

# **WWI Living War Memorial forests for Thames-Coromandel**

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<b>TO</b>	Coromandel-Colville Community Board
<b>FROM</b>	Laurna White - Communications Manager
<b>DATE</b>	23 September 2014
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>WWI Living War Memorial forests for Thames-Coromandel</b>

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## **1 Purpose of Report**

To inform the Community Board about a proposal for WW1 Living War Memorial Forests throughout the Coromandel and to ascertain support from this Board for a memorial forest to be established in its ward.

## **2 Background**

- A concept of planting a memorial forest of thousands of native trees around the Thames-Coromandel district to commemorate NZ soldiers killed in WW1 has been proposed by Chris Adams, the first CEO of Tourism Coromandel, who now runs a sustainable tourism consultancy.
- A "National Memorial Forest" within the Coromandel would be a 'living' monument commemorating those who fought for our nation and also help to restore a special part of New Zealand's natural landscape. It would also tie in with the 100 year anniversary of WW1 (from 2015). A memorial forest will appeal to visitors from across the country and around the world. There are other examples of war memorial forests around the world. Plantings do not have to be restricted to a forest situation and a wetland area could be developed. The key factor to site location is accessibility for the public.
- Mr Adams approached Mayor Leach several months ago about the concept and on 22 September 2014 a meeting was held in Thames with DOC, WRC, Kauri 2000, Forest & Bird Protection Society, Destination Coromandel, Coromandel MP Scott Simpson, along with several Council elected members and staff to discuss the concept.
- There was overwhelming support at the meeting for the proposal and a high level discussion was held around appropriate land, supply of trees, administration, funding and workforce.
- It has been suggested that the first major planting should tie in with Anzac Day 2015 (Monday 27 April 2015). From there, other plantings could be launched around WW1 100 year anniversary dates (1915 - 1918) so there will be a three year time period for different memorial forests to be established throughout the Coromandel.
- Chris Adams is now working on a project concept plan that should be completed in early October and tabled on the day.
- The meeting identified that for the project to work it will require local communities to be intrinsically involved in the development, planting, and on-going maintenance. (with national and regional support).
- A working group needs to be formed with stakeholders from all agencies (DOC, WRC, TCDC, Kauri 2000, Forest and Bird Protection Society, along with community groups) to get into the detail about what areas on the Coromandel a forest could be planted.

### 3 Discussion

- For this to go ahead the timeframes are relatively tight (April 2015) for the first memorial forest on the Coromandel to be launched. Investigation of appropriate land (using Council, DOC, QE2 land) of a suitable size would need to be found quickly.
- Both TCDC and DOC are in support of appropriate land being used for this project. WRC can supply trees.
- A governance group will need to be established to work through the management and logistics. Structure of this governance group would be TCDC (1), Community Board Reps (5), DOC (1), WRC (1), Kauri 2000 (1) and Forest and Bird Protection Society (1)
- At this stage TCDC will be the lead agency.
- Community buy-in and local support. Does the Board believe its community will want to be involved and hands on? What other local organisations, groups and volunteers could be called upon for help?
- The bulk of the funding would come from sponsorship and grants.
- At the Community Board level local iwi would become involved.

### 4 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Coromandel-Colville Community Board:

1. Receives the report.
2. That the Coromandel-Colville Community Board endorses a Living WW1 War memorial forest to be established in its ward.
3. That the Coromandel-Colville Community Board supports a working group be formed and one member from the Coromandel-Colville Community Board be delegated to represent the Board on the development of a WWI Memorial for its ward.
4. That the Coromandel-Colville Community Board identifies areas within their ward that would be a suitable location to plant on or utilise existing planting.

### References-Tabled/Agenda Attachments

**Attachment A** *Concept/Project Plan (Chris Adams) to be tabled on the day*