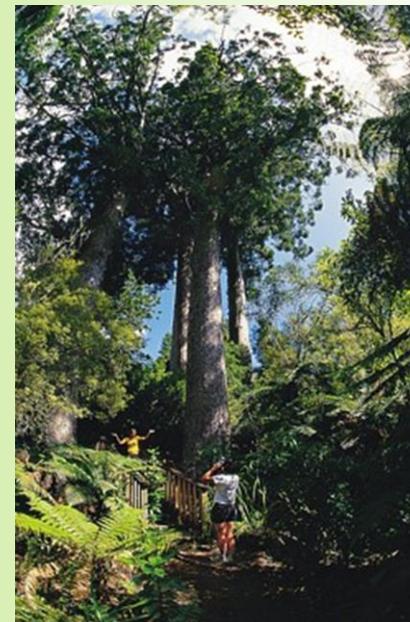


WORLD WAR ONE NATIONAL MEMORIAL FOREST

*The Coromandel.
New Zealand - Aotearoa*

Concept Paper



DRAFT. October 8th 2014

A National World War One Memorial Forest is proposed for The Coromandel. This series of forests, totalling approximately 18,500 trees would act as a living, growing memorial for the sacrifice of the fallen soldiers in World War One – with each soldier being memorialised by an individual, specimen native tree. A memorial book and mobile-friendly website would remember each, individual fallen soldier, and tell their story, against each tree in the National Forest.

The National World War One Memorial Forest or Forests would consist of five individual plantings in each Community Board area of the Thames Coromandel District – commemorating soldiers in each year of the war and/or in each of the battles and campaigns. It is proposed each Community Board would be lead and coordinate their part of the Forest – engaging with local groups, iwi and schools, etc to plant and care for the plantings – and the soldiers that each tree memorialises.

Each Community Board would be responsible for developing a planting and care plan for their part of the Forest – and submit it for review by an expert coordinating group of representatives from TCDC, DOC, Environment Waikato, Iwi, Kauri 2000 and local experts. TCDC will take the lead on identifying funding for the trees themselves and other hard 'out of pocket' costs. A number of potential funding sources have already been discussed. It is envisaged that planting and maintenance of the forest will be principally organised by volunteers – coordinated by each Community board. .

The Forest would be launched on ANZAC Day, April 25, with the 'Gallipoli Grove' – initially a planting of 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings) but growing to a memorial forest of 2,779 native trees one for each of the fallen New Zealand Soldiers of the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915. This would ideally be completed by December 2015 – the 100th anniversary of the end of the Gallipoli Campaign.

The objective would be to finish all the plantings – and complete the Memorial Forest at a ceremony on November 11th 2018 – the 100th anniversary of the end of World War one.



Puriri are one of the specimen native trees that would memorialize each fallen soldier of WWI. Along with other great native trees like Kauri and Totara, Puriri are extremely long lived – to more than 2,000 years.

The other 4 forests would memorialise the Fallen Soldiers of 1916 including the great battles of the Somme, 1917 - including the Battles of Messines and Passchendaele, 1918 – including Spring Offensive and finally, the fallen soldiers who died in New Zealand or after the war (by 1921) directly from their wounds.

The specimen native trees selected for the plantings would include Kauri, Pohutakawa, Totara, Rimu, Rata, Kahikatea and Puriri –appropriate to each location. These iconic Native Trees are all capable of living for at least 500 years (and some for 1,000 or 2,000+ years) to ensure the longevity of the memorial. Of course the forests established by this process will have enduring value – and the reforestation process, an extension of the work of organisations like Kauri 2000, is a central benefit of the project.

Another key date would be in October 2017 – the 100th anniversary of the 1917 Third Battle of Passchendaele - by far the most costly battle for New Zealand of the war – with October 12th 2017 – the 100th anniversary of the bloodiest day in New Zealand history. On this day, October 12th 2017 we would plan to finish the planting of 845 trees – the number of New Zealand soldiers who died within a few hours on the bloody morning of October 12th 1917.

The National World War One Memorial Forest will act simultaneously as a memorial, as sites of interest and reflection to visitors and another important step in the restoration of The Coromandel’s ancient forests. New Zealand native forests are special and sacred places to many New Zealanders. To iwi this extends to the place of trees as guardians of the forest and a wider ‘life force’. The Memorial Forest will set up and sustain a “guard of guardians” for future generations that honour the past sacrifice of New Zealanders.

Internationally, there are number of Memorial Forests that commemorate major battles or catastrophic loss. Examples are listed in the list of resources below. There are a couple of small memorial plantings around WWI in New Zealand – for small groups of soldiers or individuals, but this concept is unique to New Zealand and indeed the wider Commonwealth in remembering the sacrifice of World War One and acting as a National Memorial for the whole country.

The National World War One Memorial Forest is a unique opportunity for the Coromandel. Your feedback and support would be valued.

See NEXT STEPS & CONTACT, RESOURCES BELOW.

Concept Paper:
National World War One Memorial Forest.

Next Steps.

- The Community Boards of the Thames Coromandel District will consider this opportunity, provide feedback and indicate their support.
- A final plan will be prepared by District Working Group (which will meet again on November 6th 2014) and coordinated with the Thames Coromandel District Council.
- The final plan will be shared with the community boards by late November 2014.
- Each Community Board – starting with the Mercury Bay Community Board (responsible for the Gallipoli Grove plantings) will prepare a detailed Planting and Care Plan for their part of the Memorial Forest by an agreed date.

Feedback and Offers of Support.

National World War One Memorial Forest Working Group

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Resources & Links:

- World War 1 – NZ History: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/first-world-war>
- “New Zealand Blackest Day”, NZ History: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/845-nz-soldiers-die-in-botched-attack-at-bellevue-spur-passchendaele-on-western-front>
- The National Memorial Arboretum in the UK: <http://www.thenma.org.uk/>
- North Carolina Confederate Veterans Memorial Forest: <http://beforeitsnews.com/alternative/2014/03/the-north-carolina-confederate-veterans-memorial-forest-2917990.html>
- The Liberation Forest in the Netherlands: <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/overseas/second-world-war/the-netherlands/liberation>
- Martyrs Forest in Israel: <http://www.kkl.org.il/eng/tourism-and-recreation/forests-and-parks/martyrs-forest.aspx>