

**Name of Project:** “Te Kāhui Tupua: Sacred Peaks”

**Awards:** **2010 New Zealand Post Local Government Supreme Award for Excellence In Local Government.**

**2010 Tourism Industry Association Award for Best Local Government Project in Support of the Tourism Industry.**

## 1. Brief Description of the Project

*“Are you prepared for the Land of the Sacred Peaks? For this is raw New Zealand. The pathways of millions of years await you. Yet, however, you choose. The journey you make will be uniquely yours. Prepare to be humbled, to be in awe and to be touched. Above all; prepare to be.” (Te Kāhui Tupua)*

Te Kāhui Tupua ([www.tekahui\\_tupua.co.nz](http://www.tekahui_tupua.co.nz)) is the name given to the \$3.5million tourism sector development programme which started on 1 July 2010 and was formally partnered locally by three District Councils, 12 separate Iwi (Maori tribes), four Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) and industry in the Central North Island, with significant Government funding support and advice. Its genesis was in the region’s crisis response to dire economic times for the Ruapehu, Wanganui, Rangitikei area in the late 1990s and early 2000s where tourism was identified as an industry capable to delivering significantly more benefits in employment and GDP. Te Kahui Tupua was completed on 30 June 2010, and exceeded expectations for its contribution to growing the region’s GDP through tourism.

As well as a tourism sector capability-building and branding project, Te Kahui Tupua represents regional development on a large scale aimed at revitalising a lagging regional economy, and integrating key groups such as Iwi into the economic framework for growth. Essentially, the project partners agreed in 2005 to invest \$2.85million (direct funding) to catch up the lag in tourism performance in the region (compared to the national average). In doing so, the region would create a new and sustainable, diversified industry sector to provide cushioning for swings in the predominant agriculture and manufacturing base of the area.

Te Kahui Tupua was also designed to address the alarming socioeconomic indicators in the late 1990s and early 2000s attesting to population decline, falling wage rates, and a raft of other signals that screamed out that strong intervention was required, and that Maori, making up 24% of the population, stood to lose disproportionately if nothing were done.

*“With continued kotahitanga, the weaving together of the region’s distinctive Maori and European heritage and extraordinary vistas will be presented to the world as the unifying brand for this cluster of districts.” (Te Kāhui Tupua Work Programme 2009/10. July 2009. P.1)*

Whilst the general public may connect Te Kahui Tupua marketing and branding, the name is an umbrella for a far-reaching vision of regional recovery that has the benefit of all people’s well-being at its core.

## 2. Organisations Involved

*“Our success as a region, lies in continuing to work and learn from each other along with combining our respective strengths for the benefit of our people.” (Wanganui – Rangitikei – Ruapehu Regional Economic Development Plan. October 200. ‘Introduction, p.2)*

Te Kāhui Tupua was conceived by the collaborative vision of a Regional Partnership Programme (RPP) principally of three District Councils and 12 distinct Iwi. This Rangitikei, Wanganui, Ruapehu Regional Partnership Programme is unique in New Zealand for both its cross-boundary reach, and the number of Iwi partnership with local government:

Local Authorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruapehu District Council;</li> <li>• Wanganui District Council;</li> <li>• Rangitikei District Council;</li> </ul>	Tourism Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit Ruapehu RTO;</li> <li>• Wanganui RTO;</li> <li>• Whanganui Maori RTO;</li> <li>• I-Sites of all 3 Districts;</li> </ul>
Iwi Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hinengakau Development Trust;</li> <li>• Tutetawha-Tupuwae Runanga;</li> <li>• Tuhua Hikurangi Regional Management Committee;</li> <li>• Rereahu/Te Ihinga a Rangi;</li> <li>• Ngati Rangi Trust;</li> <li>• Tamahaki Incorporation;</li> <li>• Te Runanga o Ngati Apa Society Incorporated;</li> <li>• Te Runanga o Ngati Hauti;</li> <li>• O Taihape Maori Komiti Incorporated;</li> <li>• Te Runanga o Turoho;</li> <li>• Te Runanga o Tama Upoko;</li> <li>• Nga Rauru Iwi Authority Society;</li> </ul>	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Conservation;</li> <li>• New Zealand Trade and Enterprise.</li> </ul>

### 3. Rationale for the Project and Expected Benefits

#### Rationale:

The late 1990s were a bleak period economically for Ruapehu District and the other districts of the region. On the back of a devastating volcanic eruption in 1996 which crippled the small, local tourism economy, and following the closure of a major employer in Taumarunui (AFCO), Ruapehu was reeling. Council had hit the 'panic button'.

*"There is a common fear throughout the (Ruapehu) community that the economy is dependent on factors beyond local control. Examples include farming which is affected by international demand and price trends, and tourism which is dependent on natural events such as weather conditions and volcanic activity." (Future Ruapehu 2010, July 1998, p.12)*

Very few areas could have absorbed such significant impacts on their economies unscathed. Council began a strategic planning exercise with its community, and economic development investment emerged as a major thrust. In its 'Future Ruapehu 2010' document completed in 1998, the Ruapehu community supported the Council taking leadership in economic development, and identified diversification into tourism as an important opportunity to pursue.

It was not just Ruapehu reeling and by the early 2000s Ruapehu, Wanganui and Rangitikei Councils were planning a combined response to regional recession in their area. A report commissioned from BERL in June 2003 quantified the degree of decline in the region. Economic indicators for the area were recorded as the worst nationally. Within its population of a combined 72,663 people, Iwi (24%) stood to lose disproportionately.

- Population decline: -14.6% from Ruapehu 1996-2001. All districts in decline;
- Region's Employee Wages: \$16.14 in 2001;
- Regional GDP: 0.1% growth pa (2.9% nationally). Only Wanganui was in growth;
- Region's Employment: +2.8% pa (+3.2% nationally)
- Tourism Guest Nights: 524,000 in 2002 with 158,000 international;
- Tourism Employment in region: 737 (5.5%) total FTEs.
- Tourism Spend: \$45.5million in 2002.

*"Over the longer term, the performance of both the Wanganui District and the Wanganui/Rangitikei/Ruapehu region has lagged the nation-wide averages in all indicators. In addition, both the Ruapehu and Rangitikei Districts have fared worse than the national averages. Of biggest concern is that GDP in the region has grown by only 0.1% per annum over the last eleven years compared to the national average of 2.9%." (BERL, June 2003. Economic Profile of the Wanganui, Rangitikei and Ruapehu Districts 1990-2002 Update, p.2).*

A joint 'Rangitikei-Wanganui-Ruapehu Economic Development Plan' was developed in 2002 to identify opportunities and threats, and the need for economic diversification agreed on. This translated into the preparation of a business case for bidding for Government Major Regional Initiative (MRI) funding in the

early 2003. The partnership's MRI Business Case identified that the 'challenge is to minimise the downturn from the next cyclical reduction in commodity prices by adding value to the region's products and by diversifying' (p. 14, 11 July 2003). Tourism was identified as 'immensely important' to the region's diversification.

In summary, the rationale for the eventual Te Kāhui Tupua project was:

- A region reeling economically, and identifying diversification through tourism development as a major strategy to arrest decline;
- Worsening socioeconomic indicators, including some of the worst nationally in the late 1990s and early 2000s;
- A community in pain and wanting Councils to take leadership to arrest decline.

### Expected Benefits:

Te Kahui Tupua Economic Goals: Essentially, the project partners agreed to invest \$3.1million (total) to catch up the lag in tourism performance in the region, compared to the national average, and in so doing create a new and sustainable, diversified industry sector in the region. It is regional development on a large scale aimed at revitalising a lagging regional economy, and integrate key groups such as Iwi into the economic framework for growth. If the region had not invested in Te Kahui Tupua, tourism would have grown naturally. The estimate used in the Partnership's 2004 business case showed that natural growth would have led to a 32% increase in the region's growth in tourism expenditure (well behind the national projection of 58%). The success of Te Kāhui Tupua would be in its ability to generate additional total tourism spending within the region over and above natural increase, and catch up to national performance. The following table indicates the expected benefits of Te Kahui Tupua (over and above natural increase) to the tourism economy of Ruapehu, Wanganui and Rangitikei.

	2002 Actual	2009 Forecast with MRI impact included	Increase targeted	% Increase targeted
International Guest Nights	158	245	87	55%
Domestic Guest Nights	365	418	53	14%
<b>Total Guest Nights (000's)</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>27%</b>
International Guest Nights	\$111	\$147	\$35	32%
Domestic Guest Nights	\$76	\$82	\$6	7%
<b>Average Expenditure (\$)</b>	<b>\$87</b>	<b>\$106</b>	<b>\$19</b>	<b>22%</b>
International Guest Nights	\$17.6	\$36	\$18	\$104%
Domestic Guest Nights	\$27.9	\$34.2	\$6	23%
<b>Direct Expenditure (\$m)</b>	<b>\$45.5</b>	<b>\$70.3</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Total Value Added (\$m)</b>	<b>\$30.7</b>	<b>\$47.5</b>	<b>\$17</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Total FTEs</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>1138</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>55%</b>

Te Kahui Tupua Strategic Goals 2005: The following strategic goals were agreed with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) in their Funding Agreement (2005; p. 2):

- Encourage the development of new tourism products and enhance existing tourism products;
- Lift the standard of local businesses so that they are export ready and more appealing to the needs of international travellers;
- Encourage more investment in the region's tourism potential;
- Assist in the regional spread of tourism opportunities along and around the proposed tourism route;
- Provide a vehicle for marketing the tourism potential of the region as a whole;
- Allow the region to participate in tourism growth (especially given its natural and cultural assets) leading to increased and sustainable economic growth.

Te Kahui Tupua Tactical Goals 2009/10: The following extract from the Te Kahui Tupua Annual Work Programme 2009/10 indicates that four years into the project, there is a pleasingly high degree of alignment with original intentions for a tourism project, which hints to the strength of project planning and governance relationships:

*“Te Kāhui Tupua (TKT) aims by 30 June 2010 to build a coordinated, sustainable tourism industry in the Ruapehu, Wanganui and Rangitikei Districts which is well able to perform strongly alongside other more established tourism areas, with export-ready operators and product.*

*“By June 2010 TKT will also be the brand of choice for the region’s operators of this regional cluster; to umbrella and to channel their international marketing spend. The brand will encapsulate the cluster’s distinctive advantage of providing international travellers with a quality experience including authentic storytelling to deepen the connection between the area’s extraordinary vistas and equally powerful tikanga and history.” (Te Kāhui Tupua Work Programme 2009/10. July 2009. P.1)*

#### 4. Linkage to Council’s Strategic Direction

*This question is answered in reference to Ruapehu District Council’s strategic framework as an example of the three partners’ strategic focuses.*

Councils are not in the business of engaging in activities that seem ‘appealing’. The investment of significant public money into a function such as tourism and economic development is fraught with problems of demonstrating value for investment, given that the activities are not traditionally ‘core’ Council business. Therefore, Ruapehu District Council, as a small Council without a large financial base, took a view that the community mandate required for spending public funding would need to be at a high threshold for investing. The following pathways some of the Council’s processes for decision-making.

Future Ruapehu 1998: Following the unfavourable economic impacts of the late 1990’s on the Ruapehu economy, a community consultation process led to the development of ‘Future Ruapehu 2010’ Strategic Plan in 1998. This was structured like a modern Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) but pre-dates these modern documents. Future Ruapehu 2010 concluded that the community support Council taking leadership in economic recovery:

*“Community consultation has shown that many people believe opportunities exist for economic development within the District, however such opportunities are not being exploited to their fullest potential. The Council recognises that there is a need for an organisation to take a leadership/advocacy role in identifying and promoting new tourism opportunities. Due to the nature of the Ruapehu District, the Council is the only body that could fulfil this role. The Council acknowledges that the initial investment into Marketing and Economic Development will provide benefits that outweigh the costs and those benefits will reach the entire Community.” (Future Ruapehu 2010. 1998. pp31-32)*

A ‘District Vision 1998’ was articulated as follows:

“By 2010 Ruapehu will be a District:

- With a progressive and sustainable economy that is based on a diverse range of industries, particularly adventure tourism, horticulture and agriculture;
- That recognises and values the natural environment as a key economic strength of the area;
- That projects a positive image and displays community pride, making the area and attractive place to live in and visit;
- That has a population that has employment opportunities and is trained appropriately for those opportunities;
- That has a population large enough to retain existing service providers and attract new service providers;
- That has transport facilities including air, rail, and road links that allow for fast, efficient movement of people between the communities in the District and main North island centres.” (Future Ruapehu 2010, July 1998, Part A; p.12)

Wanganui-Rangitikei-Ruapehu Regional Development Plan 2002: As a result of the increasingly close relationship being formed between Ruapehu, Wanganui and Rangitikei District Councils in the late 1990s and early 2000s to address the issues of regional decline, a strategic planning process was launched which involved over 1,000 participants developing a regional strategic economic development plan. It was quickly recognised that Iwi and Central Government were key partners alongside industry in addressing barriers to

growth. A regional Economic development steering group was brought together for the first time in the region's history with leaders from all key sectors.

Emerging from this was the Wanganui-Rangitikei-Ruapehu Regional Development Plan in 2002. Regional economic priorities were identified as: (a) Workforce readiness, (b) Regional business brokerage, (c) Realising land potential including land-locked areas, (d) Regional visitor presence, and, (e) Effective roading infrastructure to stimulate business growth.

The Regional Development Plan proposed a project in alignment with Strategy 4 'A Regional Presence for Visitors'(p.12) as a tourism MRI (Te Kāhui Tupua), costed by the partnership at some \$1,780,000 (p.14). From this process emerged an agreement to lead an economic diversification project into tourism sector development, called Te Kāhui Tupua in alignment with

#### Regional Economic Development Plan 2002 Regional Vision

<p><i>“A progressive region that provides families with opportunities to achieve a healthy lifestyle and successful businesses in a global marketplace.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Kia whanake to rohe Kia tu pakari ait e whanau”</i></p>
--	--

(Wanganui-Rangitikei-Ruapehu Regional Development Plan. 2002. 'Regional Vision', p.3)

**2004 LTCCP and Subsequent:** Ruapehu District Council continued to test its community mandate to take leadership in economic development and tourism, from 1998, and Council's levels of investment into these activities through its 2004, and subsequent, LTCCPs. All three councils' financial commitment was supported by their communities through consultation on their LTCCPs.

*“Ruapehu District Council has partnered with Wanganui and Rangitikei District Councils, Iwi and Government in a Regional Partnership Programme (RPP). The RPP is promoting priorities for the region of which the Major Regional Initiative (MRI) at this time is boosting the region's profile as a visitor destination. Securing the benefits of this and future MRI programmes requires sufficient resourcing.”*  
(Future Ruapehu Long Term Plan 2004, p.74)

Community Outcomes continued to confirm the community's desire that Council take leadership and investment into economic and tourism development. As an example, 2004 Community Outcomes stated:

CO1:	A diverse range of economic activities are supported and promoted to encourage economic stability and self-sufficiency within the District.
CO2:	Initiatives ensuring sustainable growth and development within key sectors of the local economy are supported and promoted.
CO3:	Industries that do not harm the natural environment are supported and promoted.
CO7:	New tourism, agriculture, forestry, horticulture, manufacturing and processing, service and retail opportunities are identified and promoted.

## 5. Project Planning

*“This project is bigger than Ben Hur!”* (Former Te Kāhui Tupua Executive Director, Ryan Craig)

**Background:** With the decision of the Regional Partnership Programme to proceed with the Te Kāhui Tupua MRI proposal in 2002, a Tourism Working Party was established comprising industry representatives, Iwi, tertiary sector, political, and Council staff. The Working Party consulted widely with tourism operators, Iwi and others in the region, holding District seminars and refining the MRI proposal.

**Project Planning Disciplines:** Te Kāhui Tupua has always been tightly project planned around a framework for reporting to NZTE that is based on agreed milestones and outcomes as agreed by both the governance of the project and NZTE. Such a framework has a heavy requirement for quarterly reporting of expenditure by cost category, which is linked to delivery of strategic outcomes. The same reporting is required by the project's governance. Each year, the governance of Te Kāhui Tupua considered an Annual Work Programme by the Project Manager and approved its strategic direction and the level of resourcing required to achieve each objective. This formed the blueprint for the year ahead for all stakeholders.

**Project Timing:** The following represents the strategic progress of Te Kāhui Tupua in building a cohesive and coordinated industry tourism industry across Ruapehu, Wanganui and Rangitikei:

Year	Phase	Key Tasks
Year 1: <b>2005/06</b>	Establishment	MRI approval, development of structures to oversee the project and partnership development and strategic planning, staff employed.
Year 2: <b>2006/07</b>	Building coalition of support, and, Development of new brand	Staff familiarised with the project, stakeholders and distinctiveness of the region. Beginning to take hold of the strategic direction with brand development in the international marketplace.
Year 3: <b>2007/08</b>	Bedding-in new brand, and, Mid-term review undertaken	Continuation of the branding and marketing efforts and bedding these in. A mid-term review of the project recommended directional change to local industry capability building.
Year 4: <b>2008/09</b>	Local industry capability building	Launch of an 'acceleration programme' to invigorate efforts into building support in the local tourism sector for the programme, and extending the meaning of Te Kāhui Tupua from a 'brand' to a programme of capability building. Specific training courses begin combining business skills training, with brand understanding and cultural authenticity. First Te Kāhui Tupua 'Ambassadors' graduate. Clusters of tourism products, inter-district, begin to be developed.
Year 5: <b>2009/10</b>	Local industry capability building, and, Sustainability planning	Completion of capability building programme and development of the sustainability plan to transfer the project from a Council controlled organisation to a sector Incorporated Society as a sector leader for the three Districts.

**Resourcing:** Te Kahui Tupua is a collaborative approach to resourcing involving both Central and local government in funding, industry buy-in to some programmes, and in-kind support from all partners. The funding is tightly linked to achievement of milestones. Overall, the amount contributed was:

- \$2,000,000 from Government
- \$600,000 from three local authorities

\$000s (GST incl.)	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Total
Government	\$490,238	\$511,581	\$258,650	\$555,491	\$452,751	\$2,250,000
Councils	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$600,000
Other Revenue	-	\$68,920	\$50,388	\$55,032	\$77,000	\$251,340
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$610,238</b>	<b>\$700,501</b>	<b>\$429,038</b>	<b>\$730,523</b>	<b>\$649,751</b>	<b>\$3,101,340</b>

This budget is divided up annually by strategic delivery area as indicated by the following table. The table also indicates that a considerable additional value was provided by way of 'in-kind' support, which is over and above funding commitments. The value of in-kind support may have been as high as 13%, bringing the total value of this project to \$3,504,514.

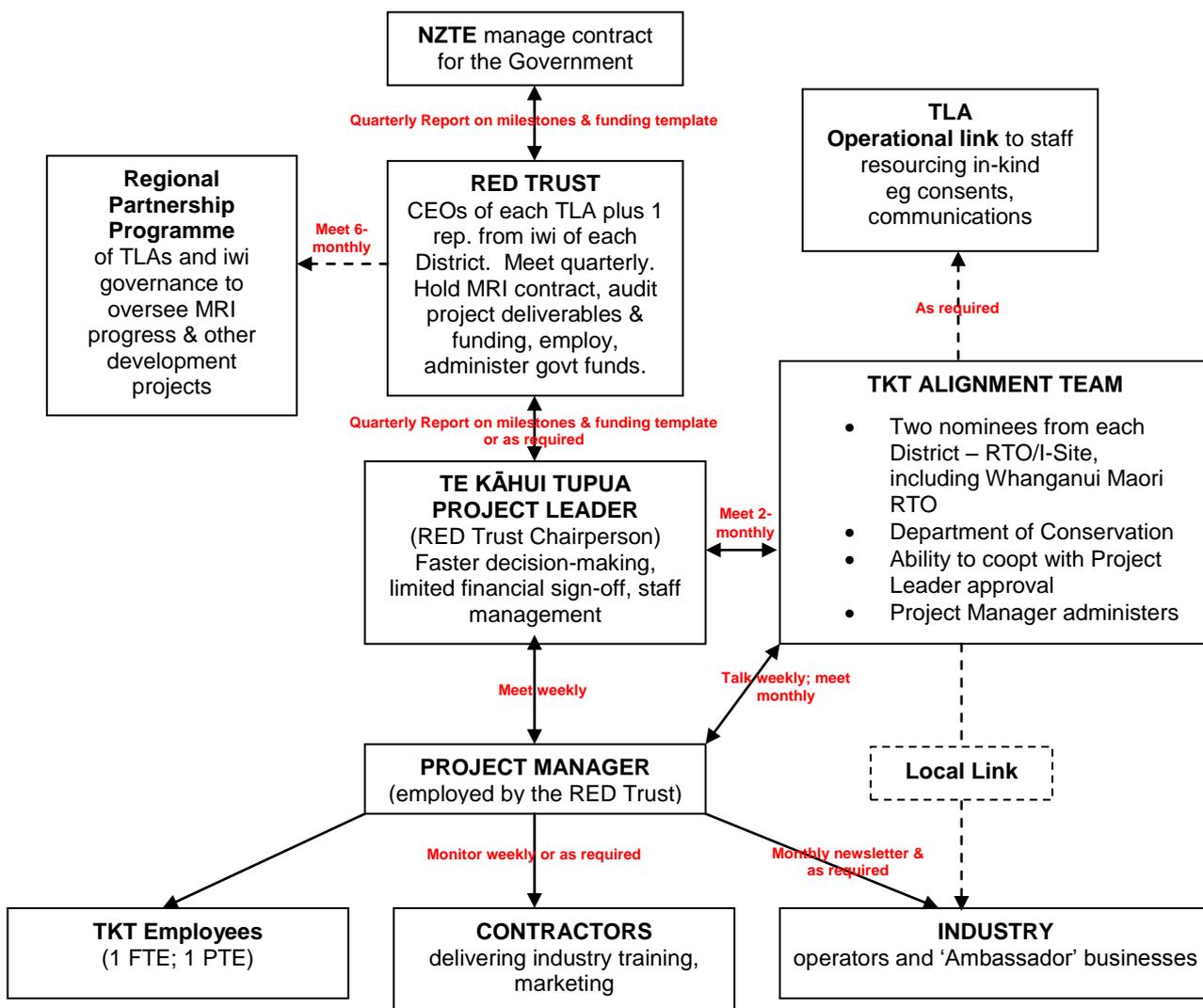
2010 (Year 5) Funding Source	\$000's	Main Investment Area
TLA funding	\$120	Together invest in five strategic areas with a funding split agreed; (a) Operational & Governance, (b) Industry JVs & Advocacy, (c) Regional Projects & Regional Collaboration, (d) Industry Capability Building, (e) Marketing Industry & Consumer.
NZTE funding	\$452	
Industry contributions	\$67	Tourism business training and mentoring, advertising.
Sales	\$10	Imagery sales.
In-kind contributions	\$95	Office rental, Communications Manager from Council, uncharged time of administration, resource consents, web support, signage partnering.
	\$744	

## 6. Project Management

**2006-08 Project Management:** After the initial phase of consultation and refining of the MRI proposal by the Tourism Working Party in 2002, a governance structure was established to forward economic initiatives from the Regional Economic Development Plan including the tourism MRI. This Board consisted of industry representatives, Department of Conservation, Councils and local Iwi. The Board (later to be called the MRI Board due to enormous effort and time required into making an MRI succeed) monitored the operational activity of the MRI Executive Director and approved the Annual Work Programme. It was also necessary to establish a Trust to employ the Executive Director and act as the administration agent for Government and Councils' funding. This Ruapehu Wanganui Rangitikei Regional Economic Development Trust (RED Trust) was established on 21 October 2005. In 2008, a mid-term review of the project was undertaken and the Te Kāhui Tupua partners considered its strengths and weaknesses, and made recommendations for change to the structure which were implemented.

*“If there was a manual, it would be easy, but this project is setting the way for other areas of New Zealand in future.” (Press Release: 27/3/2009, ‘MRI Surges Forth and Urges Support’, RED Trust Chair David Hammond)*

**2008-10 Project Management:** From late 2008, Te Kāhui Tupua adopted a management and governance structure designed to both represent the needs and aspirations of each partner, and ensure that streamlined decision-making could proceed. It was the ‘business-end’ of the project and agility and flexibility became important. The resulting structure represented a workable balance between governance and operational requirements. This structure hinged around an agreed Annual Work Programme that the project’s governance layer debated, amended, and resolved to forward to NZTE for approval.

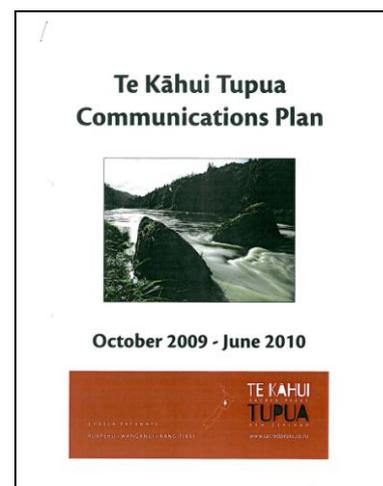


## 7. Relationship / Stakeholder Management

**Objective:** Te Kahui Tupua’s relationship management approach was ‘multi-layered’ due to the large number of stakeholders in the project and regular to ensure two-way communications and continued buy-in to the programme.

**Mid-Term Challenges:** Holding such a large Partnership together has been an art form, time consuming, and not without challenges. After the first period of close relationship in a new Partnership, 2008 became Te Kahui Tupua’s greatest challenge. Media carried an opinion piece on lack of progress with Te Kahui Tupua generated from one of the Partners. This served to highlight not only a problem with strategic direction sought by the Partnership, but weaknesses in relationship management. Cracks were exposed. In a Mid-term Review, the Partnership met, discussed the issues, and restructured the project in early 2009 to improve delivery, reporting and streamline the governance. Relationship management does not simply mean communications, but also addressing the real concerns of the partnership, and acting on these, even if it proves a painful upheaval is required. Of the restructure measures, NZTE commented:

*“The report acknowledged the inherent difficulties associated with bringing together three disparate regions under one overarching brand have proven both to be difficult and time consuming. There is now general consensus from all the key stakeholders that this has been achieved and there is recognition that this now provides a platform to consolidate the industry buy-in that is starting to emerged through the education and capability-building programmes which commenced in the last quarter.”(NZTE, 18 May 2009. ‘Internal Review of the Wanganui/Rangitikei/Ruapehu Tourism Major Regional Initiative’, p.1)*



**Communications Plan:** A further outcome of restructure was the need for a formal Communications Plan. This Plan was consulted through the Partners represented on the RED Trust before adoption. Whilst it may feel ‘codified’, a formal plan for this complexity of project is essential. The Communications Plan is structured to match communications both with stakeholder group, and by strategic goal for each given year. For the majority of the Project a Communications Manager has been employed for this task (amongst other Marketing responsibilities). Toward the end of the project this was provided as ‘in-kind’ support from Ruapehu District Council. The approach to relationship management has been:

Stakeholder	Method of Stakeholder Relationship Management	Objectives
Regional Partnership	Relationship formalised through a Regional Partnership Memorandum of Understanding between councils and 12 Iwi. Target six-monthly meeting.	Advise Governance of progress for performance monitoring. Give local political advice to the project.
	Quarterly formal meeting of RED Trust who are the representatives of the Regional Partnership Programme. Report back to their stakeholders.	Monitor performance of the project at an operational level.
Tourism Industry Ambassadors	Ambassador (ELEVATE) newsletter. Monthly.	Develop a 'family' of operators as a cohesive cross-District sector group encouraged to maintain standards
	Ambassador Agreement signed by each.	Relationship and standards formalised through a signed Memorandum of Understanding with each Ambassador business.
Other Operators	General industry newsletter. Monthly. Industry Workshops on general tourism training. Quarterly.	Advise progress on Te Kahui Tupua, upcoming events etc. Encourage new operators into training, and to enter the 'Ambassador' pathway.
I-Sites and RTOs	Familiarise staff with Te Kahui Tupua products and upcoming training and other events.	Educate key tourism industry staff and build commitment to Te Kahui Tupua.
Te Kahui Tupua Advisory Team	Made up of D/RTOs, I-Sites, Department of Conservation	Bring industry advice to the project, and coordinate alignment of tourism planning between the three Districts. Foster collaboration.
Iwi	Separately meet in an Iwi Regional Partnership Programme forum and forward matter to the RED Trust to address.	Advocate for the Iwi position, and seek benefit from the Te Kahui Tupua for Iwi.
Local Public	Regular press releases of progress.	Inform of progress, celebrate successes, and build confidence in Te Kahui Tupua.
NZTE	Quarterly formal reporting. Advice as sought. NZTE independently survey stakeholders.	Advise of progress for performance monitoring. Seek expert advice. Monitor regional support for the investment.
Product Promoters	Travel Trade Newsletter produced seasonally with appropriate product offerings to the season.	Raise awareness of the region to wholesalers of tourism products internationally.
Visitors	Erect Te Kahui Tupua Signage.  Maintain a FaceBook presence (1 hour per week).	Promote the distinctness of the Te Kahui Tupua region and its offering. Raise international and domestic profile.



Te Kahui Tupua SH43 Signage at regional entrance points.

## 8. Innovation and Originality

### a. The Scope of this Regional Partnership Programme Is Unique in New Zealand

The scope and commitment of the partnership behind Te Kahui Tupua is completely unique, innovative and inclusive; Three District Councils, 12 distinct Iwi; four Regional Tourism Organisations, industry and Government - all coming together to find economic solutions for regional development of this area of the Central North Island in 2000. The work behind coming to a position of agreement by all these parties cannot be underestimated. The formal Memorandum was signed on 21 October 2005. The Partnership of all local authorities and 12 Iwi in the region, and 4 Regional Tourism Organisations has endured since 2002.

*“The efforts of your regional partnership are an excellent example of co-operation between regional stakeholders. Through your work, goodwill has been built up between the parties involved and clear directions have been set for the economic development of Wanganui, Rangitikei and Ruapehu areas.”*

*(Rt Hon Helen Clark, Prime Minister, October 2002).*

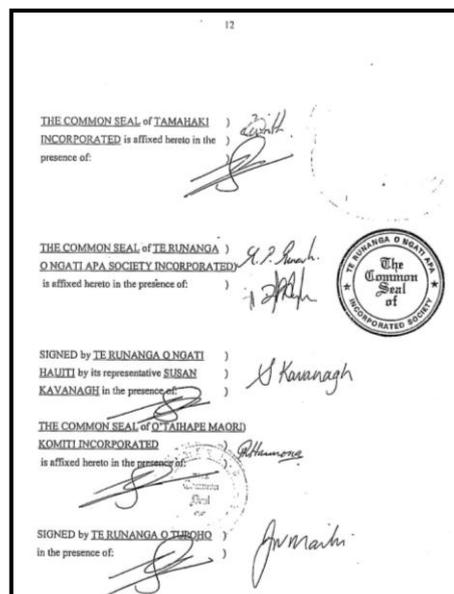
### b. Economic Development around Treaty Principles

The Regional Economic Development Plan umbrellas economic development under Treaty principles. Kotahitanga (unity) is a core value of the RPP and Te Kahui Tupua. Kotahitanga of Districts around a common set of structural economic issues; the unity of three Districts deciding not to compete against each other, but to collaborate for joint economic and social development is the foundational strength of Te Kahui Tupua. Kotahitanga between Maori and Pakeha development aspirations; the unity of Maori and Pakeha cultural and historic stories:

*“The Regional Partnership Programme has been very successful and has created many “firsts” for the region. In ways not seen before the three District Councils are working together collectively, and Iwi and the Councils are engaging in economic development. In the words of one Maori leader, “the regional partnership programme has real mana”.”* (Wanganui-Rangitikei-Ruapehu Regional Development Plan. 2002. ‘The Strategy’, p.18)

Te Kahui Tupua is not ‘just another tourism training programme’; it is a sea-shift in regional tourism development, pathwaying a new era for the integration of Maori tourism economic development into a regional growth structure. Iwi values have practically worked out in Te Kahui Tupua through:

- Iwi partnering in governance of the project;
- Iwi cultural and environmental values being a core part of the tourism operator training programme;
- The brand reflecting cultural authenticity, and;
- Iwi advising to best meet Iwi development needs.



Extract: Regional Partnership Programme, 21 October 2005. Signatories, p. 13.

**The Partnership**

The following parties agree to work together, through the regional economic development steering group, to implement this plan for the benefit of communities and iwi in the region. The parties are committed to building a progressive region where families enjoy their lifestyle, and businesses succeed in a global marketplace. The parties agree to:

- Take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi through the appropriate consultation and service delivery to Maori and the community.
- Act in the spirit of partnership, working toward identified common goals, whilst ensuring the diversity of the partners’ unique roles is respected and maintained.
- Recognise that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi is a developing area and new principles may emerge as the Treaty is further defined between the Treaty partners.
- Understand that the delegated powers and functions of authority from the Crown to Councils are limited by statute.
- Work in a co-ordinated way to lead, resource and implement the regional projects in this plan.
- Meet on a regular basis to monitor progress of implementation.
- Meet each year to review and refine the plan and to set budgets and identify resources to be committed from the parties involved.
- Continue to build the relationships between the parties, through improved processes, to strengthen this regional partnership.

The Prime Minister, Minister of Industry and Regional Development and Minister of Maori Affairs support this Plan as indicated in their letter on page 16.

Regional Economic Devt Plan. (Oct 2002) ‘The Partnership’, p.4

### c. Unique and Innovative Operator Training

ELEVATE is the name given to the training programme of tourism operators in business skills and cultural values in the Ruapehu, Wanganui and Rangitikei region. Over 100 operators were trained and businesses upskilled. These newly 'export-ready' businesses are recognised as 'Ambassador' businesses of Te Kahui Tupua and enter into Ambassador Agreements to assist programme sustainability.

Designed by tourism expert, Craig Wilson (Quality Tourism), ELEVATE combines normal training with two other elements essential to lifting the performance of tourism businesses; one-on-one mentoring sessions with tourism business experts, and; coordinating participating businesses into inter-District clusters where competitive barriers are broken down. As a package, this is completely unique and innovative. Operators themselves decided what clusters they wanted to be a part of when they were in the Workshop environment. Support was given, and five new clusters formed since 2009.



ELEVATE Tourism Business Training Workshop – Craig Wilson

*"The ELEVATE training highlighted some areas we could concentrate on, with the networking opportunities being invaluable and allowing us to learn more about our fellow operators businesses to help with collaboration."*

*(Claire and Brent Firmin; Spirit of the River Jet)*

The following example shows how this package is aiding the region to move ahead competitively by breaking down traditional competitiveness which inhibits tourism development:

#### Electronic Product Manual Cluster

The new Electronic Product Manual is one of five collaborative products developed by Te Kahui Tupua and includes 34 operators from across the three Districts, with 45 products to offer wholesalers. Within this new cluster, 17 of the products are completely new to the region. They are either new operators and product, or existing operators offering new product. The cluster contains five new Maori operators featured in the electronic manual, supported by both Te Kahui Tupua and the Whanganui Maori RTO.

The Electronic Product Manual includes wholesale pricing, suggested itineraries, an annual events schedule and hyperlinks to individual websites so that buyers can work directly from the Product Manual, which is loaded onto branded USB sticks. This is all new development for the three Districts.

## 9. Benefits to Other Parties

### Operators

*"As a new Tourism business operator, I have found the training, networking and trade show support offered by Te Kahui Tupua incredibly helpful as it has opened doors and presented opportunities for my business to grow." (Dan Steele, Blue Duck Lodges. 2 April 2009)*

Tourism industry operators are very supportive of the value of the Te Kahui Tupua programme. The December 2009 survey of the three Districts' tourism operators' satisfaction with Te Kahui Tupua, completed by NZTE, indicated a dramatic rise in support for the programme since February 2009 coinciding with the strategic focus on local industry capability building:

- 23% of businesses said that they had increased their commitment to tourism quality standards as a result of Te Kahui Tupua;
- 33% of businesses said that the tourism industry in the region was more cohesive because of Te Kahui Tupua;
- 30% of tourism businesses said that Te Kahui Tupua participation had improved their business;
- There was a 300% increase in operators' knowledge of Te Kahui Tupua.

## Wanganui's Anndion Lodge – Tourism Award Winner because of Te Kahui Tupua

Wanganui's Anndion Lodge owned by Anne and Dion Ngatai won the 'Leisure and Tourism' category in the Massey University Wanganui Business Awards. Staged by the Wanganui Chamber of Commerce, and judged by an independent panel comprising senior business executives appointed by Massey University, the Awards recognise Wanganui businesses that are demonstrating excellence and making a positive contribution toward the economic development and growth of Wanganui.



Anne said, "Last year we won an 'Innovation Award'. The contest requires you to 'look deeply' into all aspects of your business. You then have the benefit of having senior business people and academics review your business in detail."

**"The judges commented on our involvement in Te Kāhui Tupua and it was taking part in the contest over the last two years that helped us focus on the business' weak points and that helped us see the value in the (Te Kāhui Tupua) initiative and the ELEVATE Fast Track training."**

The success of Te Kāhui Tupua (Sacred Peaks) Ambassadors at putting theory into practice is demonstrated in their success at being recognised by their peers, communities and other organisations and programmes they are involved with (such as environmental programmes).

*"I am a newby to tourism and I found the course incredibly inspiring, practical, useful, providing user friendly information and knowledge - and all delivered in a generous inclusive presentation" - Elaine Roberts; Duck Crossing Country House.*

*"I have learnt an incredible amount of information about tourism and this has opened my mind to new ideas and prospects, thank you" - Sharon Grant; Go Deep Scuba.*

## 12. Results

### Training was stunning success:

- 24% of region's operators trained & export-ready; 52% from Ruapehu; 24% others' sectors (113 operators; Target: 100)
- 96% of trained agree TKT met their needs (Target 90%)
- 95% agreed TKT added value to their business
- 20 businesses getting mentoring (Target: 5)
- 33 businesses have committed marketing \$ to TKT
- 11 new export-ready products developed (Target: 5)
- 5 new clusters of product developed between competitors

### Tourist Satisfaction:

- Tourists enjoy the TKT Region experience but room for improvement – with commitment to TKT it will rise:

	Total Region	Ruapehu	Wanganui	Rangitikei
Satisfaction with tourism offering:	72%	72%	72%	71%
Want to return again:	84%	90%	86%	75%
Operator satisfaction:	77%	77%	78%	76%
Overall satisfaction:	78%	80%	78%	75%

## GDP and Employment

	What we said we'd do	Actual Result (Region)	Ruapehu	Wanganui	Rangitikei
International Guest nights	+55%	16%	23%	0.6%	-38%
Domestic Guest nights	+14%	25%	45%	14%	-23%
Internat. Spend (\$) per night	+104%	15%	22%	-0.2%	-39%
Total Guest nights	26%	22%	36%	11%	-25%
Domestic spend (\$) per night	+23%	25%	45%	14%	-23%
FTEs	+55%	8%	-8.3%?	17%	-0.2%

### What do the numbers show?

- **Statistics:** The statistics are conservative. The original MRI Business Case statistics were based on the 'Commercial Accommodation Monitor' which reported 632,000 visitors (2009); but the 'RTO Monitor' reports 1,639,000;
- **Total Guest Nights** met expected level. Ruapehu exceeded by 10%;
- **Domestic Guest Nights** were double that expected; Ruapehu's results were four times the expected;
- **International Guest Nights** were affected by recession and were only one third of the expected level. Ruapehu fared much better;
- **Tourism Spend** was only about quarter of the expected (another recession effect), but a 30% rise in Ruapehu was observed, with domestic performance outstripping the MRI expected result by 100%.

### What TKT has delivered:

- **Leveraging:** The later business cases developed for other tourism projects including the sealing of the Wanganui-Pipiriki River Road (\$10m) and two Cycleways (\$5m) leveraged off the success of TKT in the Region. Government funding was available to other projects in the same area as the area had demonstrated its ability to deliver.
- **Recession:** There is no comparison between how well the region has fared in this recession compared to the recession of the late 1990s and tourism investment has been the difference;
- **Iwi:** Local Maori have been brought into the tourism economy as both operators and at the planning level. This remains unique in New Zealand. The project acknowledges that not all commitments to iwi were delivered, but delivery remains a goal;
- **TKT Brand:** It is very tough to establish a new brand in an international marketplace, but the mana of Maori has been enhanced by recognition and support of TKT for Te Kahui Tangata;
- **Sector Cooperation** – There has been substantial operator cooperation to form new clusters, the TKT Alignment Team, and a new Incorporated Society.