



caring about you & your environment

Commercial and Non-commercial Recreation and Tourism Activities on Regional Council Lands

Information Booklet

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1 INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in recreational activities in the Wellington region. The Wellington Regional Council encourages you to use the region's parks and forests and hopes this booklet will be helpful for you to pursue your interests.

This booklet has been written for those people running or intending to establish a recreation or tourism business, for recreation clubs and members of the public who wish to undertake events and activities on land managed by Wellington Regional Council. The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with some guidance on how commercial and non-commercial activities are managed. Current fees and charges are also included.

2 HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

It's easy – the first part gives you some background information on commercial and non-commercial concessions. The second part provides the latest fees and charges. At the end are some contact details if you need further information or advice.

3 WHAT DOES COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL MEAN?

These are just terms used to classify if your activity is a business or not. Commercial refers to recreation or tourism businesses whereas non-commercial refers to club, association, school group or other non-business activities.

4 WHAT IS A CONCESSION?

4.1 WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

A concession grants legal rights for an individual or organisation (known as a Concessionaire) to offer recreation services and facilities for visitors to Wellington Regional Council parks and forests.

Concessions are classified and processed as major, minor, temporary or trial concessions, depending on the type and scale of activity, and the potential effects on the environment or community.

5 WHY DOES THE WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL HAVE CONCESSIONS?

Concessionaires offer alternative and complementary recreation services and experiences to independent recreation. The Regional Council promotes public access to a wide variety of natural areas within easy reach of cities. The Council encourages multiple use of land, vegetation and water resources, provided the primary use is not compromised. Concessionaires satisfy a public need by providing access to and enjoyment of those resources by a significant number of park/forest visitors, some who would not otherwise get the opportunity to experience them.

Concessions are needed in order to manage activities and minimise effects. The concessions system provides a clear and transparent contract between an operator and the Wellington Regional Council for that management. In future, Wellington Regional Council may consider tendering for education and/or commercial recreation opportunities if visitor demand exists (for example, eco-tourism operations).

Exclusive commercial rights (that is, an operator having a monopoly) are rarely granted, and may only be possible where environmental and or social/cultural values outweigh the benefits or principles of competition. Film Companies may be granted exclusive use of a specified area, for a short term, at the discretion of the Council.

There are four main Acts and several management plans that provide the Wellington Regional Council with a mandate to develop and manage Parks and Forests, including the management of commercial and non-commercial use of Wellington Regional Council Parks and Forests:

- Local Government Act 1974
- Wellington Regional Water Board Act 1972
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Reserves Act 1977
- Regional Park and Forest Lands Management Plans

The Wellington Regional Council has a detailed policy and guidelines for commercial and non-commercial recreation which is available from either the Council rangers or administration staff (refer contacts at the end of this booklet).

6 DO I NEED A CONCESSION?

You will need a concession if you are intending to do any of the following in a park or forest on land owned or managed by the Wellington Regional Council:

1. Film (e.g. documentary, movie or commercial)
2. Offer guided activities
3. Conduct an event (e.g. triathlon, horse trial event, etc)
4. Build a structure (e.g. mini golf course)
5. Use an existing building
6. Conduct education or instruction activities (e.g. environmental education)
7. Offer transport services
8. Offer hire service
9. Conduct one-off activities (e.g. scientific research).

6.1 WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A CONCESSION?

There are several benefits to obtaining a concession if you intend to conduct a commercial or non-commercial recreation activity in a Wellington Regional Park or Forest:

- Gives you a legal right to carry out your activity on Wellington Regional Council land,
- Provides a formal relationship between yourself and the Wellington Regional Council,
- Provides security for your operation or event for the term of the concession,
- Provides competitive advantage of being a “Council Approved” operator.

7 HOW DO I GO ABOUT GETTING A CONCESSION?

There are different steps in the process of obtaining a concession, depending on what you would like to do. It really depends on whether your activity is likely to be a major, minor, temporary or trial concession. Here's a summary of what might be involved:

- Speak to a ranger or Council staff first to get advice
- Obtain an application form from either a ranger or the Wellington Regional Council
- Submit your application, which should include:
 - A completed application form
 - An application lodgement fee or booking fee
- Depending on your application, you might also be required to include:
 - An environmental and social effects assessment
 - An audited safety plan
 - Evidence of operator/guide experience and qualifications
 - A business plan and/or evidence of proven business skills.

If your application is classified as a major concession, you may need to obtain resource consent. This is a separate procedure, and not part of the concession application.

At the end of the concession application process (which may require public notification), if the Council approves your application, a contract will be drawn up between yourself and the Council.

8 FEES AND CHARGES

8.1 WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY?

In order to conduct your activity on land managed by the Wellington Regional Council, there are a variety of fees and charges that may apply. The key assumptions behind the Council's philosophy of charging are:

- Access to Wellington Regional Council Parks and Forests is free for casual visitors. Organised non-commercial and commercial activities normally require or involve additional Council services and/or privileges to use or occupy part of a park or forest. The Council believes that those who benefit directly from this use or privilege should contribute financially towards the associated costs. Some or all of the charges are recovered from users, the percentage of cost recovery being dependent upon the nature of the event/organisation.
- Full or almost full cost recovery will apply to commercial activities to avoid or minimise any rate payer subsidy of private gain;
- Some activities (for instance, enduro events, mountain bike events, 4WD events, some filming such as large feature movies) can produce more effects than others. The charges and fees tend to reflect this due to the additional Council resources needed to manage, avoid or mitigate these effects or repair damage. It is difficult to accurately cost the effects that arise from each activity as so much depends on the number of participants, length of the event (time and distance), the weather and general condition of the track or grassed area prior to the event taking place. Therefore, a simple and practical approach to setting fees has been adopted;
- There are benefits to the community from improving environmental education. School groups and other educational groups should be able to use and enjoy the parks and forests of the Wellington region for free and with the services of rangers (up to two hours free), in order to foster environmental and cultural/heritage awareness with younger generations and help Council achieve its environmental objectives. Some nominal charges may be required where ranger input is greater than two hours.
- The fees and charges have been based on the principles of being fair, consistent and relative to current market rates for similar opportunities and services.

8.2 WHAT DO I HAVE TO PAY?

Commercial Activities	Application Fees, Activity Fees & Bonds (all inclusive of GST)
Applications	\$175 non-refundable application fee for new applications and renewals.
Processing	Processing charges based on estimate of staff costs, public notification, consultation or any other processing costs required.
Bonds	Bonds may be required depending on activity and effects.
Site occupation, e.g. mini golf, eco-tourism operation	Market rental for space occupied and/or 10% of gross receipts or negotiated flat fee where activity not open to the public or a per person/vehicle charge as appropriate.
Ranger assistance (above normal duties) once commercial operation commences	\$50/hr for ranger time. \$80/hr ranger & vehicle.
Commercial Activity (Non mechanised, e.g. guided walking)	\$6 per person full day. \$3 per person half day.
Horse trekking	\$5 per participant.
Commercial Activity (Mechanised, e.g. vehicles and bikes)	
<i>4WD Bikes & Trail Bikes</i>	\$15/bike full day. \$10/bike half day.
<i>4WDs</i>	\$30/vehicle full day. \$20/vehicle half day.

Non-Commercial Events/Activities	Booking Fees, Activity Fees & Bonds (all inclusive of GST)
Booking fee	\$10 booking fee
Bond	\$100 bond minimum charge or higher negotiated bond, depending on effects
Ranger assistance with non-commercial events	\$50/hr ranger time \$80/hr ranger with vehicle
School Visits and School Events	School groups free with ranger time free up to first 2 hours. Ranger time at \$30/hr after that. Vehicle costs (if needed) to apply after first 2 hours.
Special Interest Groups (e.g. Forest & Bird, historic societies, nature clubs, universities)	Free access First 2 hours free with ranger \$50/hr ranger time after first 2 hours Vehicle costs may apply
Ken Gray, Education Centre	Bond may be required
Schools	Free access. Ranger free for first 2 hours. \$30/hr ranger time after first 2 hours
Independent Groups:	Free access. \$50/hr ranger interpretation (if requested)
Private Functions:	\$10 booking fee \$2/head or \$100/group, whichever is greater

Non-Commercial Events/Activities	Activity Fees (all inclusive of GST)
4WDs	\$10 Booking Fee \$15/vehicle
Trail Bikes	\$10 Booking Fee \$10/Bike
MTBs	\$10 Event Booking Fee \$5 per bike
Horses	Events: \$5 per competitor Rally/Practice: \$3 per participant \$10 Event Booking Fee
Orienteering / Running	\$3 per participant \$10 Booking Fee
Picnic Area or Space reservations for groups (e.g. Weddings)	\$20 per group minimum \$1 per person for groups >20 <i>NB. No Booking fee, but you must reserve a space with the ranger</i>
Camping	\$5/adult/night \$2/child/night under 16 years of age For flat site, tapped/potable water & toilets and/or picnic tables, coin operated BBQs.

8.3 CAN I GET A WAIVER OR A DISCOUNT?

Fees and charges may be waived or discounted if an activity meets at least two of the following criteria:

CRITERIA	EXPLANATION
Benefits to the management plan objectives and <i>Signature Values</i> ¹ of the park or forest	This activity could be a direct contribution to the management plan objectives and <i>Signature Values</i> of the Wellington Regional Council parks and forests.
Educational activity	The core activity is education relating to Wellington Regional Council parks and forests. Examples could be school groups.
Non-profit status	The activity must show clear non-commercial benefit. For example, a charitable organisation involved in fund-raising, or an activity that is open to the public and free of charge.

8.4 WILL MY FEES CHANGE?

When you are granted a concession by the Council, a contract will be drawn up. This contract will state what fees will apply to your activity, along with a date for reviewing these fees. Where possible, the Council will provide notice of no less than two months if your fees are to increase as from the next fee review date.

¹ *Signature values are a standard set of criteria used to assess the recreation, environmental and heritage values of Council parks and forests. These provide a 'signature' for each area, which identifies its unique character and helps Council staff decide how to manage it appropriately.*

9 HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION OR ADVICE?

For general enquiries, Wellington Regional Council Parks and Forests administration and management staff can be contacted at the Wellington offices on (04) 384 5708.

Wellington Regional Council rangers can be contacted at:

Akatarawa & Pakuratahi Forests	Tel. 526 5343 or 025 248 1658
Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Forest	Tel. 564 8599 or 021 249 6473
Belmont Regional Park	Tel. 586 6614 or 025 430 362
Battle Hill Regional Park	Tel. 237 5511 or 025 450 983
Kaitoke Regional Park/Hutt	Tel. 526 7322 or Water Collection Area 025 430 361
Queen Elizabeth Park	Tel. 04 292 8625/8432 or 025 244 5319/025 223 7115

For hunting and trail bike permits contact the Upper Hutt Office: Tel. 526 4133

Alternatively, you may like to access the Wellington Regional Council web site:
www.wrc.govt.nz