6.2	37 974	11.6

Age-sex structure

Tapawera's population is more youthful than that of Tasman District as a whole. Children comprised a third of the population in 1996, while persons 65 years and over were only 5% of the township's residents (Table 2.4.2).

Sex ratio M/F 1996: 1.00 (Tapawera), 1.02 (Tasman District).

Dependency ratio 1996: 0.63 (Tapawera), 0.56 (Tasman District).

TABLE 2.4.2. AGE STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF TAPAWERA—1996.

	TAPAWERA	TASMAN DISTRICT
% 0–14 years	33.6	23.4
% 15–64 years	61.4	64.3
% 65 years & over	5.0	12.3
Total number of persons	420	37 953

Ethnic composition

Maori comprised 16% of the population of Tapawera in 1996, compared with almost 7% of the population of Tasman District.

Employment status

Two-thirds of Tapawera's workforce were wage and salary earners in 1996. Only a sixth of the workforce were either self-employed persons or employers, while over a fifth belonged to these categories in the district workforce. Furthermore, some 12% of the township's workers reported they were unemployed—a rate that was almost three times the level of unemployment in Tasman District (Table 2.4.3).

TABLE 2.4.3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF TAPAWERA—1996.

AREA UNIT	WAGE OR SALARY %	SELF-EMPLOYED & EMPLOYER OF OTHERS %	UNEMPLOYED %
Tapawera	65.6	16.4	11.5
Tasman District	65.1	22.1	4.2

Occupational status

One third of Tapawera's workers were pursuing agriculture and fishery occupations in 1996. Another third of them were trades workers, machine operators or were engaged in elementary occupations. White collar workers, however, were a smaller proportion of the workforce than in the greater Tasman District (Table 2.4.4).

TABLE 2.4.4. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF TAPAWERA—1996.

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	TAPAWERA % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Administrators/managers	7.3	8.5
Professionals & technicians	12.7	15.2
Clerks	7.3	8.1
Service/sales	7.3	10.6
Agriculture & fishery	30.9	28.2
Trades workers/machine operators/elementary occupations	32.8	25.2
Not specified	1.8	4.2
Total number of persons	165	18 729

Industry—major divisions

In 1996 the major sources of employment for the workforce were the agriculture/forestry and fishing (36%), wholesale/retail/accommodation (15%), manufacturing (13%) and community/social/personal services (13%) sectors (Table 2.4.5).

TABLE 2.4.5. SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKFORCE OF TAPAWERA—1996.

SECTOR	TAPAWERA % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Agriculture/forestry & fishing	35.8	30.5
Mining/quarrying	–	0.2
Manufacturing	13.2	12.5
Electricity/gas/water	–	0.3
Construction	3.8	5.7
Wholesale/retail/accommodation	15.1	17.2
Transport/communications	3.8	4.0
Business/financial	7.5	7.4
Govt administration & defence	1.9	2.0
Community/social/personal services	13.2	13.5
Not specified	5.7	6.6
Total number of persons	159	18 723

Household incomes

Household incomes in Tapawera in 1996 were lower than those at District level (Table 2.4.6).

Income support

There was a high degree of dependence on income support among the residents of Tapawera in 1996. The main types of income support received by residents were the unemployment benefit (29% of total benefits), national superannuation (20%), the domestic purposes benefit (16%) and the sickness benefit (14%).

TABLE 2.4.6. DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOMES IN TAPAWERA—1996.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE	TAPAWERA % OF HOUSEHOLDS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF HOUSEHOLDS
$10 000 & under	6.4	5.9
$10 001–$30 000	40.4	37.0
$30 001 & over	38.3	40.3

Education

The residents of Tapawera in 1996 held relatively fewer educational qualifications than their counterparts in the rest of the District. Some 45% of Tapawera residents reported that they had no qualifications, compared with 34% of the population of Tasman District (Table 2.4.7).

TABLE 2.4.7. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY RESIDENTS OF TAPAWERA—1996.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	TAPAWERA % OF RESIDENTS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF RESIDENTS
University	4.3	5.1
Other tertiary	21.3	26.4
Secondary	28.7	30.1
No qualifications	44.7	34.2

Household tenure

There were significant differences between the patterns of household tenure in Tapawera and Tasman District in 1996. Over a quarter (28%) of households rented their dwellings, while less than a fifth (18%) of households did so at the district level. Moreover, over two-thirds of the households in Tapawera which owned their dwellings were encumbered with a mortgage, whereas at the district level owner-occupied dwellings were almost equally divided (both around 36%) between those with a mortgage and those without (Table 2.4.8).

TABLE 2.4.8. TENURE OF DWELLINGS IN TAPAWERA—1996.

FORM OF TENURE	TAPAWERA % OF DWELLINGS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF DWELLINGS
Provided rent free	4.3	4.3
Rented	27.7	18.2
Owned with a mortgage	44.7	35.8
Owned without a mortgage	19.1	36.1
Total number of dwellings	141	14 163

2.5 MURCHISON

Murchison is a township of 580 people situated on the main highway between Buller and Nelson. A service town for the local area, its economy also draws heavily on passing traffic and tourism, with businesses such as garages and tea rooms. There are also several motels.

Interviews identified that Murchison was seen to be in a state of ongoing decline economically despite the current strength of dairying and a number of new conversions (to dairying) that have been a boost to the area. The town has lost services and professional people.

The recent loss of the ASB bank was reported as having a profound effect on the town. People are travelling to Motueka or Nelson to do their banking, and do their shopping there as well. Lower prices in the larger towns mean that they pay for their trip, and shopping is becoming a recreational activity. There are social impacts as people go into the Murchison town centre less often, with less contact in the street as a result.

Residents described the main street of Murchison as 'dead' and the side street worse, with several closed shops. It was suggested that a tourism company is going to take over one of the closed shops. A tearoom is up for sale and there is strong competition in the town for the wayside business of travellers. Several tourist businesses are part time, the operators having farms or other businesses or employment. Others come into the area for the tourist season only, such as a rafting company based in Queenstown and another in Motueka. These outside businesses are seen by some as having only a limited value to the town—'they fleece the dollars, then go'.

The Park, and activities associated with the park such as walking, fishing and rafting, are seen as a way of attracting greater numbers of tourists or, more importantly, keeping them in Murchison for longer.

Population changes from 1986 to 1996

During the decade between 1986 and 1996 the population of Murchison fell by 8% from 633 to 582, while the population of Tasman District grew by 17%. The decline in population occurred during the first five years of the period. Since 1991, however, the township's population has remained relatively stable (Table 2.5.1).

TABLE 2.5.1. MURCHISON—POPULATION CHANGES 1986–1996.

CENSUS YEAR	MURCHISON		TASMAN DISTRICT	
	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION
1986	633	–	32 403	–
1991	579	–8.5	34 029	5.0
1996	582	0.5	37 974	11.6

Age-sex structure

Murchison had a slightly smaller proportion of its population in the working age group (15 to 64 years) in 1996 than did Tasman District. There are a large number of widowed and elderly in the town (Table 2.5.2).

Sex ratio M/F 1996: 1.10 (Murchison), 1.02 (Tasman District).

Dependency ratio 1996: 0.63 (Murchison), 0.56 (Tasman District).

TABLE 2.5.2. AGE STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF MURCHISON—1996.

	MURCHISON	TASMAN DISTRICT
% 0–14 years	24.0	23.4
% 15–64 years	61.2	64.3
% 65 years & over	14.8	12.3
Total number of persons	588	37 953

Ethnic composition

Maori comprised about 5% of Murchison's population in 1996, compared to 7% for the population of Tasman District.

Employment status

The employment status of Murchison's workforce was broadly similar to the District's workforce in 1996. Two-thirds were wage and salary earners and another quarter were either employers or self-employed persons. Unemployment is higher than for Tasman District, but the unemployed in the town were described there as being 'invisible' and the census figure may be an understatement (Table 2.5.3).

TABLE 2.5.3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF MURCHISON—1996.

AREA UNIT	WAGE OR SALARY %	SELF-EMPLOYED & EMPLOYER OF OTHERS %	UNEMPLOYED %
Murchison	66.0	24.7	5.2
Tasman District	65.1	22.1	4.2

Occupational status

The occupational status of Murchison's residents in 1996 differed from that of Tasman District as a whole. There were fewer professionals and technicians, clerks, and agricultural and fishery workers in the town's workforce, and more service and sales workers and those engaged in blue collar work (trades workers, machine operators and elementary occupations) (Table 2.5.4).

TABLE 2.5.4. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF MURCHISON—1996.

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	MURCHISON % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Administrators/managers	9.8	8.5
Professionals & technicians	8.7	15.2
Clerks	6.5	8.1
Service/sales	23.9	10.6
Agriculture & fishery	17.4	28.2
Trades workers/machine operators/elementary occupations	31.5	25.2
Not specified	2.2	4.2
Total number of persons	276	18 729

Industry—major divisions

The major sources of employment for the residents of Murchison in 1996 were the wholesale/retail/accommodation (34%), agricultural/forestry and fishing (18%), and community/social/personal services (15%) sectors. By contrast, Tasman District had higher proportions of its workforce engaged in the agricultural/ forestry and fishing, and manufacturing sectors of the economy (Table 2.5.5).

TABLE 2.5.5. SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKFORCE OF MURCHISON—1996.

SECTOR	MURCHISON % OF WORKFORCE	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Agriculture/forestry & fishing	18.1	30.5
Mining/quarrying	5.3	0.2
Manufacturing	1.1	12.5
Electricity/gas/water	–	0.3
Construction	9.6	5.7
Wholesale/retail/accommodation	34.0	17.2
Transport/communications	8.5	4.0
Business/financial	3.2	7.4
Govt administration & defence	2.0	2.0
Community/social/personal services	14.9	13.5
Not specified	3.2	6.6
Total number of persons	282	18 723

Household incomes

Households incomes in Murchison were lower than that of those for Tasman District in 1996. Over two-fifth's of households reported earnings between $10 000 to $30 000 for that financial year (Table 2.5.6).

TABLE 2.5.6. DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOMES IN MURCHISON—1996.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE	MURCHISON % OF HOUSEHOLDS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF HOUSEHOLDS
$10 000 & under	6.5	5.9
$10 001–$30 000	42.9	37.0
$30 001 & over	35.1	40.3

Income support

Residents of Murchison were less dependent on income support (39% of the population aged 15 years and over) than the population of Tasman District (43%). The major forms of income support they received during 1996 were national superannuation (52% of benefits) and the unemployment benefit (22%).

Education

In 1996 almost a half of the residents of Murchison who were aged 15 years or over reported that they held no formal educational qualifications (cf. 34% for Tasman District). Only the proportion of those holding secondary school qualifications (31%) approximated that for the Tasman District as a whole (Table 2.5.7).

TABLE 2.5.7. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY RESIDENTS OF MURCHISON—1996.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	MURCHISON % OF RESIDENTS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF RESIDENTS
University	2.0	5.1
Other tertiary	15.5	26.4
Secondary	31.1	30.1
No qualifications	49.3	34.2

Household tenure

The only notable difference in household tenure between Murchison and Tasman District in 1996 was the higher proportion of rental dwellings in the township, and slightly fewer houses with mortgages (Table 2.5.8).

TABLE 2.5.8. TENURE OF DWELLINGS IN MURCHISON—1996.

FORM OF TENURE	MURCHISON % OF DWELLINGS	TASMAN DISTRICT % OF DWELLINGS
Provided rent free	4.1	4.3
Rented	21.6	18.2
Owned with a mortgage	33.8	35.8
Owned without a mortgage	36.5	36.1
Total number of dwellings	222	14 163

Social and economic development

People interviewed in the town recognised the potential of tourism, with a focus around the new Park, but they lacked the experience, resources and/or initiative to set it off. This problem could be overcome by the development of a co-ordinated business strategy for the town. The community is relatively small, however, with only a few people who are well linked into organisations that could assist, such as the District Council and government agencies. There is an air of uncertainty about the future of the town.

2.6 KARAMEA

Karamea is a geographically isolated area, with one road providing access to the rest of the Buller District to the South. The main population centre—Karamea township[6] (453 residents in 1996)—has a few shops, a garage and a visitor information centre, while accommodation is spread for several kilometres on each side of the township.

The area around the township is very dependent on dairying, with about 40 dairy farmers. Of 150 children at the school, a quarter were reported as coming from farming families. The dairy processing factory has been closed since 1993. The milk now goes to Hokitika. There has been a downturn in other traditional areas of the resource economy, particularly in forestry with one mill closing and the other operating with a very reduced cut. In 1997 There was one person working sphagnum moss full time and 30 working it part time.

There have been a number of business closures in Karamea township, including the post office, a garage and a tearoom. There were reported to be around 90 people unemployed. There is no bank and the small supermarket and some other businesses such as hotels act as cash suppliers to visitors and locals. Recent floods have added to business uncertainty.

On the positive side, there has been significant recent growth in accommodation in Karamea, evidenced by the number of new motel units. This has been in response to increased numbers of tourists, many of whom take part in activities in the new Park. But operators reported that there are not 'enough' small craft-type businesses like the two woodworkers to attract tourists to the 'business' section of the town. Most tourism businesses in Karamea tend to be run by 'outsiders'. Locals tend not to get involved with tourism businesses—it was considered that they are 'a bit scared' to take the risk. Yet home stays do well in the area. The community is looking for growth from increased interest in the Park and the area in general. But there is a recognition that to take best advantage of the opportunities offered by the Park the community needs to work together.

Population changes from 1986 to 1996

The population of Karamea fell by 5% from 477 to 453 during the period 1986 to 1996. By contrast, the Buller District experienced a growth in population of some 13% over this decade. Since 1991, however, the population of Karamea has declined at a slower rate (Table 2.6.1).

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[6] Note the statistical Area Unit for Karamea includes the settlement and some surrounding farm land—an area of approximately 5 km radius.

TABLE 2.6.1. KARAMEA—POPULATION CHANGES 1986–1996.

CENSUS YEAR	KARAMEA		BULLER DISTRICT	
	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION	NO. OF PERSONS	% CHANGE IN POPULATION
1986	477	–	2028	–
1991	459	-3.8	2088	3.0
1996	453	-1.3	2298	10.1

Age-sex structure

Karamea's population in 1996 was slightly younger than that of the greater Buller District, with a higher proportion of children and a lower proportion of elderly persons. Young people have to leave the town for education and work opportunities. Some go to boarding school in Christchurch or Nelson. Those that stay or return usually join a family farm or business (Table 2.6.2).

Sex ratio M/F 1996: 1.01 (Karamea), 1.16 (Buller).

Dependency ratio 1996: 0.56 (Karamea), 0.54 (Buller).

TABLE 2.6.2. AGE STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF KARAMEA—1996.

	KARAMEA	BULLER DISTRICT
% 0–14 years	29.9	27.5
% 15–64 years	63.9	64.8
% 65 years & over	6.1	7.6
Total number of persons	441	2277

Ethnic composition

Maori comprised 9% of Karamea's population in 1996, and about 7% of the population of Buller District.

Employment status

The employment status of the workforce of Karamea differed considerably from that of Buller as a whole, having a higher proportion of self-employed persons and employers in 1996 (34% cf. 24%), but a lower proportion of wage and salary earners (40% cf. 53%), as shown in Table 2.6.3. These figures reflect the importance of farming and small businesses to the Karamea economy.

TABLE 2.6.3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF KARAMEA—1996.

AREA UNIT	WAGE OR SALARY %	SELF-EMPLOYED & EMPLOYER OF OTHERS %	UNEMPLOYED %
Karamea	39.7	33.8	11.8
Buller District	52.8	23.7	12.0

Occupational status

Two-fifths of the workforce of Karamea were engaged in agriculture and fishery occupations in 1996, while just over a quarter of Buller's workforce belonged to this category. There were also lower proportions of the town's workforce engaged in white collar occupations and blue collar occupations related to non-primary industries when compared with Buller's workforce (Table 2.6.4).

TABLE 2.6.4. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE OF KARAMEA—1996.

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	KARAMEA % OF WORKFORCE	BULLER DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Administrators/managers	8.3	10.1
Professionals & technicians	13.3	13.3
Clerks	6.7	8.1
Service/sales	11.7	12.3
Agriculture & fishery	40.0	26.3
Trades workers/machine operators/elementary occupations	15.1	25.0
Not specified	5.0	4.9
Total number of persons	180	924

Industry—major divisions

The major sources of employment for the workforce of Karamea in 1996 (Table 2.6.5) were the agriculture/forestry/fishing (39%), wholesale/retail/ accommodation (18%) and the community/social/personal services (16%) sectors. The most significant feature of the sectoral distribution of Karamea's workforce was that two fifths of the town's workers were employed in the primary sector compared with just over a quarter for the District as a whole.

TABLE 2.6.5. SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKFORCE OF KARAMEA—1996.

SECTOR	KARAMEA % OF WORKFORCE	BULLER DISTRICT % OF WORKFORCE
Agriculture/forestry & fishing	39.3	26.7
Mining/quarrying	–	3.9
Manufacturing	8.2	6.8
Electricity/gas/water	–	0.3
Construction	1.6	5.2
Wholesale/retail/accommodation	18.0	21.2
Transport/communications	1.6	4.6
Business/financial	3.3	5.2
Govt administration & defence	1.6	3.6
Community/social/personal services	16.4	13.7
Not specified	9.8	8.8
Total number of persons	183	921

Household incomes

The pattern of household income distribution (Table 2.6.6) reveals that incomes in Karamea were slightly lower than those reported for the district as a whole.

TABLE 2.6.6. DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOMES IN KARAMEA—1996.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME RANGE	KARAMEA % OF HOUSEHOLDS	BULLER DISTRICT % OF HOUSEHOLDS
$10 000 & under	9.6	10.8
$10 001–$30 000	42.3	39.3
$30 001 & over	26.9	28.1

Income support

The residents of Karamea were more dependent on income support (57% of the population aged 15 years and over) than the population of Buller District (53%) as a whole. The main forms of income support received during 1996 were the unemployment benefit (34% of benefits) and national superannuation (29%).

Education

Residents of Karamea aged 15 years and over generally possessed higher educational qualifications than their counterparts in Buller District. Only with respect to other tertiary qualifications (19% cf. 24%) did they compare unfavourably with residents of the District as a whole (Table 2.6.7).

TABLE 2.6.7. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY RESIDENTS OF KARAMEA—1996.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	KARAMEA % OF RESIDENTS	BULLER DISTRICT % OF RESIDENTS
University	3.7	2.7
Other tertiary	18.7	23.5
Secondary	36.4	29.3
No qualifications	36.4	38.8

Household tenure

Over 71% of dwellings in Karamea were occupied by their owners (Table 2.6.8). In 1996 most of those owner-occupied dwellings (39% of the total housing stock) were owned without a mortgage, while at the district level owner-occupied dwellings were almost equally divided (both around 34%) between those with a mortgage and those without.

TABLE 2.6.8. TENURE OF DWELLINGS IN KARAMEA—1996.

FORM OF TENURE	KARAMEA % OF DWELLINGS	BULLER DISTRICT % OF DWELLINGS
Provided rent free	5.4	6.4
Rented	14.3	15.7
Owned with a mortgage	32.1	34.4
Owned without a mortgage	39.3	34.8
Total number of dwellings	168	897

Social and economic development

The Karamea community is very active[7] and there were reported to be a lot of newcomers. It is a mobile community—while some people move in, others move out. There is a good medical centre. When the Medical Association (that operates the medical centre) noted that there was a need for housing for the elderly, Buller District Council contributed $150 000 and local fundraising raised $30 000, and the land was donated. There are numerous community organisations, including a strong volunteer fire brigade, St John, bowls group, junior rugby and hockey. Golf was reported to be declining and senior rugby struggling. It was noted, however, that very few of the unemployed get involved in community activities. One group tried to get a Task Force Green person to do some landscaping and couldn't get anyone to do it. There is reputedly a lot of marijuana growing in the area.

2.7 THE WESTPORT COALFIELDS AREA

There are a number of small localities of a few hundred people that lie on or just off the main road north from Westport to Karamea. A number are based historically on coal mining, including Hector, Granity and Ngakawau. The large opencast mine at Stockton still produces considerable quantities of high-quality coal, but from low-labour, opencast methods. Employment is now based mainly on agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. The populations in these small communities are generally in a long-term decline following economic restructuring, particularly in the coal mining industry. The old coal mining areas, particularly Mokihinui, are popular for domestic recreation and holidays.

There are a number of small hotels, cafes, craft shops and businesses catering to visitors and people passing along the road between Westport and Karamea. There are also a number of short walks and a major historical attraction in the old coal workings on the Denniston Plateau. Interviews indicated that these businesses are benefiting from the increased flow of visitors along the road, with the increase being attributed to the new Park.

Westport, a town south-west of Kahurangi National Park, at the mouth of the Buller river, is the service and administrative centre for Buller District, the Department of Conservation and other agencies. The population of the town

[7] There is a strong sense of belonging to a community and wanting to contribute to the well-being of that community. Regular social functions are well attended by members of the wider community including outlying farms.

declined by 6% from 4494 in 1991 to 4236 in 1996, while the population of Buller District grew by 10%. Westport depends on farming, forestry and mining in the greater area around the town, the cement manufacturing plant just outside town, and the town's port activity and a fishing fleet. A quarter of Westport's population are national superannuitants. Moreover, two-thirds of the town's residents are in receipt of some type of welfare benefit.

2.8 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

The study communities had falls in population between 1986 and 1991, mostly resulting from economic restructuring, particularly the reduction and/or removal of many government organisations and services. However, since 1991 they have had reasonably stable total populations. People in these communities are predominantly of European descent. Populations are aging, with losses of young people, particularly in the 15 to 19 age group.

Golden Bay and Karamea have relatively high numbers of self employed and employers, reflecting industries based on family farming and small enterprises, including small-scale tourism activities such as homestays, craft shops and recreation/tours.

3. Current issues for the Park and adjacent communities

In this section we examine issues related to the creation of Kahurangi National Park from the perspective of the local communities. Wherever relevant and possible we compare the nature and status of these issues today to those that prevailed during the investigation stage of the Park in 1993 (as reported in the 1993 assessment).

Issues addressed are:

- the use and maintenance of tracks and huts,
- the management of concessions,
- access roads,
- the trans Park road proposal,
- helicopter operations,
- recreational hunting,
- mountain bikes,
- pest and weed control, and other management issues,
- mining,
- forestry and sphagnum moss,
- water resources,
- eeling.

3.1 USE AND MAINTENANCE OF TRACKS AND HUTS

The main walking tracks

The 1993 assessment found a general concern that the tourism industry was not adequately using tracks in the north-west Nelson area. Use was uneven, and concentrated on the main tracks[8], especially the Abel Tasman coastal track, during the peak summer months. As a result, DOC experienced considerable problems managing the main tracks and associated facilities. Social carrying capacity for more specialised tourists[9] appeared to have been reached, with overcrowding experienced in summer months. These problems cannot necessarily be overcome by transferring people from Abel Tasman to other tracks such as the Heaphy or Wangapeka. These trampers are often 'one timers' and the Abel Tasman experience is not available from other tracks, which may be more difficult and do not provide the special coastal experiences. Nonetheless, the two main options identified for management were increased shoulder seasons (the period between the peak and off peak seasons) and encouraging more trampers to use the Kahurangi area.

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[8] The main tracks were considered to be the Heaphy and Wangapeka tracks (Kahurangi National Park) and the Abel Tasman Walkway (Abel Tasman National Park).

[9] Some tourist companies offer tours to special interest groups such as botanists, geologists and ornithologists, and provide special facilities and specially qualified guides.

Overall, people in the tourism industry agreed in 1993 that the Heaphy Track was not being used to capacity—either physical or social. Peak use occurred in the 1970s when there was an expectation that a road would be built linking Karamea and Collingwood, motivating people to use the track before the experience changed as a consequence of the road. Since then, numbers have declined, with somewhere between 2000 and 4000 people walking it annually until the early 1990s. It was considered in 1993 that improved facilities on the track would allow an increase in numbers, both in the peak period and during the shoulder periods.

In 1998 these dilemmas remain, although it appears that patterns of domestic tramping have changed and international visitors are increasing. Some people find with that changing patterns of employment there is less time to tramp, and tramps tend to be shorter. The new school holidays with the four-term year are also changing the pattern of use. For example, the Abel Tasman Track has been in heavy use in the new October holiday and, as a result, DOC needs to get hut wardens in earlier.

There are few reliable sets of track-counter data showing trends for tracks in the Kahurangi National Park. Data on the use of major tracks in the period 1988 to 1997 are shown in Fig. 2. Use of the Heaphy Track increased markedly in the period from 1993 to 1995, prior to the gazetting of the Park, and has since declined back to around the 4000 per annum mark. The increase from 1993 to 1995 is attributed to an influx of mountain bikers using the track before it was closed to them under Park rules. The use of the Wangapeka Track has remained relatively stable. Visitor numbers to the Upper Cobb have also remained relatively stable, with two years of highest use in 1993 and 1996. Use of the Mt Arthur track increased in the early 1990s, but the Mt Arthur Tablelands have seen a marked increase since 1995.

Figure 3 shows the highly seasonal nature of use of the Heaphy Track. Indeed it became more so in the 1995 to 1997 period, although there has been a small increase in the proportion of winter use. At peak times, huts on the Heaphy are full and one-way walking has been proposed, although this would not be a popular response. The Wangapeka is not used to capacity, and its use could be increased with existing facilities and by encouraging people to use the track throughout the year. Interviews with DOC staff and tourism businesses pointed to a decrease in use of the track in the longer term, and deterioration of its surface and facilities. It was suggested that the track was promoted by New Zealand Forest Service (NZFS) but not by DOC, and use decreased when staffing was stopped in 1990/91. There have been recent problems over access through private farm land at the Karamea end, necessitating 2 km of rerouting. A 3-km stretch of new track would mean the Wangapeka could do a loop to Karamea via Granite Creek.

Increase in use of other track and huts

There was a strong expectation and prediction in 1993 that the new park would increase demand for all types of walks, including the main tracks, lesser-known tracks and short walks. Considerable anecdotal evidence, plus DOC staff observations and data from hut books show that this increased use had indeed eventuated across the Park by 1998. Users are a mix of domestic and international visitors. Furthermore, it is widely considered that the Park will continue to attract more use, increasing the need to manage social and ecological impacts.

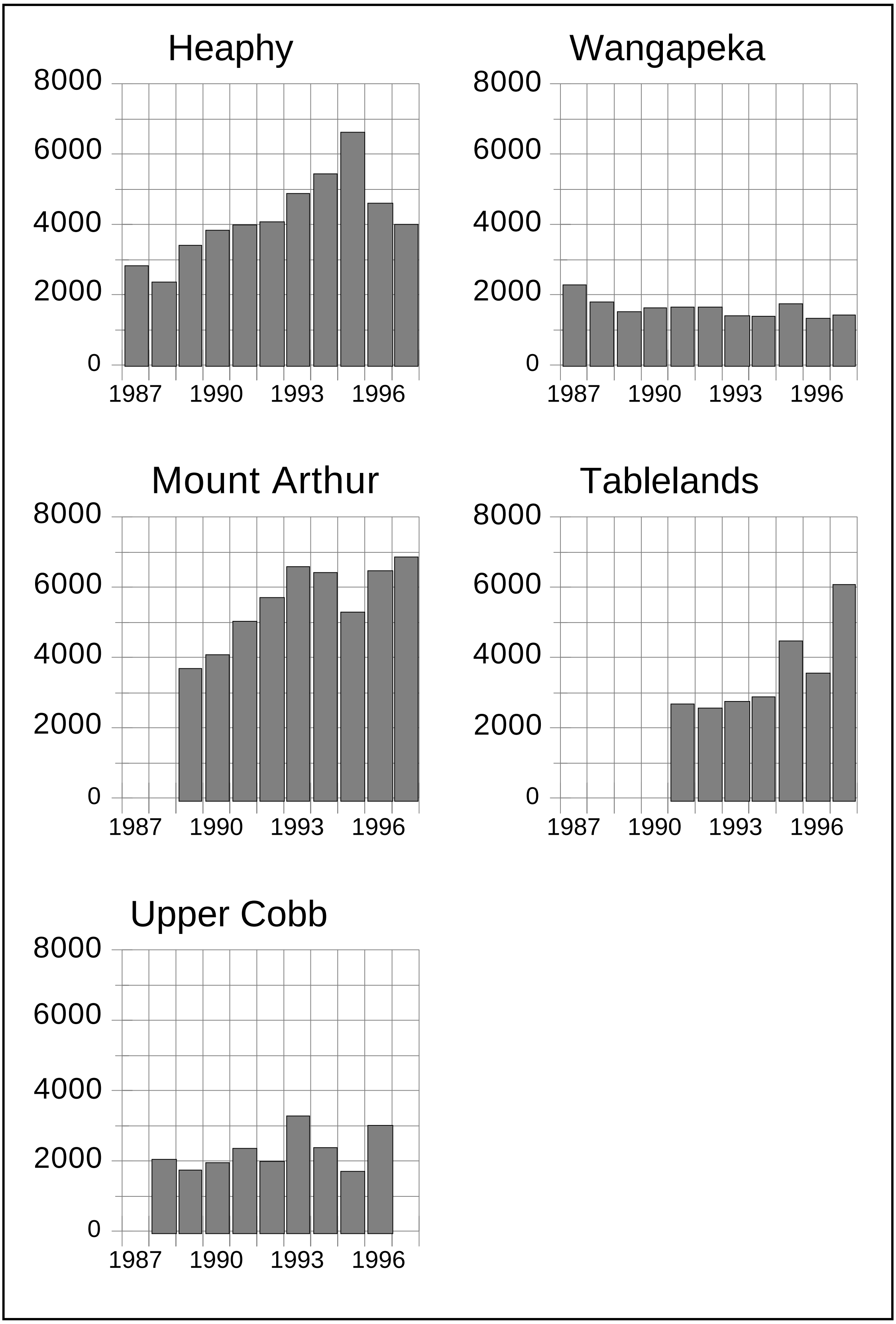

Figure 2. Track visitor monitoring data by year.

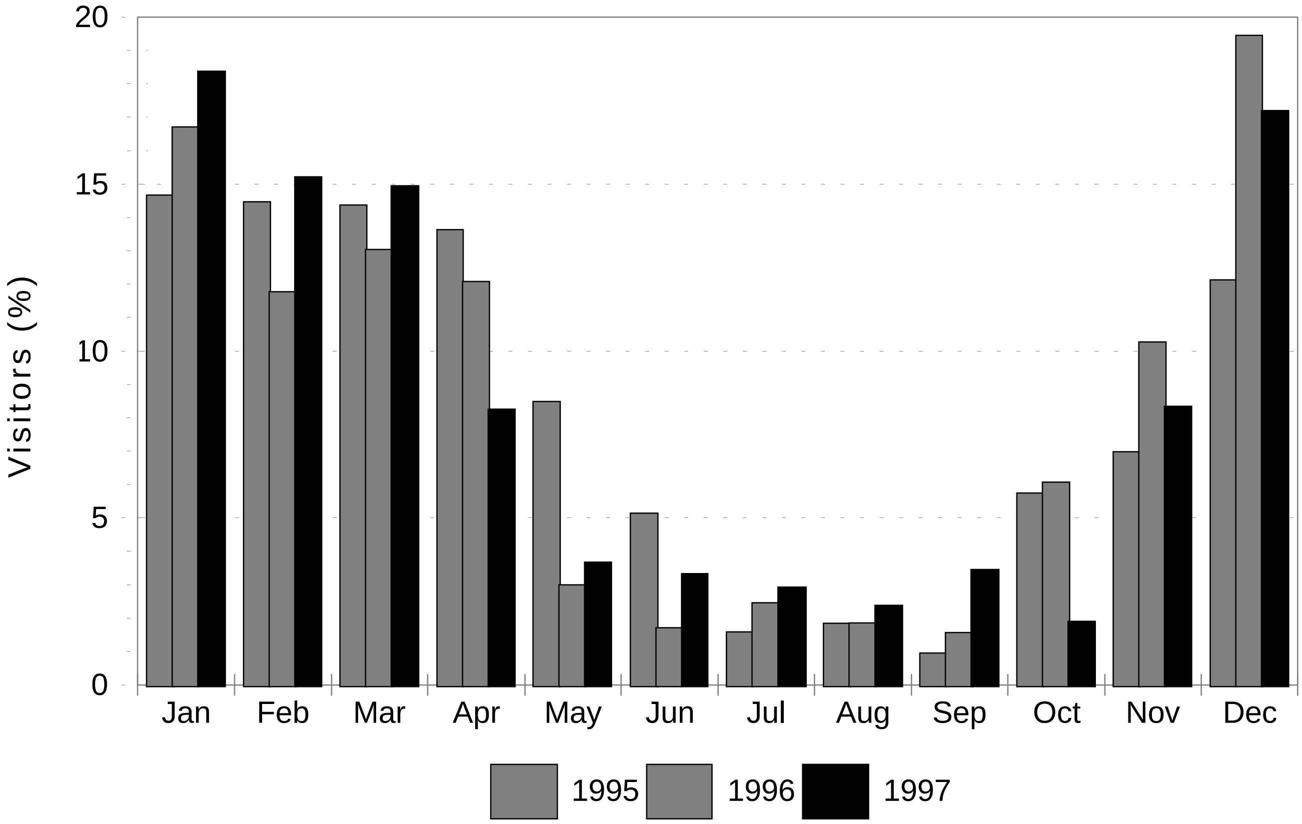

Figure 3. Monthly visitor numbers, Heaphy Track (percentages, 1995–97).

It was suggested in 1993 that the tracks in the Cobb area are often underrated by visitors and promoters. Track monitoring data show there have been increases in visitor numbers to the Cobb, Mt Arthur and the (Mount Arthur) Tablelands, either because of better facilities (e.g. the Balloon Hut) or because of the establishment of the National Park. The Balloon Hut was ‘done up’ by members of the local community who ‘loved’ the hut and Tablelands area, demonstrating the efficacy of DOC working with the community and sponsors to improve Park facilities.

Many Park tracks are undeveloped, but they are experiencing pressure from displacement from other, high-use tracks, reflecting social carrying capacity issues in the Park. There are also issues of safety and comfort for users. However, it was also suggested by local residents that there are ‘plenty of tramps’ at present. One that is not well known, for example, is the Leslie to Karamea track. The Matiri and Owen tracks are also little-known, but have experienced some growth in their use[10]. Few people link from these tracks through to the Wangapeka. The Granity Track was reported to be ‘falling apart’.

Use of short walks is reported as having increased throughout the Park. A tourist operator pointed out that only 15% of visitors to the Karamea area walk the main tracks. Some walk the Heaphy for just one night (to the Heaphy Hut). Many do short walks such as the Nikau Palms loop track or to Scotts Beach. There are enough options to filter out the ‘non’ walkers from the ‘real’ walkers.

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[10] These are ‘dead-end’ tracks where most people go in and come out the same way.

Upkeep of tracks and huts

In 1993 there was public understanding of funding constraints in adequately maintaining and developing huts and tracks in the Park area. However, there was also concern about the allocation of funds between tracks and huts, and amongst DOC Conservancies. For instance, people believed that major tracks such as the Abel Tasman, the Heaphy and, to a lesser extent, the Wangapeka, were being maintained at the expense of other shorter and less popular tracks in the area. There was also a perception that hut fees collected in the old Forest Park area ended up in a 'consolidated fund', and could not, therefore, be applied to track and hut maintenance where they were generated.

Given the increase in tourism and use of facilities across the Park, as noted above, these issues have intensified since 1993. The Department of Conservation is realistic in acknowledging that it has strictly limited funds to carry out maintenance, and this should be done according to plan and agreement, both internally and with the public. Therefore they have instituted a national priority system for expenditure, and this is part of the Draft Management Plan for the Park. The reality of this system is that some tracks and huts will not be maintained.

Numerous comments were made by residents and tourist operators on the lack of track and hut maintenance. For example, the Heaphy track was described as is in 'good shape' on the Nelson side but as 'very poorly maintained and in bad shape' on the West Coast side. Other facilities such as toilets at the Kohaihai end of the Heaphy Track were reported to need maintenance and, despite some new signs, there could be more signage. DOC were described as 'pulling out strategically placed huts' from the Park. DOC staff noted that they were short on labour for hut and track maintenance, despite a casual labour allocation. Nevertheless, there has been considerable expenditure on the Heaphy Track, in particular, over the past two years.

Department of Conservation staff believe that while there are clear needs, the standard of facilities in Kahurangi are generally good, and better than in some other national parks. Funding is a problem across the country. Other factors affect maintenance and new structures. A DOC Quality and Hazard Management System set in place since the platform collapse at Cave Creek in 1995 includes provision for huts and structures. The provisions of the new Health and Safety in Employment legislation and the Building Act may also discourage DOC from taking responsibility for additional structures such as huts and swing bridges.

New tracks and huts

The 1993 study pointed to the need to develop new tracks in the Park. So far no track development has taken place. Indeed, DOC consider new tracks are 'out of the question' at the moment. Under present funding levels DOC is only able to bring structures up to standard and maintain existing tracks. The argument is 'quality not quantity'. However, communities around the park consider that in creating a national park there was a commitment to development in order to maximise local benefits. They consider they were given assurances that 'facilities will not be lost'. Eventually the question of Park development funding will need to be addressed.

There were a number of suggestions for track development. There is no marked loop track between the Thousand Acre Plateau and the Matiri, although one was reputedly investigated some years ago. Development would include a better hut placement. It is also possible to go up the Matiri valley and join the Wangapeka Track ('if you can read maps' expertly!) Another possibility would be a new track through Granite Creek. Easy, 'in and out' or loop tracks are also suggested, particularly near the main Park communities. For example, a track looping from the Heaphy to the Oparara arches near Karamea has been suggested. There were several suggestions that short walks be developed from Karamea.

Not all proposals are confined to the Park. One respondent proposed the idea of a linked track system around Golden Bay, perhaps similar to the Banks Peninsula track. This would require the co-ordination of private sector operators and land owners, community groups, DOC and the Tasman District Council.

Currently there is little community involvement in the development of tracks and huts. In Murchison the local community have been involved with development of a local walk, but not in the Park. Taskforce Green was also suggested as a mechanism that could be used to assist any track project. One way of enhancing existing track use and funding track development might be through encouraging sponsorship of appropriate facilities.

3.2 THE MANAGEMENT OF CONCESSIONS

The 1993 assessment indicated frequent dissatisfaction with the allocation of concessions within the then Forest Park. Based on experiences with ongoing problems in Paparoa National Park, tourist industry people anticipated problems with the proposed national park. Concerns included delays in finalising the management plan, costs and delays in administering applications, length of concessions, and percentage payments to DOC.

Since 1993 DOC has made considerable changes and developed a national system for dealing with concessions. Under the Conservation Amendment Act (1996) applications for concessions must identify the possible effects of their proposed activity, and suggest measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate any potential adverse effects. This is a more 'enabling' approach. Policy on concessions is provided in the Kahurangi Draft Management Plan. Nonetheless, there appear to be some remaining inconsistencies and problems in the way concessions are managed. There is still a need to co-ordinate concession management in DOC, through area, conservancy, regional and national levels.

There has been a notable increase in tourist concessions in the Park, most for guided walks. The concessionaires are based mainly in Golden Bay, Motueka and Karamea. Some are New Zealand wide, multi-conservancy concessions, e.g. NZ Experience. There has also been an increase in illegal operations. The growth overall is modest, and any expectation that 'hordes would gallop in' has not been fulfilled. The increase in tourist businesses is discussed in more detail in Section 4.

Issues identified for concessions (across a number of interviews with tourism operators and DOC staff) were:

- The process of applying for a concession was described as too 'onerous', including safety questions, information on effects and their amelioration, personal and business financial information.
- Fees are a concern. The minimum fee is $200 and it usually costs $700–800 for processing costs, for an ordinary 5-year permit.
- Concern was expressed about the prospect of 'tendering' for concessions, where an existing business might have its concession tendered away. (This does not appear to be part of DOC policy).
- In contrast, other respondents were concerned about fairness when, with the aim of limiting or managing effects, DOC issues only one consession Others may want this operation opened up for competition. Access to cave systems is one area of concern, with further restrictions proposed in the Draft Management Plan.
- The management planning process has led to uncertainty, with concessionaires reporting they have been advised to delay submitting new proposals until the Management Plan is complete.
- The adequacy of dialogue and flow of information between DOC and concessionaires has been raised. An example was the question, 'What happens to concession funds?', which remains an issue from 1993.
- There needs to be more intense monitoring of concessions, their operation and effects, and resources are required for DOC to do this task properly.

3.3 ACCESS ROADS

The 1993 assessment concluded that for the full social and economic values of a national park to be achieved a wide network of access roads needs to be maintained, or further developed through joint funding arrangements (e.g. DOC, district councils & other parties). Park development and access were seen to be interrelated. Some problems in access to the tracks existed because there were no regular bus services, but with an increase in numbers of visitors local bus operators considered they could easily extend their services.

It was clear in 1993 that local councils faced an inevitable problem justifying the construction and maintenance of roads into areas that are, by their very nature, subject to low rate takes. There are precedents for DOC jointly maintaining roads that provide access to park facilities and features. It was suggested that agreements and liaison between DOC and local councils, and with the tourism industry, would be needed in the future. The position had not changed in 1998. Furthermore, proposed road reforms may also have an impact on little-used roads in the area.

The new Park is placing clear pressure on access roads. Examples given were those to the Cobb Valley, Mt Arthur, the Matiri Valley, the Wangapeka Track from Karamea, the Oparara Arches, and the Fenian Track (near Karamea). Comments were made that access roads are part of the upgrade of facilities generally needed. Poor roads and lack of maintenance were cited.

Many comments were made in Karamea about the state of the Oparara Arches Road, which has been closed for several periods of time, and the Fenian, which remains closed. Financial resources were the limitation for all interested parties. The Oparara road has been improved, but could be better, and remains difficult for camper vans, which are adding to the problem. On the other hand, improved access to this area will increase people pressure on the cave systems. For the Fenian, there has been an issue in co-ordination of effort between DOC, the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council, which controls a quarry that restricts access because of dangerous rock overhangs.

Transfund (the government road funding agency) funds all highways and a number of special purpose roads where there is no rating base but a public need—in most cases because of a tourist attraction. Roading policy is presently being reviewed. In general, the present policy for special purpose roads is that Transfund provide the funding and the local (District) Council does the work. In some cases (Franz and Fox glacier roads, and Hooker Valley Road) Transfund gives the funding to DOC, who does the work. There are discussions at present about some of the roads around Karamea. There are also a number of unformed roads in the Park, vested in local authorities, and the Draft Management Plan indicates that these will be formally incorporated into the Park.

There are commercial services providing shuttles to the main track ends. However, new services are required as new areas open up. For example, access into the Matiri Valley is difficult without a vehicle. Some visitors bike in, while others hitch a ride on school buses. Some motel owners will take visitors in by car. There is potential for a service to be started from Murchison as use of the southern area of the Park develops.

3.4 THE TRANS-PARK ROAD PROPOSAL

During the park investigations in 1993 it was hoped by a number of parties that a national park would not ‘shut out’ a road link between Nelson and the West Coast as a ‘future’ option. Comments about the need for such a road varied then, with a polarisation of views. Neither was there agreement as to where such a road could be located, with north from Karamea along the coast, to Collingwood via the Heaphy, or more directly via the Wangapeka, being the main options. It was maintained that the latter route made the best sense in terms of its utility for general use as a short cut to Nelson, serving sectors such as agriculture as well as tourism.

While there did not appear to be such a strong call for a road in 1997, it does remain an issue for some people. As a result, the proposed road has been included in the Draft Management Plan, which states that any road proposal would have to go through a full resource consent process. The road area would need to be excluded from the Park and vested in a new managing authority.

It is also possible that continuing tourism development in Karamea will increase opposition to a road from this sector. A number of operators made the point that the very ‘isolation’ of Karamea was an attraction in itself and a basis for promoting the area.

3.5 HELICOPTER OPERATIONS

Prior to the gazetting of the national park, helicopter operators could enter the Forest Park, excluding the wilderness area, if they had concessions to do so. Operators based in Motueka, Nelson, and Westport were taking in rafters, fishers, trampers and hunters, as well as their supplies. DOC personnel were using helicopters for essential management such as the maintenance and development of huts and tracks and also for Search and Rescue. Most of the issues for helicopters revolved around restrictions to flying over or landing in the Northwest Nelson Wilderness Area. The restrictions were seen to limit existing activities and the potential for adventure tourism.

Little has changed. The wilderness area was incorporated into the Park as an integral feature and helicopter access is a contentious issue for people who want to fly in and around it, particularly along the Karamea River and its tributaries. There are also conflicts between helicopters and other users in other parts of the Park, which are wilderness in nature, if not in name. It is evident that there are differences in perception between people in local communities who are used to helicopters in their lives and work, and visitors who are in the Park for peace and solitude.

The level of helicopter use has changed, but the types of use are similar. A 'massive'[11] increase of helicopters in the Park was described. They can appear very noisy, especially in the headwater fisheries and similar sensitive areas. On the other hand, helicopters are opening up the Park to people who would not otherwise get in, such as fishers and rafters. Kayakers are becoming interested in helicopter use as well. Some tourism people noted that helicopters are a good way of getting visitors—especially overseas tourists—into the Park. People involved in the walking side of tourism, however, described the helicopters as very 'invasive' and there is potential for conflict between different park users and different branches of the industry.

Key issues are use of landing sites along the Karamea River, and access for fishing and rafting. The Draft Management Plan recognises the demand for helicopter access to the Wilderness Area, but notes the inherent conflict with the values of the area. Helicopter hunting is allowed for pest control, however several people interviewed gave accounts of illegal passenger transport, raising the issue of compliance and monitoring. The Department of Conservation itself also adds to the helicopter use in ferrying staff and supplies. Management techniques could include helicopter-free areas, limits to landing sites, conditions on concessions and time (daily and seasonal) restrictions. Co-operation between helicopter operators could reduce the number of trips by minimising one-way empty trips, where helicopters at present take people or equipment into an area and return empty.

Rafting

Rafting is an increasing tourism activity and one of the main users of helicopters for access. There are several companies operating in the Park, primarily on the Karamea, and nearby rivers, especially the Buller. To raft the stretch of the Karamea that flows through the Wilderness Area requires some portage. To

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[11] No data were available.

avoid this, there would need to be a landing site in the Wilderness. Access lower down would also allow for shorter trips. Experience in adjacent areas indicates that shorter trips would be popular.

It was noted that some of the locals view rafting companies on the Murchison side of the Park as 'fly-by-nighters', without realising 'how much money they bring into the community'.

Trout fishing

There is increasing interest in the Park from tourist fishers and guiding operators, fishing mainly for brown trout, some of trophy size. The Karamea and its tributaries —the Leslie, Ugly and Roaring Lion—are the most popular rivers. In 1993 the Karamea catchment was noted to be a high-value fishery where the intensity of fishing is low because of its remoteness. The wilderness character and scenic values were considered to be rated highly by fishers. Use was expected to increase, and put pressure on the resource despite 'catch and release' policies. There was a concern in 1993 that national park status may limit any stock enhancement.

Observations from Fish and Game (Nelson) and tourism operators confirm that there has been increased visitor pressure on the Park fishery in recent years. While there are no numeric data, Fish and Game have noted an increase in licence sales to overseas visitors and increased activity by fishing guides. Fishers remain attracted by both the nature of the fishery (large brown trout) and the isolated, wilderness nature of the setting. It is likely that the increasing interest in the fishery is more a result of international tourism promotion of New Zealand for trout fishing than the creation of a national park. Certainly the Park does not appear to have constrained activity. In fact, despite the isolation and limited helicopter access to some areas, it is more likely that social carrying capacity and behaviour of the stock under pressure are the strongest limiting factors[12].

Fish and Game generally do not stock sports fisheries that have not been stocked previously, unless there are 'extreme' circumstances. Their policy is to keep trout fisheries such as the Karamea as 'wild' and 'self-sustaining' resources, thus avoiding any direct conflict over the issue of indigenous versus introduced fauna in a national park.

3.6 RECREATIONAL HUNTING

The original Forest Park had a Recreational Hunting Area (RHA) that was highly regarded by hunters and hunting organisations (particularly the Deerstalkers Association). The value of the area stemmed from provisions, within a management plan, for herd enhancement, and hunting restrictions to protect animal numbers. Loss of the Area was a threat to hunters, with a shift to hunting for pest control as the priority objective in a national park, rather than recreation. Recreational hunting continues in the Park, however, and the Draft Management Plan acknowledges hunting as a legitimate activity, as the first line of attack in pest control.

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12 Research by the Cawthron Institute in Nelson is currently investigating fishing behaviour and impacts on back country rivers, including rivers in Kahurangi National Park.

3.7 MOUNTAIN BIKES

Mountain biking is a popular activity, especially in the Nelson and Golden Bay areas, with increasing activity from tourists. Prior to the Park the biking tracks at Cobb and Mt Arthur were popular, as was the Heaphy Track. With formation of the Park there was concern about provisions for biking as bikes are banned from national parks.

Prior to the gazetting of the Park there were a noticeable number of mountain bikes, indeed the proposal for a park generated interest from bikers, especially those taking the last opportunity to bike the Heaphy. Their exclusion from the Park has caused a marked reduction in the number of cyclists coming through towns such as Karamea. Mountain bike access to the Park remains a major, and contentious, issue for bikers and tourist operators who service this sector of the industry.

It was acknowledged that there is potential for real conflict between walkers and bikers, as evident when bikes did use the Heaphy Track. There could be a compromise, such as opening the Heaphy to cyclists at certain times, e.g. October to November, but as the Draft Management Plan points out, this would require a change in national park policy. Another option is to provide biking alternatives outside the Park, including on other DOC estate. There is a lack of mountain bike tracks in the Karamea area in particular.

3.8 PEST AND WEED CONTROL AND OTHER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

In 1993 farmers and others were critical of DOC's erosion containment, clearing of waterways, control of weeds and pests such as ragwort, gorse, goats and possums, and fire control. With a change of land status, they predicted that these activities would be further undermined. These are all issues covered in the Draft Management Plan. The main concern today is the same as that before the Park. Does DOC have the resources, rather than the will, to implement the required programmes?

These are issues that require ongoing communication and liaison with the boundary communities.

3.9 MINING

The mining industry expressed concern in the 1993 assessment that national park status would preclude future mineral investigation and mining over a large part of the South Island where the status of mineral resources was still largely unknown. The primary response to this issue by the authorities defining the Park boundaries was to exclude areas with evidence of commercial prospects for minerals from the Park. These areas included Sam's Creek and Mt Burnett.

There is the potential for government to re-designate particular areas later if commercial mining becomes a realistic prospect. In addition, while the Crown Minerals Amendment Act (No. 2, 1997) prohibits mining in National parks, a few, very low impact activities can still be permitted (as specified in the Act).

3.10 FORESTRY AND SPHAGNUM MOSS

In 1993 there were people in the communities bordering the Park who believed that sustainable yield forestry, tourism and national park status were not necessarily incompatible. They were concerned that the West Coast Forestry Accord that was meant to provide a medium-term supply of indigenous timber in Karamea would not be fulfilled. They were suspicious of national park status as a further constraint to forestry cutting and proposed that 'buffer zones' be used to provide areas of sustained-yield timber production with a mix of exotics and indigenous production. These zones were not created around the Park. One exception are some 'scruffy' Tasmanian blackwood groves in the Park for which Timberlands have one-off cutting rights. Neither have exotics been planted on any scale.

Sphagnum moss production was also an issue for the Park investigations. In particular, the West Coast communities around Karamea have obtained considerable part-time employment from gathering and processing the moss. But areas with commercial value for sphagnum moss production also tended to have lower conservation values, and these were largely excluded from the Park, so the Park has had no discernable impact on this activity.

3.11 WATER RESOURCES

There is considerable potential for small and medium capacity hydro electricity development in the area of the Park, and interest groups were concerned in 1993 that any land status change may limit future developments. Indeed, case law prohibits hydro-electric schemes of any size from national parks. Yet there is still potential for low-impact, micro-hydro schemes to be considered.

Although there are potential micro-hydro areas outside the Park, surrounding communities still believe that there is also potential for low-impact schemes drawing water from the Park, and they consider that this option has been limited for them. There are also a number of existing use rights for farmers and communities who draw water from the Park, and concern that these need to be protected.

3.12 EELING

While eel fisheries are managed by the Ministry of Fisheries, a fisher needs a permit from DOC to operate in the Park. Cultural harvest is also allowed (for non-commercial use). There is one eeler operating in the Park at present, and the practices of this eeler have raised concern about the sustainability of the resource and the role of a national park in protecting eel habitat. There is uncertainty about the basis on which the current 'permit' operates, and a need was identified for monitoring this type of activity more closely.

4. Tourism development and economic impacts

4.1 ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS FROM THE 1993 ASSESSMENT

The 1993 assessment of the Park noted that any new economic activity generated by it needed to be balanced against the opportunity costs. But the remoteness of the northwest Nelson area and limited available infrastructure meant that many of the natural resources remained unmeasured or unexploited, such as by mining or hydro electricity (both prohibited by law in National Parks). Also, any new industry, such as hydro-electric generation, could be expected to be independent of the gazetting of the national park and therefore have no impact on the economics of the proposal itself.

The economic analysis undertaken in 1993 projected the direct impact of the Park to be a net increase of about 50 full-time equivalent jobs over the first five years in the area adjacent to the proposed national park, including Westport and Karamea, Murchison, Motueka and Takaka (but not Nelson) plus a number of other much smaller settlements around the boundary of the Park. At a national level, the indirect impact was assessed as another 35 full-time equivalent jobs. The direct jobs projected ranged from hostel operators to concessionaires and DOC maintenance and administrative staff.

Loss of proposed mining activity was seen as a potentially large opportunity cost in terms of employment (assessed at up to 150 FTE). But, as noted above, this loss has been avoided by excluding the major known mining prospects.

4.2 THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

The 1993 assessment indicated considerable agreement that tourism provided an opportunity for the communities around the Park to become more economically viable, and there was some confidence that a national park would enhance the tourism industry. However, this confidence was not universal, and it was too early to discern any clear impacts then. At the time tourism was already becoming increasingly important for the communities within the vicinity of the investigation area. The smaller centres had narrow, resource-based economies, which had felt the effects of public service restructuring, economic recession and decreasing mining and forestry activity.

In 1993 there was clear evidence that although summer domestic visitors predominated, the tourism industry was diversifying. Overseas visitors were coming to the top of the South Island, attracted to the forests, mountains and rivers, and beaches. Many of these attractions already lay within the DOC estate, particularly the major walking tracks.

The character of rural tourism in Tasman and Buller Districts

A profile of the character of rural tourism businesses in the Tasman and Buller Districts is provided in Table 4.2.1.

An analysis of the main types of business showed that for accommodation most operations were small. In Tasman District, 45% of accommodation businesses were bed and breakfasts, home or farm stays, and in Buller District the figure was even higher, at 53%. Camps were also important—16% of accommodation in Tasman and 19% in Buller District. These camps can draw large numbers in peak seasons. It was reported in Murchison, for example, that over Christmas 1995 there were 200 to 250 people in the camping ground, while during Christmas 1997 there were over 600. Tasman District has more lodges and motels than Buller.

Rural tourism retail outlets in both Tasman and Buller were very predominantly craft-based. A range of outdoor activities were available. A large number were water-based, such as kayaking, rafting, and water taxis. Others activities available included horse treks, cave tours, guided walks and nature tours. Buller had a similar range to Tasman.

There has been a clear growth in tourism businesses of all types in Golden Bay and Karamea, and to a lesser extent in Murchison since 1993. A rural tourism national survey (Warren 1998) confirmed that the majority of businesses around the country are relatively new, 43% of those surveyed being five years or less in age. Given the growth of the sector, it is important to recognise that there would have been growth in tourism in Tasman and Buller Districts without the gazetting of a new national park. Nonetheless, the industry is increasingly recognising that Kahurangi Park is a key feature in the promotion of the top of the South Island as a destination.

TABLE 4.2.1. CHARACTER OF RURAL TOURISM—TASMAN AND BULLER DISTRICTS.

CATEGORY	TASMAN DISTRICT (%)	BULLER DISTRICT (%)	NEW ZEALAND (%)
Accomodation	50	44	21
Retail and trade	24	17	30
Heritage	1	2	11
Activities	22	19	26
Vineyard	3	0	4
Garden tour	1	0	20
Food	6	17	31
Other	0	0	1

Note: Data for this table were obtained from the Rural Tourism database developed under the FRST Rural Tourism Research Project in 1997. The database is held at the Centre For Evaluation, Research and Social Assessment, Wellington. For the database, rural was defined as centres under a population of 1000. The percentages for the broad, primary business characteristics were calculated from 244 entries for Tasman District, 74 entries for Buller District and 3065 entries total for New Zealand.

The most marked recent growth has been in Karamea. Before the 'Last Resort' accommodation and activity centre venture was established, Karamea had a camping ground and one 'motel'. Now there is a range of accommodation with recent expansion of existing businesses including the 'Last Resort'. Accommodation providing 50 new beds in Karamea has been built by three operators since 1995. Growth in Karamea would probably have happened without the gazetting of the Park, as the New Zealand tourist mix diversified and new destinations, including natural, isolated areas were sought out. However, the Park is adding to the growth and, conversely, without the growth there would be a limited visitor base in the west for access to the Park's resources.

In many ways Karamea appears to be at the beginning of a tourism growth curve, as recorded in other tourism communities. In terms of the tourism growth cycle (Warren & Taylor 1994), Karamea is at the 'involvement' stage—when the volume of tourism grows and becomes more regular, and some residents provide facilities designed primarily for visitors. The next stage is 'development' when the area will become a well-defined destination and numbers increase rapidly. Golden Bay is well into a development phase, now attracting outside investment. Murchison, already with a steady flow of road traffic, is also experiencing some growth as a destination in its own right.

The character of the visitors

There has been growth in visitor numbers (domestic and overseas) in communities around the Park. There are limited local data that together show recent trends:

- Takaka—The Visitor Information Centre recorded an increase in visitor numbers from 1995 (21 804) to 1996 (25 393) and to 1997 (26 811), an increase of 23% in three years.
- Murchison—The Visitor Information Centre (which is closed in winter) recorded an increase from 1994/95 (10 200) to 1995/96 (11 000) to 1996/97 (12 300) and to 1997/98 (12 600), an increase of 24% over four years.
- Karamea—The Karamea Resource and Information Centre recorded an increase in visitor numbers from 1995 (4427) to 1996 (5579) to 1997 (7829), an increase of 77% in three years.
- Westport Visitor Information Centre recorded an increase from 1995 (36 000) to 1997 (42 900) for visitor inquiries at the Centre, an increase of 19% over three years.

Visitor numbers are constrained by available accommodation in the high season (summer), despite the new units that have been built in towns like Collingwood and Karamea. Operators are expanding in response to what they see as a definite increase in visitor numbers over the past few years and a perception that this trend will continue.

Operators report a highly seasonal visitor profile, as they did in 1993. Seasonality is shown in visitor data, for example in Westport (Fig. 4). The main season is December to February. The shoulder seasons are October to November and March to April. There is a very distinct winter 'off' season. These seasonal variations are similar to those for visitor numbers on the walking tracks (Section 3.1 above). Despite some signs of more visitors during the shoulder seasons—spring 1997 being 'one of the best shoulder seasons ever'—seasonal data follow

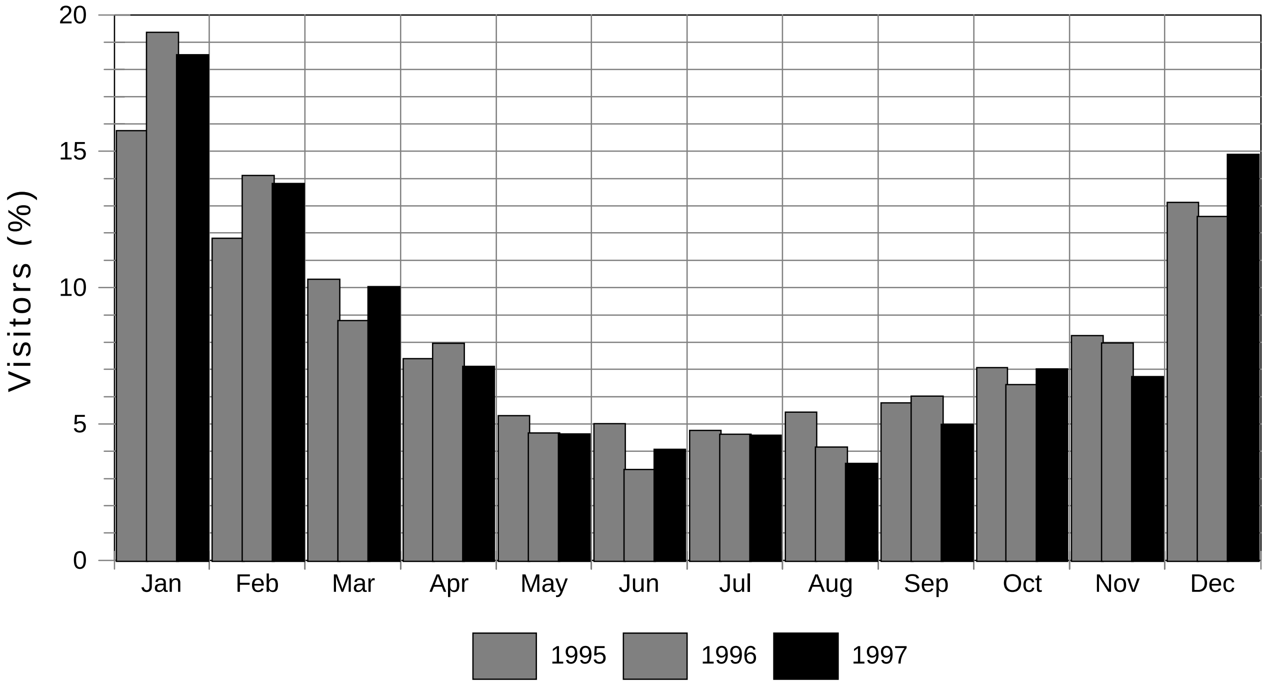

Figure 4. Monthly visitor numbers Westport (percentages, 1995–97).

the Heaphy track data in showing that an even stronger summer period has developed. Whitebaiters bolster the early shoulder on the West Coast (Karamea).

The national survey of rural tourism businesses identified that domestic tourists are the mainstay of their market, with little change between 1991 and 1996 (Warren 1998). There was a similar pattern from the interviews with operators around the Park, who have a high dependency on domestic visitors. The majority of international visitors are European, with large numbers from Germany, as well as some from the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Israel. Others come from the United States of America, Australia and South Africa. There are some Asian visitors, one of the main sources being language schools in Nelson.

People come on holiday and they have disposable income, which is spent on activities, arts and craft work. Visitors want friendly, smaller scale and not too expensive accommodation. But there has been a marked shift from backpackers, with fewer 'Kiwi Experience' types. There were reported to be no in-bound backpacker trips to Golden Bay. More are in the 50-plus age group. There has been an increase in campervans, including the smaller vans. There are fewer bikers and hitchhikers but increased numbers of kayakers, rafters and fishers, people wanting outdoors experiences including those available in the Park. People are staying longer—typically for three days. In Karamea, The 'Last Resort' complex has created a market and become a destination in itself. All these patterns in visitor numbers and types are confirmed by the national rural tourism study (Warren 1998).

As noted in Section 3.1, in the discussion about walking tracks, there has been an increase in visitor numbers on some of the lesser-known tracks. The DOC Motueka office reported that records of hut log books show an increase in international visitors, (from negligible to around 20%) in areas such as the

Mount Arthur Tablelands, possibly because of better facilities (e.g. Balloon Hut) and/or because of the establishment of the Park. An operator commented that the car park at Mt Arthur 'is always full now'. The Department of Conservation in Murchison noted a similar, if smaller, shift with international visitors around 5–10% and increasing. Overall there has been an increase in all types of visitors to more 'difficult' areas, and also to the short, popular walks.

The character of the tourism businesses

There are more tourism operators in and around the Park, but not necessarily enough new tourists to fill the services supplied. As a result, there is considerable competition between businesses. In addition to new businesses, others have changed hands—a third of the motels were reported to change hands each year. However, comments made by local tourism operators and residents indicated that there are believed to be limits to tourism development, so continual growth in numbers should not necessarily be their aim.

Data from interviews of tourist-related businesses around the Park confirm the results of the national rural tourism survey (Warren 1998)—that the majority of these types of businesses are relatively new and their current operators have not been at it for long. Of 26 operators around the Park for whom length of operation was available from interviews, 58% had been operating for less than three years. The great majority of these were new businesses as well (i.e. started by the operator interviewed). The remaining 42% of the businesses were mostly more than ten years old—suggesting a strong distinction between those business that are well established (and primarily based on domestic tourism) and those that are new; indeed, have started in the time of the Park, and are focussed much more on international as well as domestic tourists.

As also found in the national survey (Warren 1998), many of the tourism businesses around the Park are part-time. They are typically associated with farming, other employment, and the provision of local services such as a garage, local pub or post shop. Some believed that they could not survive unless they were 'strapped onto' another business.

Operators typically noted the time it takes to establish a tourism business. Few expect that they will be viable, or making a good return on capital and labour, in the short term. After capital expansion they are forced into a period of consolidation. Some had made a substantial capital investment to set up or expand their businesses. Yet there was limited evidence of formal business planning—primarily this is undertaken by larger businesses who obtain bank loans. The high birth and death rates of businesses, lack of planning, no marketing budget, and too many 'lifestylers' in the industry are described as concerns. Again, these findings confirm the national study (Warren 1998) and a previous study of eco-tourism businesses (Warren & Taylor 1994).

The businesses tend to employ part-time and seasonal staff in addition to the work of the operating family. This employment is naturally seasonal in nature. Some mentioned the difficulty of obtaining and retaining staff, either as a result of the seasonal work, or because young people in particular tend to move on after having some initial training and work experience after leaving school. One business described being 'desperate' for employees 'last summer' and others described similar difficulties. While there are substantial numbers of unemployed people in the Park communities, they are not always motivated to work. There is potential for further pre-employment and in-service training. Training needs are largely met by the regional polytechs. While training is needed for employees, operators also need business training and advice. There are obvious opportunities for training providers.

4.3 ESTIMATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT EFFECTS IN 1998

There are a number of businesses in Karamea that clearly get a proportion of their business from the attractions provided by the Park. In other communities, such as Collingwood, Takaka and the rest of Golden Bay, Motueka, Murchison and Westport, there is a further direct effect. For instance, people passing through Westport and communities along the road to Karamea generate economic activity. But to what extent the Park has caused this new activity is difficult to estimate, and would require comprehensive surveys of businesses and visitors alike to pin down. The next census in 2001 will provide data on employment by sector for comparison with the 1996 baseline. At the stage of our surveys (in 1998), two years after the establishment of the Park, there is sufficient new activity in the Park (most identified through information on concessions) and new services, such as accommodation, bars, cafés, crafts and transport near to the Park and servicing Park visitors, to conclude that the original estimate of 50 direct jobs in five years will prove conservative.

There is also a flow-on effect on employment and expenditure. Narayan (1993) calculated Type II multipliers (direct, indirect and induced effects) for the West Coast of 1.56 for cafés, restaurants and motels, 1.66 for transport, and 1.76 for business services. Sectors such as building and construction are higher. Therefore, an average multiplier for tourism in the order of 1.6 gives a modest effect, i.e. 50 new jobs in tourism can be expected to have a flow-on effect creating an additional 30 jobs in the regional economy. This is similar to the effect projected in the original economic assessment of the Park.

The direct and indirect economic effects of the Park on expenditure and employment will depend on the approach taken to managing the Park and tourist sector. Various options and three scenarios are discussed in Section 5.

4.4 SOCIAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM

There is ample research to show that tourism, including eco-tourism, is far from a panacea for rural communities (Warren & Taylor 1994). The original assessment in 1993 indicated that with growth in the tourist industry there will be a shift in emphasis from production to service work in the Park communities. Because service occupations are typically filled by women, there is likely to be a shift in the participation rates of men and women in the workforce. While jobs for men may disappear, jobs for women, especially part-time jobs, may increase. It was also predicted that if tourism does increase, then the lifestyles of people in the small communities are likely to change. For instance, it is likely that the summer ‘crowds’ may be there for longer periods of the year as the tourist shoulder periods extend. However, with increased populations, plus tourist numbers, services such as medical services or public transport may be more viable.

It is evident in 1998 that lifestyles in and around the Kahurangi National Park are indeed changing and becoming more diverse. While economic activity in the areas surrounding the Park is still based strongly on farming, and dairy farming in particular, there other well established groups, including the original 'alternative lifestylers', low income and unemployed groups attracted to cheap housing in the area since the economic restructuring of the late 1980s, the 'new lifestylers'—some very wealthy—and now tourism entrepreneurs and business people. Social conflicts and divisions were described by interviewees, and are likely to increase.

Of the areas surrounding the park, Golden Bay probably has the greatest diversity and potential for social conflicts. Some of these conflicts involve land use, and the value of land. Others involve planning issues, and there have been some heated battles in the Bay about coastal subdivision, marine farm proposals, and hotel-resort proposals.

The impacts of existing activity can also cause problems. One issue cited was conflict between tourism and local traffic. In Karamea, there was concern about the effects of air traffic. A large number of helicopters and planes in the area cause a noise problem in the town itself and around the airport. An increase was also noted in the numbers of motorised vehicles and wet bikes (wave riders etc.) on the Karamea estuary.

Environmental issues are not all generated by tourism. For example, tourist operators commented on the use of rivers as 'a rubbish dump' for farmers. There are also local conflicts over water pollution by the dairy industry.

The communities around the Park previously experienced 'very little' crime. It was reported that there is now 'more than there used to be'. The most common problems involve theft from vehicles at road ends and car parks, while people are away tramping. The 1997/98 summer season was said to be the first time for a car to be stolen from the end of the road to the Heaphy Track at Karamea. Farmers now know to take the keys out of their vehicles. There is, however, very little vandalism in the Park itself. Overall, most problems are at the main public access points. For instance, no problems have yet been experienced at the end of the Matiri road.

4.5 MARKETING AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE PARK

The 1993 assessment found general agreement that national park status would improve the marketing potential of the region, especially to overseas tourists. It was also established that national park status is insufficient on its own. The Park needs to be marketed in association with other national parks as an area with special and unique qualities. It was noted that other national parks tend to be marketed around a particular attraction or a number of attractions, such as the Punakaiki rocks or the Abel Tasman Track. Very similar views were expressed by people in the tourism and related industries during this current study. However, five years later on the reservations are perhaps clearer, and the need for good public information is articulated more strongly.

Kahurangi has been well established as the Park name since 1993, when the name was an issue with many people. An image has certainly been developed around Kahurangi, as a dramatic and diverse wilderness with many attractions to visitors. The name has appeared on many maps and promotion brochures. Information on the Park has appeared in magazines, including airline in-flight magazines, and guide books such as the Lonely Planet Guide (Turner et al. 1996). The Heaphy Track remains a key feature of the Park and is now marketed internationally as one of New Zealand's 'great walks'. Specific articles increase local use; for example, an article on Mt Owen in a Christchurch newspaper in 1997 reportedly caused a 'big increase' in numbers using that area. On the Karamea side, the Park was seen as a drawcard that has not yet been properly exploited. On the Golden Bay side, however, the Park was seen more as 'simply another park'. While tourists are beginning to recognise the name Kahurangi, they don't necessarily ask specifically about it as a national park. In general, overseas visitors seemed to be more aware of the Park than domestic tourists.

There is a notable lack of general information on the Park available to tourists at Visitor Centres. In addition, a particular need was noted for area-specific brochures at the different entry points to the Park. These could include local history as well as better information on the flora, fauna and birdlife of the Park in the form of flyers and leaflets (rather than books). People often come back after a walk and ask their hosts about things they have seen. They look then at any bird and botanical books available.

A more professional approach to promotion of the park and the area around the Park was advocated by many people interviewed. At present there are visitor information centres in Takaka, Murchison (summer only) and Karamea. These visitor centres have largely been run by volunteer committees and staff. There has been a move towards paid people and a more 'professional' and commercial approach, linking into the official national Visitor Information Network (VIN) operated by the New Zealand Tourism Board. There are VIN centres in the main towns of Motueka and Takaka, and also in Westport and Nelson. Each of these communities also has a DOC office, and several of these offices, in particular Takaka and Motueka, have had information centres, and have also provided hut and track passes and hunting permits.

In the three key communities of Takaka, Karamea and Murchison there are plans to improve the existing community-based information centres and combine these with DOC. This move has already been made in Motueka. Combining information facilities is likely to take different forms in different communities. Some of the smaller DOC centres are not staffed full-time and, as noted previously, some of the community visitor centres are run by volunteers and are open for limited times.

One of the issues still to be addressed is the location of each combined information centre. This was also an issue in Motueka where the old DOC information centre was on the edge of the business area and well away from the VIN centre in the middle of town. The DOC office in Murchison is also well away from the main highway where the tourist information centre is well located. Overall, sensible rationalisation is needed. The combined DOC and VIN centre in Reefton was quoted as providing an excellent model to follow.

The Department of Conservation has a key role to play in the rationalisation and development of the local information centres. This will require DOC to actively work with the local committees, and will also require funding. Funding proposals by DOC are very limited. For example, in Karamea DOC has offered $3000 in the form of Park interpretation stands to be included in a proposed refurbished centre. The centre committee will need to find other sources of funds (see development scenarios in Section 5 below). Furthermore, the local communities will, in most cases, need to overcome local divisions and leadership issues. For instance, there is a promotions group functioning in Murchison, but links with the volunteer committee running the visitor centre are not strong and could be improved.

Communities and local businesses do not easily recognise that they need to work together to attract more visitors to their area rather than trying to compete for a fixed pool of visitors. This is a common problem faced by local rural tourism groups (Taylor & Warren 1998). Clustering is required with existing organisations, such as Tourism Nelson, and the larger tourism businesses. One suggestion was for joint marketing of the region in Auckland through TRENZ (the annual national tourism exhibition). The future may be to market the top of the South Island, or the centre of New Zealand (including Wellington) as a destination. Use of the Internet was seen as a valuable direct marketing tool with a few businesses operating Web pages, and others planning to do so.

Co-ordination between DOC, other agencies, local government and local businesses could be improved. For example, the Oparara Road (Karamea) was closed for some time recently, yet at the same time Air New Zealand and DOC in Hokitika were continuing to promote the Oparara arches. A similar example arose with respect to the Franz Josef area in 1998, when Auckland travel agents were reported as telling visitors that the Franz Josef bridge was closed, several weeks after it had been opened following repair of flood damage!

5. The management of change

5.1 INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PARK

It is important to consider how the social and economic benefits gained from the conservation estate through creation of the Kahurangi National Park can be maximised. In 1993 most people recognised that it would cost extra money to build up the infrastructure required for a national park. It was suggested that establishment funding for the Park could be provided through a special, joint injection of public, private and community monies. It was considered that mechanisms to recover the costs of providing and maintaining national park facilities also needed to be implemented.

It was generally agreed by people in the tourist sector in 1993 that it is necessary to manage and market tourism more effectively, to enhance or protect the experiences of overseas and domestic tourists, extend the shoulder periods, spread use over a number of attractions in the area and maximise economic benefits in the region. A strategic approach to tourism would be achieved though establishing joint management arrangements between DOC and other tourism interests. These could include management regimes for nearby, non-park conservation estate, for activities such as mountain biking and horse riding, and to take pressure of use off the Park, e.g. in the location of concessions in areas beyond the Park.

These issues of investment and establishment of the Park remain largely unattended in 1998 and, in many respects, are even more obvious. It is argued that ‘only lip service is being paid to the Park’, not just by DOC. The Department of Conservation needs more money for huts and track maintenance, and to build staff skills, quality of performance and morale. But the district councils and Transit New Zealand need more money to invest in signage and roads. Overall, there is a need for central government assistance and incentives; for example, in support of business initiatives and tourist promotion, or even through Taskforce Green and assistance to community projects.

Investment scenarios

Three scenarios have been derived from analysis of the information received during this survey from people interviewed in communities around the Park, DOC staff, and tourism operators. The scenarios are optional strategies for the future of Kahurangi National Park. Their purpose is to provide DOC with a basis for discussion of development strategies with the communities surround the Park.

Scenario 1—An investment and development programme

- A 5–10 year development programme with targeted investment (see below) in new huts, tracks, facilities and access roads, while maintaining existing facilities to a high standard, including the Heaphy as a premier track.

- Development of three well-equipped visitor centres, operated jointly by DOC and the local communities, at Takaka, Murchison and Karamea.
- New signage, interpretation programmes and provision of free information and fliers about the Park.
- Increased DOC front-line staffing.
- Increased differentiation between less-specialised users of highly developed facilities (e.g. intensive walking on a highly-developed track) and specialised recreationalists in lowly-developed facilities and wilderness areas.
- The investment would come from a mix of central and local government funding, private sector operations, sponsorship, and community involvement. Income from concessions and user charges would increase and be invested back into the Park.

Benefits would include increased economic impact in local communities through tourism and recreational use, increased knowledge of the Park and its resources, both nationally and internationally, and increased public commitment to national park and conservation goals.

The additional costs associated with the scenario would be significant and, as noted, funding would need to come from a mixture of sources.

Risks (or indirect costs) that could result from the adoption of this approach are that other areas and projects could suffer as a result of funds and effort (public, private and community) being diverted.

Scenario II—The status quo

- No new huts or tracks. Limited maintenance of access roads. Upkeep of huts and tracks limited and based on DOC national priority system. Some little-used huts and tracks fall into disrepair or are removed.
- Community joint venture information centres developed in existing buildings with minor funding from DOC.
- Slow increase in tourism development based on the Park. Static domestic recreational use. No increase in concession and user fee income.
- User charges on information and low-level staffing. Likely to result in lack of growth in Park use and limited advance of education and conservation goals.
- Park use away from short walks and main tracks likely to become relatively specialised, or restricted to highly experienced trampers, fishers and hunters (the latter using helicopter access). Increased conflict between these parties.

There are few benefits seen as likely to accrue from this scenario, and no additional financial costs.

There is a significant risk that increasing use of helicopter servicing of the specialist activities (fishing, hunting, and rafting) will reduce the value of the wilderness experience both for these users and general users (trampers, walkers, and nature conservation tourists) to the extent that fewer people will come to the area[13]. There is also a risk that walking use will become restricted to the Heaphy Track, with some overuse experienced there at peak times.

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13 One intending tourist operaror has already abandoned plans to take groups on multi-day trips into the Park because of the helicopter noise near huts.

Scenario III—The sinking lid

- No new huts and tracks, reduced maintenance of facilities based on DOC national priority system. Most huts, tracks and access roads go into decline. Increased pest and weed problems.
- Little used huts removed and low-use tracks not maintained, and allowed to become overgrown.
- Increased wilderness areas, which require little maintenance but may enhance intrinsic conservation values.
- No DOC assistance to local information centres, all information based on user pays, resulting in reducing interest in the Park.
- Little increase in Park-based tourism, reduction in domestic general recreationalists, and an increase in specialised, wilderness recreation.
- Reduced income from concessions and user fees.

There are no additional direct costs, and benefits will accrue as cost savings. There may also be conservation benefits (including intrinsic values) from reduced use of the Park.

Risks are that few visitors will enjoy the experience of the Park, educational values will be reduced and businesses in communities surrounding the Park will suffer.

5.2 COMMUNITY LIAISON AND INVOLVEMENT

Since 1993 the structure of DOC has changed significantly. Under the new structure there are three regional offices, and eight conservancies with a number of area offices. Westport is an area office, and Karamea is attached to Westport, currently with four staff based at Karamea. The number of staff at the Murchison office (attached to St Arnaud Area Office) has been reduced to one. The West Coast is in the Southern region and Nelson is in the Central region. Conservation Board areas are not necessarily the same as conservancy areas. The Nelson Conservation Board oversees the whole of the Kahurangi Park, and the Management Planning process for the Park is being conducted by the Nelson conservancy. The West Coast Conservation Board has very little impact on what happens in the Park, and there was some concern that the Board was not allowed to put in a formal submission to the recently circulated draft Management Plan (they had to do it as individuals).

Although the Park is the responsibility of the Nelson Conservation Board, the Nelson-West Coast Conservancy boundary runs through the Park (see Fig. 1). Policy is therefore directed from Nelson, but the work is carried out by two conservancies. It was noted that the physical state of the Heaphy Track deteriorates markedly when crossing from the section maintained by Nelson Conservancy to the section managed by West Coast Conservancy. There appears to be a lack of coordination between the two conservancies over administration of the Park; for example, the upkeep of huts and their supply with gas and coal.

In 1993 there was general recognition that the Department needed to maintain ongoing liaison and community involvement, and take an active role in the tourist industry. In 1998, the same views were expressed, but there was only limited evidence that DOC was taking an active role. Lack of resourcing was recognised as a key issue and DOC was referred to as being 'stretched'. Another comment was that there was a 'lot of planning, poor on action' in relation to track construction, culverts etc. Nonetheless, the DOC office in Karamea works reasonably closely with the Information Centre and takes Centre staff out on the tracks and provides them with some training. The Department of Conservation reports to the Information Centre each month, saying what they have been doing, and what they plan to do in the short to medium term.

There is a perception in the Park communities that DOC is not as active in maintaining huts and tracks as previously. The Department of Conservation has centralised its workforce to the main stations (field centres) with 'hit' teams available from these bases to undertake track maintenance and provide staffing at peak times. This may be affecting community perceptions of the adequacy of DOC staffing as staff are not as visible as in the past.

People in the Karamea and Golden Bay communities had expected DOC to put bigger resources into the new Park, and hoped that DOC would actively promote the Park. They expected to see more people employed. The impression was that DOC is not doing much and is low on resources and morale. The local community has had to wait too long for action on issues considered to be of vital importance to the community; for example, dealing with problems on the Oparara Road, and the Fenian Track.

There is a significant issue with respect to overlapping and confusing jurisdictions. For example, the Fenian Track is an unformed legal road which DOC administers as a track. It has been closed since August 1997, and was closed for a period two years prior to that as well. Westland District Council and the West Coast Regional Council also have some responsibilities for the track/road. However, none of these agencies is taking responsibility for stabilising the quarry area or rerouting of the track (for safety), and the loss of the track has cost the local community some tourism business.

The Oparara Road was opened at Christmas, having been closed for several months and previously (two years earlier) for nine months. The Westland District Council is considering taking over the road with DOC input. It isn't a legal road and if the Council takes it over it will have to be surveyed out of the Park.

Community attitudes have changed over the past few years. Kahurangi has become an important 'psychological part' of both Golden Bay and the Karamea area. It is part of their isolation, part of their context of areas with outstanding natural environments. The effect of the Park is already evident in these communities and helps to raise environmental consciousness as well as create economic opportunities. These effects are much less evident in Murchison, where the visitor economy is based on its position on the main highway, and activities outside the Park, particularly fishing. Karamea residents and businesses are planning for an increase in business and using the Park as a marketing drawcard.

The formation of the Park means that local residents can't do some things that they previously took for granted (and this effect may not yet be fully realised).

Under the previous administration (Forest Park) local residents could negotiate, for example, to take fallen wood for woodworking. Now, DOC will not allow this activity, even though they may have to remove logs themselves that block a river bed or track.

Westland District Council relations with DOC have not been good but are improving. The Council sees Karamea as a weekend destination for Wellington professionals, and have assisted the Karamea Community to seal the airstrip by providing a loan. There is a perception that DOC is adopting a very short-term perspective and doesn't seem to have any real long-term plans.

5.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There is a need to monitor the social and economic impacts of the Park over time, based on the 1993 assessment and this 1997/98 assessment. The monitoring will be useful for park planning and management, and can be applied to strategic planning by the Park communities. It will also form the baseline for longer-term assessments of effects of the Park. The information will also be useful as a comparative case in the assessment and evaluation of future park proposals around New Zealand.

Some specific needs are:

- An improved system of reliable track counters to provide systematic, longitudinal data.
- Regular analysis of hut books for visitor characteristics.
- Regular analysis of visitor centre data and sample visitor surveys, in a joint venture with district and regional tourism offices.
- Ongoing maintenance of a concessions database for the Park.
- Regular recording of issues that arise during consultation with Park communities.
- The allocation of resources to visitor monitoring and analysis by DOC.

A comprehensive update of social and economic impacts of the Park should be planned for 2002—assuming 2001 census data are available at that time.

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Appendix 1

KAHURANGI PARK STUDY—KEYWORDS[14]

interview [name of the person interviewed]
date [date of the interview]
area [e.g. Murchison, Karamea, Golden Bay]
organisation [the name of the organisation or company that the interviewee is involved with]
contact [Address and phone number/s if available]
type [tourist operation type and description]
personal [personal background and work history of the operator]
profile [social and economic profile of the community and surrounding region]
bike [issues relating to mountain bikes]
chopper [issues relating to helicopter access]
concessions [issues relating to the process of application and allocation, fees, management of the resource and monitoring]
council [role of local and regional government—supply of public infrastructure such as water, toilets]
crime [levels and changes in crime in the area]
develop [business development process and plans]
doc [general role of DOC—relations with the community—see also park and concessions]
eel [issue relating to harvesting of eels]
employ [employment generated by the park and or tourism activity]
highway [roads and signage, access roads]
hunting [issues relating to recreational hunting]
maori [issues relating to Maori interests and use]
mining [issues related to mining in the park area]
moss [issues relating to sphagnum moss]
network [developing and maintaining local and regional networks and groups]
park [management issues for national park and conservation land—note key issues have their own words e.g. moss, mining, road, bike, track, chopper]
promo [advertising and promotion of tourism and the park]
rates [issues around charging and commissions for tourism businesses]
resources [nature of the tourist resource]
road [issues relating to the trans-park road proposal]
strategy [tourism development strategy for the surrounding areas]
stress [personal issues and stress, community conflicts]
support [level of community support for tourism and the park]
track [issues relating to the use and maintenance of tracks and huts]
training [training needs in the area, including for tourism]
trends [tourist trends]
visitor [nature and numbers of visitors to the business or area]
water [issues relating to extraction of water and hydro electricity]

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14 All field and meeting notes were coded using the above key words so that the material could be sorted and analysed using AskSam software.