

3. COAST TO HIGH COUNTRY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME VISIT

Officer responsible Director of Policy	Author Kerry Everingham, DDI 941 8779
--	---

The purpose of this report is to report back on the Education and Promotion Co-ordinator's observations of the Coast to the High Country Environmental Education Programme camp with Room 5 of Wharenui School.

CONTEXT

In May 2000 the Christchurch City Council approved funding for the Coast to the High Country Programme through the Annual Plan process. This support has continued and no further funding, except that provided for in the current and forward budgets, is being sought at this time.

In June of 2002 the Community Plans Special Committee agreed to the adoption of the Coast to the High Country partnership agreement for environmental education. Background to the Council's commitment to the Coast to the High Country Programme is provided in the report that went to the Community Plans Special Committee meeting in June 2002. The attachment sets out the agreed criteria for the Council's involvement in the partnership.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

The Coast to the High Country Programme was introduced in early 1999. It is a programme of educational activities for students from Year 7 to Year 13, focusing on primary level initially then secondary as resources, both financial and staffing, become available. The jewel in the crown of the programme is the unique three day residential, *Mountains to the Sea* camp, which takes children in a bus from their school to a local site, thence via a number of significant environmental sites to the high country, where they stay two nights at the Environmental Education Centre of New Zealand in the Craigieburn Forest Park. To ensure that the programme offers something to attract every school, it comprises a number of different courses and activities for a variety of target student groups. A record of the Room 5 of Wharenui School trip can be viewed in the attachment.

The 'Coast to the High Country' environmental education programme provides a programme of activities and lessons to address the key aims of environmental education. These aims are for students to develop:

Awareness and sensitivity to the environment and related issues;

Knowledge and understanding of the environment and the impact of people on it;

Attitudes and values that reflect feelings of concern for the environment;

Skills involved in identifying, investigating, and problem solving associated with environmental issues;

A sense of responsibility through participation and action as individuals, or members of a group, whanau, or iwi, in addressing environmental issues. Partners in the Coast to the High Country Programme are:

- Environment Canterbury
- Canterbury Environmental Trust
- Christchurch City Council
- Christchurch College of Education
- Department of Conservation, Canterbury Conservancy
- World Wide Fund for Nature

BACKGROUND

In order to get a better feel for what the programme offers teachers and students the partners in the Coast to the High Country programme agreed to send partner representatives (where possible) to observe the programme in action. The Council representative, Education and Promotion Co-ordinator, undertook to observe Room 5 of Wharenui Schools *Mountains to the Sea* camp. The Wharenui class camp was undertaken Tuesday 12 November through to Thursday 14 November 2002. Thirty-two of the Years 6/7 students participated. The report on the findings is set out in the attachment.

CONCLUSION

The Coast to the High Country Programme is seen as a complementary extension of the Learning Through Action environmental education programme offered by the Council through LEOTC (Learning Experiences Outside of the Classroom) funds. Co-ordinators for both programmes work closely together, providing support and promotion for each other's programmes. The Coast to the High Country Programme requires more of a commitment from teachers and is seen as the next step for those teachers that see value in the programmes offered by the Council Programme.

Within the terms of the partnership agreement each partner provided a list of its aims, targets and expectations for the programme. The two main aims identified by the Council were:

- The promotion of issues that relate to the role of the Council
- And opportunities for participation (action) for the local (built and natural urban) environment.

In my view these aims have been met with further work to be done on identifying relevant opportunities for encouraging the students to participate in action for the environment. The Local Government Act requires a considerable amount of public consultation, including children. This programme encourages children to participate in Local Government decision-making. It encourages them to form opinions and express their views on environmental matters. It also teaches them to consider they do have a voice and that we live in a society where the public is encouraged to make submissions and share their views and that those responsible for managing the development of our cities and land need to consider everyone's view.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the information be received.