

## SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATION

# LABOUR WEEKEND PUBLIC MEETING

**Jarrold Bowler of Genesis Energy (formerly the hydrologist and now Procurements and Contracts Manager) continued the AFTR major educational theme of these meetings with his talk on "The Ideal Long-term Management of the Tongariro River by Discussing the Challenges the River faces."**

The talk began with an informative description of the river's catchment, contrasting the hydrology of the eastern catchment (Waipakahi River valley) with the western National Park. That large areas of the catchment are in either the Kaimanawa Forest Park or the Tongariro National Park is a strength, as also that large areas are in Maori ownership. Thus the catchment has limited opportunity for any wide-scale land use change. Also there is limited demand for water allocation. And the river is well-understood as it has been monitored and researched over a long period.

A further strength is seen in examples of various interest groups undertaking initiatives that are enhancing aspects of the river and its environs. The Advocates of course, with their riverside enhancement projects, the Ngati Turangitukua with willow



removal and gravel extraction, the Lake Rotoaira Trust with its monitoring and research, DoC with fishery management, the Tongariro National Trout Centre with its education programs, the Blue Duck Trusts, all contribute to the status of the river, as does Genesis Energy with its monitoring, research and mitigation.

The Tongariro is a big, dynamic river that has a life force of its own. Human interventions such as have been proposed from time to time – particularly in the lower reaches like dredging - would be unproductive and probably futile. The flood history of the river particularly those that originate in the southeast of the catchment bring down material that is beyond human intervention.

How much more effective and efficient it would be if these efforts were better integrated. (This is the Advocates' stance too, hence our continued pressing EW to formulate an integrated catchment management plan).

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Looking back over the second half of 2009 one can see that the AFTR have been no less involved than in 2008 (which was a busy year). The pine tree eradication process will move to a third phase soon and the Committee is thinking about fourth and five phases to ensure that the next generation of young pines are dealt with before they become hard to manage.**

The AFTR have continued with riverbank re-vegetation on the left bank near Taupahi Reserve. Eric Wilson has spent many hours here, resulting in planting 1000 native plants one winter's morning (assisted by some 30 residents; the job took two hours) Clearing the site was undertaken by Community Detention people who seemed to enjoy this work. Other assistance has come from the District Council and Truebridge Contractors. The project is ongoing.

The Advocates stand for the intelligent care of the Tongariro River (to be formalised in a Management Plan) and for the restoration of the native flora and fauna in the river valley. We emphasise our reliance on ecological principles and compliance with the nation's biodiversity strategy. We seek the best scientific understanding and in a short time our knowledge has grown – talks such as that presented by Jarrold Bowler, Genesis Energy hydrologist at Labour Weekend add strongly to the informed basis of our advocacy. I think the time has come formally to consolidate that knowledge in one place for its educational value. Of course, we work with other stakeholders in this desire to understand the River, and are pleased to report our first meeting with the Turangitukua Environment Committee in October.

In this newsletter you will find a report from Ross Baker on the ecotourism opportunity the River offers. Ross has worked this proposal for a walking and cycling track to the stage where it is widely supported politically. Let's hope that it is an idea whose time has come.

May you enjoy the coming holiday season.

Mark Cosgrove



# ACCESS INITIATIVE

**From its beginning, The Advocates has had a goal of improving access along the Tongariro River. In 2003 the Advocates made a submission to the Turangi /Tongariro Community Board seeking an extension to existing tracks.**

A submission was made to Taupo District Council in 2007, through a change in the Taupo District Council Long Term Council Community Plan, to ask that provision be made to ensure that access along existing tracks was maintained if there was further flood damage which could potentially see track loss around the area of the Stag Pool on the true right bank.

Advocates attended the Outdoor Walking Access Consultation Panel meeting in Taupo on 16 May 06 and followed up by asking Taupo District Council to clarify existing public access roads in the area.



**Louise Upston's rafting experience**

For all of these actions little was achieved.

Since 2008 the Mayor of Taupo, Rick Cooper, has given great support to the idea of developing tracks. The suggestion is that a track be developed on the true right bank, south through prison land and then through DoC land to the Poutu intake and on to Tree Trunk Gorge where tracks already exist. Attention has been captured with the new Government proposing an extension of cycling/walking tracks. It would seem that such a proposal has distinct merit. Certainly there is much support locally.

The matter has been brought to the attention of local MP Louise Upston. Louise was invited to raft the river to view the spectacular scenery.

She did and supports the proposal and has spoken to Judith Collins as Minister of Corrections seeking her support.



**Louise Upston**



## JOHN GIBBS RETIREMENT

**John has been involved in freshwater fishery management for all his working life.**

John will retire in December of this year. We in the Advocates wish John a long and happy retirement.

An account of John's service is on the AFTR website, editorial.

# WILDING PINES PROJECT

DECEMBER 2009

**By the time this newsletter goes to print, Stage 2 of the Wilding Pines Project will virtually have been completed, with only a few missed trees yet to be treated, plus any felling of trees along the tracks that the remainder of our funds will allow for to be carried out.**

After a slow start to the year, with our first contractor, Will Kemp, having moved to live in Tauranga, we were finally able to appoint a replacement in Peter Marshall, of Acacia Bay Nurseries. He comes with the Department of Conservation's recommendation, has carried out forestry work for DoC for many years, and has a complete understanding of the type of work involved in our project.

He was able to start work in September taking over from where Will Kemp stopped. The total number of trees now treated by him is approximately 1340 which, when added to the 1195 trees covered initially, makes a total of 2535. The newly introduced Meturon herbicide has proved exceptionally effective and much quicker to apply, with the result that our funding has been allowed to go so much further than originally anticipated, a considerable bonus as the number of trees actually growing is greater than in the original DoC survey. We have also undertaken tree felling in the areas alongside walking tracks adjacent to the Island/Major Jones Pools and behind Waddell's Pool.

The Department of Conservation has enthusiastically expressed their satisfaction with the results of this eradication program and anticipate good regeneration of the native species as a result



of the gradual increase in filtered sunlight to the vegetation understory, an expected result of the slow disintegration of the pine canopy. We are also hoping that a return of the manuka and kanuka will help re-establish the little green manuka beetle, an important food source for juvenile trout.

The next steps in this project are to establish where we can go from here by way of trees on Department of Corrections Land and local Iwi-owned land, monitoring of missed pines in the Stage 2 DoC estate land and developing a programme to inhibit the re-establishment of wilding pines in all treated areas. Further funds will be sought once we have developed these stages.

It is worth mentioning that the value of projects such as this one has been increasingly recognised in New Zealand with the growing awareness of the threat to our native flora and fauna that self-seeded wilding pines present, with no greater evidence of this recognition being the recent TV1 Country Calender coverage of the local community-initiated eradication programme in the Marlborough Sounds. We hope that our Pines Project will add weight to even greater national awareness and support.

As a committee, we would like to thank you, as members, for your continued support of this very important environmental programme on our famous Tongariro River.



## RIVERBANK RESTORATION



**An AFTR project has been to restore the river margin. This year we undertook to plant the area at the end of Taupahi Reserve which is next to the Island Pool.**

Clearance of the area was through the services of Corrections, Community Probation, Taupo. The people involved did a magnificent job for us. Mathew Truebridge with his large

machine moved felled logs off the planting area and we thank Mathew.

More than 1000 plants were planted in 2 hours by a willing community workforce and community probation..

Since planting, the area north of Taupahi Reserve to Te Aho Reserve has been cleared by Community Probation for planting in 2010. Maintenance is required to keep the blackberry in check.

## RIVER ACCESS DEVELOPING A POLICY.

**Stuart Crosbie is leading a discussion aimed at a policy on access. This issue is about the proportion of the Tongariro River accessible for anglers and non-anglers.**

Improved access leads to (i) less fishing pressure with a greater number and variety of pools to fish except during winter spawning runs when the upper river is closed; (ii) loop routes for walkers and cyclists to enjoy the river environs; (iii) better integration of the river environs with the National Trout Centre as a tourist attraction; and (iv) a wider appreciation of the Tongariro River as an outstanding amenity to gain public support for preserving the river's values and protection against further exploitation. Associated aspects include clarity on paper roads, the maintenance and development of tracks and their responsible management for shared use (by anglers, hikers, cyclists, etc).

## FROM THE SECRETARY TREASURER

**Thank you all for your support.**

Attached to this newsletter is an account for 2010 subscriptions. Subscriptions for 2010 remain unchanged:

- \$25 per individual
- \$30 for a household
- \$60 for an Associate membership.

The Advocates is registered with the Charities Commission, so donations are tax-deductible. Our number is CC11274

In 2010 the Annual Report will publish the names of members who have agreed to have their names published. A significant number have agreed, which we find pleasing. We will continue with this policy.

A key to our functioning is an accurate database. I am thankful for notification of change of address or other key data, death of a member, or withdrawal of membership. Please continue to provide me with such information.

Those who can pay subscriptions by internet banking are encouraged to do so. Go to our website [www.tongariroriver.org.nz](http://www.tongariroriver.org.nz) membership and email the form with membership detail from this page. To make the internet subscription payment, go to your bank website and make the payment from there. Our bank account number is 38 9000 0863130 00

Eric Wilson

## COMMITTEE CHANGES

We were sorry to receive the resignation of Robert Brace from the committee. We valued Roberts insights, questions, enthusiasm and commitment. Pressure of work made it difficult for Robert. We thank him.



**Robert Brace**

The committee was pleased to co-opt Neville Young to the committee.



**Neville Young**

## STOP PRESS

Paul Green, Tongariro Taupo Conservator, has announced that Dave Lumley, DoC Manager for Turangi Taupo will be the interim manager of the Taupo fishery.