

Management of natural parks in Carinthia Discover the regions' protected areas

Robert Heuberger

The companies of the Natural Parks of Carinthia have been integrated into Carinthia regional management. This permits the creation of synergy in regional development, the ideal use of subsidies, and high-quality natural park management.

With the foundation of the Regionalmanagement Kärnten Dienstleistungs GmbH (RMK) Company that assumed responsibility for Carinthia's natural parks in 2007, natural park management was also inserted among the many other regional development structures.

The integration of natural park affairs into the Regional management Kärnten Dienstleistungs GmbH Company has been deemed extremely positive. This structure facilitates synergy with other instruments and regional development programs, such as LEADER or INTERREG, while also improving the coordination of such activities at national level.

If, in other regions there is only one director for the natural parks, one regional, and a Leader manager for the various organizations, these roles have all been combined in RMK and enriched with other departments for related affairs, such as consultancy for funding, renewable power supplies, and tourism.

Together with collaboration with other regional reference authorities, cooperation with the municipalities and the directors of the region's other natural parks can be a key factor in a natural park's success.

This organizational structure also permits the development of new natural parks. The regional office serves as the first reference authority in the region and applies regional networks to the achievement of its objectives, whereas natural park management utilizes specific knowledge and experience for their development. Funding experts are responsible for taking the measures necessary.

Natural park management is entrusted with the following tasks:

1. Coordination point
2. Implementation of local projects
3. Development of tourism offers with particular attention to environmental protection, agriculture,
4. and training
5. Development of natural park projects and strategies
6. Coordination of projects between different natural parks
7. Exploitation of synergy between natural parks and other protected areas
8. Natural park mapping

Further strategic development of the idea of natural parks in Carinthia

Dobratsch Natural Park

Dimensions: 7,248 hectares

Natural park's region: 8,833 hectares

Protected areas: "Villacher Alpe" natural area and "Schütt-Ost" and "Schütt-West" protected areas and parts of the "Natura 2000 Schütt-Graschelitzen" area

Municipalities: Villach, Arnoldstein, Nötsch im Gailtal, Bad Bleiberg

Organizational structure: Arge Interkommunale Plattform Naturpark Dobratsch (Dobratsch Natural Park inter-city work team)

The leading natural park in Carinthia since September, 2002

Important projects:

- Development of an alternative winter vacation plan for families without ski lifts

- Theme trails: geography educational trail, wildlife educational trail, mountain tunnel trail

- Arnoldstein Natural Park Training School

- Visitor orientation and reforestation measures for Mt. Dobratsch

www.naturparkdobratsch.info

Weissensee Natural Park

Dimensions: 7,640 hectares

Natural park's region: 563 hectares

Protected areas: Weißensee protected area

Municipalities: Weißensee, Stockenboi

Organizational structure: Weißensee Natural Park Work team.

Natural park since May, 2006

Important projects:

- A Natural Living Room

- Equipping Gosariawiese Meadow

- In Harmony with the Lake

- The Book Trail (long-range trail)

- List of Weißensee Wildlife Species (under development)

www.weissensee-naturpark.at

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ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Nationalpark Hohe Tauern - Conference Volume](#)

Jahr/Year: 2009

Band/Volume: [4](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): Heuberger Robert

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