

TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE WAENHUISKRANS NATURE RESERVE

Ms Gail Cleaver, WCNCB, Overberg Business Unit Manager

Mr Roelof Jalving, WCNCB, Waenhuiskrans Nature Reserve, Conservation Manager

Mrs Elana Minnaar, WCNCB, Overberg Tourism Officer

1. Tourism Activities

1.1 Entry Fees Pedestrians

All pedestrians will be given free access into the Waenhuiskrans Nature Reserve at any time of the day or night. Pedestrians can visit any part of the reserve. Pedestrians will be granted access at any time (day/night). This will accommodate the local Kassiesbaai fishermen who require access to the reserve for fishing.

1.2 Off-Road Vehicles

No 2x4 vehicle/Motorbike/Quadbike Access

Only off-road vehicles will be allowed past the gatehouse as cars that drive here get stuck in the sand and cause roadblocks for vehicles, which can become a danger.

No private motorbikes or quad bikes will be allowed on the reserve. Guided quad bike trails will however be considered and opens an opportunity for a concessionaire.

Fees

Off-road vehicles will be granted access to the reserve at a fee of R50-00 per day. The R50-00 will allow access to the top of the Waenhuiskrans Cave and at a later stage use of the circular fishing route to Galjoen Gat. Visitors who wish to make use of the annual permit system can purchase a permit at a cost of R500-00 and this permit will be valid from 1 December to 30 November each year. Annual permit holders will be issued a sticker to post on the vehicle window to identify annual permit holders. Sticker design and colour will be changed every year to make identification easier. If some wished to purchase an annual permit after 1 June the permit will cost R300-00 and be valid from 1 June to 30 November.

Entry Times

Vehicle access will be limited to certain times:

January/February/March/April/October/November/December: 07h00 – 19h00

May/June/July/August/September: 07h30 – 18h00

December/January School Holidays: 06h00 – 20h00

The reserve gate will be locked at night and no vehicles will be allowed into the reserve after the gate closing times.

Law enforcement

Any person not adhering to the rules and regulations of the reserve will have their vehicle banned from the reserve for three months and their permit cancelled. The person may after three months request permission from the Conservation Manager to take out another permit at the full price of such a permit.

Access to the Beacon

A gatehouse will be erected at the parking area above the cave and will be. Only 30 vehicles will be allowed past this gatehouse at any one time. Special permits will be sold at R80-00 per vehicle, to allow controlled access to this very sensitive area, thereby allowing access to the Beacon.

Once a vehicle leaves, another may enter, to ensure that there are not more than 30 vehicles past the Cave parking area at one time. Annual permit holders will not have to pay the

additional R80-00 to go to the beacon, however access to the Beacon will work on a “first come first serve” basis and no preference will be given to annual permit holders.

Any person not adhering to the rules and regulations pertaining to this special permit will have their annual entry permit cancelled immediately. The vehicle will be banned from the reserve for three months. After three months they may make application to the Conservation Manager for a new annual permit, however this person will not be eligible for a special permit to go to the beacon for a period of three years.

3. Main entrance gate

There is only one access road leading to the Waenhuiskrans Nature Reserve and the new gatehouse is currently sufficient to use as the controlled access point.

Fees will be generated, brochures and information pamphlets would be handed out from this control point.

Gate management will be outsourced to private persons and preference will be given to persons from the community.

A boom will be necessary to lock the gate at the agreed upon time.

4. Interpretation/Information boards

Interpretation boards and other signage would be erected or upgraded on the reserve to provide interpretation on various aspects of the ecology and historical assets.

5. Reserve Brochure

The reserve brochure should be updated and re printed when necessary.

6. Parking areas

Parking areas in the Waenhuiskrans Nature Reserve are currently in a very poor condition. Historically, four areas existed where people can park their vehicles. Roman Beach has the largest parking lot. This parking area is used for access to Roman Beach and standard vehicles park here. Cars are usually parked haphazardly all over the parking lot, as there are no parking bays to guide them.

Demarcation of this parking lot is also non-existent with the result that every year this parking lot increases in size. On the seaward site the parking area crumbles into the sea, while on the western site the border increases and is replaced by loose dune sand. This situation in peak holiday times is uncontrolled, resulting in much damage to the surrounding environment. During the summer months, the Cape Agulhas municipality issues permits to concessionaires trading in food and other related products. All moneys received from such traders are currently to the benefit of the municipality. A periphery of strong material such as paddock pole fencing will be aesthetically acceptable in this area.

A joint initiative will be entered into between WCNCB AND the Cape Agulhas Municipality to secure funds to fix and demarcate this parking area. Funds to upgrade the toilets will also be sourced from the Municipality or from donor funding.

A second parking area is found on top of the Waenhuiskrans cave. This area, because of shifting dune sand, can now only be reached by off road vehicles and serves as a thoroughfare for fishing spots in the Waenhuiskrans Nature Reserve and beyond. This parking lot also serves as a viewpoint. The whole of the Waenhuiskrans Nature Reserve, from Valknes in the

west to Roman Beach in the north, can be viewed from this point. At present this entire parking lot is badly eroded and extensive littering occurs daily.

The last parking lot is situated at the beacon (in the coastal zone). Only special permit holders will be allowed to use this parking area, which will be properly demarcated and the necessary signage will be erected.

7. Interpretation Center

An information center would help to make the public aware of the ecological processes in the Waenhuiskrans Nature Reserve. Funding would have to be sourced to build such an information center, which could also include a place where the local community could sell their products to the public. This would require input from the local community and could be a joint project between WCNCB and the Waenhuiskrans/Arniston community. The entrance gate and information center could be combined to create an aesthetically pleasing structure, which would be an asset to the reserve.

8. Hiking trails

Properly constructed and marked hiking trails are required for the area. This would include boardwalks along sensitive areas and difficult or currently dangerous sections of the trail. There is a considerable amount of potential to develop new trails in the area. Excellent whale watching sites occur within the reserve. During winter numerous whales can be viewed alongside the adjacent coastline of the reserve.

Self-guided or guided trails could be arranged on the reserve. WCNCB could give out concessions for this type of operation, which would create further job opportunities. Funding to train people to carry out this type of function would be sourced to ensure guides meet the required standards set by the tourism industry. Tours can include archaeological sites, interesting wreck sites (the Arniston), the internationally known Waenhuiskrans cave and the beacon.

The reserve is renowned amongst bird watchers for its rare red data species namely the black oystercatcher, Damara tern, crowned cormorant and jackass penguin. The reserve also offers good observation sites for other rare sea and coastal birds.

With diving being very safe in certain parts of the reserve an underwater trail could be considered. This diving, be it snorkeling or scuba diving, can only be enjoyed in clear water. An underwater trail can be considered between Roman Rock, the cave and Roman beach. WCNCB would look for a partner (concessionaire) to manage such a trail.

The construction of boardwalks to bridge sensitive areas is a high priority, as numerous pathways and off road tracks occur in the area. The public must be encouraged to stay on tracks that are approved by WCNCB, thereby conserving sensitive areas but still enjoying the reserve to the fullest.

9. New Job Opportunities

- Outsource gate access control.
- Tour Guides – Waenhuiskrans Cave, Beacon, Visvyvers.
- Ferry Service – From gatehouse to the Beacon and circular fishing trail.
- Field Rangers
- Assist to anglers wishing to fish at Die Mas by carrying their equipment, collecting bait etc.
- Continued use of Coastcare workers on the reserve.

10. Concessionaries

All concessionaire agreements undertaken by CapeNature will give preference to BEE's and negotiations between CapeNature and the individuals and will not be part of the agreement between CapeNature and the Cape Agulhas Municipality (Ward Committee).