

PROPOSED KAWATIRI HERITAGE PARK

NOVEMBER 2006

What is a Heritage Park?

A Heritage Park is public conservation land with historic or natural resources that are of particular significance. Similar parks have been established in other places in New Zealand to provide recognition of important places - Victoria Forest Park in the Reefton area is a West Coast example.

Would a Heritage Park benefit Buller?

A heritage park would highlight Buller as a distinctive and significant area of historical, natural and recreational importance. A heightened profile would present an opportunity for communities to work together with land managers to develop and promote heritage based opportunities.

Cultural tourism is an international phenomenon. The NZ Tourism Research Council identifies cultural tourism as a rapidly growing segment of the New Zealand brand that extends across all aspects of New Zealand's culture - indigenous and colonial, social and industrial.

Buller has a rich social and industrial history. Local heritage projects focus on this at Denniston and Charming Creek and other sites such as Millerton and Lyell compliment the stories of Buller's early life and times. Buller communities like to celebrate their heritage and enable others to appreciate and enjoy it. The proposed Kawatiri Heritage Park presents an opportunity to showcase the heritage that is right on Westport's front door step and support social and economic opportunities.

What land is involved?

The proposal is to gazette 91 existing conservation areas in the Buller covering 146,563 hectares as a Conservation Park to be known as the Kawatiri Heritage Park.

The land proposed for the new park is already conservation land of which half has previously been gazetted as Ecological Areas. It lies between the Buller River in the south and the Little Wanganui River in the north, east to Kahurangi National Park along the main divide and west to SH 61 - refer to the map on p2.

No private land is involved and neither is land managed by the Ministry for Economic Development. Land required for some local development investigations under discussion with DOC would be excluded from the proposal.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

What about commercial access and minerals?

Nothing will change for people wanting to apply to undertake commercial ventures in the proposed boundary. Mining already occurs within this area, and it is also an approved activity in some conservation parks, for instance, Oceana Gold NZ Ltd's mine at Reefton is within the Victoria Forest Park. This is because applications to access minerals, or to undertake other commercial ventures on conservation managed land, are assessed on their merits against the conservation values involved.

Where to from here?

Discussions have taken place with local authorities and community interest groups in Buller. The purpose of these discussions was to outline the project, inform people about the process and consult with them on issues and options. Public submissions are now invited from the wider community on the proposal and hearings may be held. At the conclusion of the submissions process the Minister of Conservation will make a decision on whether or not to approve the heritage park.

Submissions close 2 March 2007.

More Information?

More information about the Kawatiri Heritage Park proposal is available from Department of Conservation offices in Westport, Greymouth and Hokitika, and, at the Buller District Council's office in Westport.

E-mail queries may be addressed to westcoast@doc.govt.nz

