

2022

ANNUAL
REPORT
2022



A photograph of a forest with tall trees and a ground covered in fallen leaves. Two markers, a red triangle and a blue hourglass, are attached to a tree trunk. A green rounded rectangle is overlaid on the bottom right of the image, containing the table of contents.

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Kia ora koutou

As we emerge from the Covid lockdowns of the last two years it is great to see that the good work of our organisation continues to grow and prosper. Since the last time I wrote to you, Project Tongariro has been nominated as the Environmental Hub for the Central North Island and we have initiated an educational program similar to that undertaken by Kids Greening Taupō in the area surrounding Ohakune. This will be known as the Waimarino Environmental Education Project.

Environment Hubs of Aotearoa is a charitable organisation embracing environmentally focussed organisations across the country. These hubs focus on a broad range of activities such as water and energy, gardening and food supply, environmental protection and transportation. By becoming part of this organisation Project Tongariro will be exposed to ideas from other organisations with similar goals and ambitions to ours. It also provides training for our staff and board members on subjects such as the Treaty of Waitangi to board governance, which will increase the resilience of our organisation.

“Since the last time I wrote to you, Project Tongariro has been nominated as the Environmental Hub for the Central North Island.”

The setting up of the Waimarino Environmental Education Project extends our educational focussed activities to the southern region of our sphere of influence. The lessons learned and the resources developed by Rachel Thompson and her team at Kids Greening Taupō will provide a foundation on which these programs will be rolled out. I would particularly like to thank Kiri Te Wano, Rachel Thompson, Karen Grimwade and Allan McKenzie for their mahi in getting this program up and running. We look forward to providing the tamariki of the Waimarino area the resources to learn how to interact and protect the environment that they live in.

The organisation stands in a good position to move forward with its recently adopted 5 year strategic plan which the executive board approved at its September board meeting. This plan will build on the present work

MIKE O'SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT



undertaken by Kids Greening Taupō, Greening Taupō, Predator Free Taupō, our Restoration Champions, Wicked Weeders and our many volunteers. Our finances, ably looked after by Patricia Taylor are in a strong position due to our many sponsors, two of which in particular I would like to thank, that being the Bay Trust and Len Reynolds Trust.

I would like to acknowledge Paul Green's immense contributions to our society over the last 20 odd years. Earlier this year Paul stood down from the position of Director in which he passed the baton onto Kiri Te Wano whose responsibility is now to guide our society forward. Paul however has agreed to stay involved with Project Tongariro as a board member and a mentor to Kiri. We thank you Paul for your efforts and I look forward to working with you for many more years.

Finally I would like to thank you - the volunteers, without your efforts we would not have been able to achieve a fraction of what we have done over the last year.

Ngā mihi

Mike

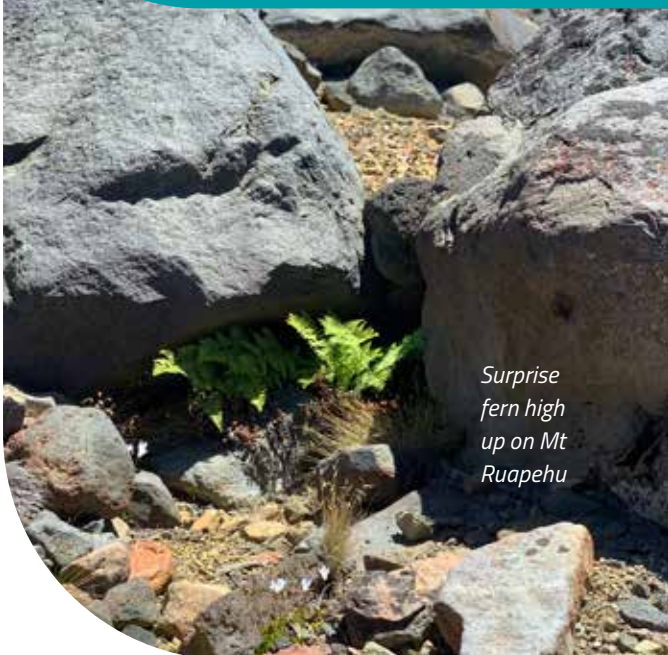
Contents page photo is of the tracking tunnels on Mt Tauhara

KIRI TE WANO
DIRECTOR



“No one will protect what they don’t care about, and no one will care about what they have never experienced”.

David Attenborough



Surprise fern high up on Mt Ruapehu

What a year it’s been - with the continued effects of the ongoing pandemic and making sometimes difficult changes to deal with this new but same way of life. In December 2021 I was appointed the role of Director of Project Tongariro, and I officially took over this role from Paul Green in February 2022. I’m delighted to be given this very special opportunity - especially with the continued support from the Board and from Paul. I’m extremely grateful to be taking over with a well experienced team around me and wonderful community partnerships in place. Paul has gone above and beyond in terms of leading our society through the last tumultuous 2 years.

Waimarino Environmental Education Project

Our Executive Board recognised that the society is wanting to reconnect back into Tongariro National Park (TNP). Through experience in Taupō with Greening Taupō and Kids Greening Taupō, we have learnt a successful way to entice communities into conservation is to engage school children. Not only does conservation provide excellent learning opportunities - it also achieves enviable biodiversity outcomes - albeit a bit slower than direct purpose-projects.

We were successful in obtaining the backing and funding from a private trust who’s philanthropic trustee is keen to support environmental projects in TNP. We then engaged our previous Kids Greening Taupō Coordinator Thea Depetris who completed a comprehensive scoping study for us looking at the need and support for such a project in Waimarino (southern Ruapehu) region. The report identified that the 5 small communities of Waiouru, Ohakune, Raetihi, National Park and Owhango welcomed our approach and support for environmental education.



Rainbow above the tussocks

In May we were lucky to hire Clodagh Costello, an Ohakune local with great passion, energy and enthusiasm for connecting children with our natural environment. Her key role is to initiate, develop and build relationships of trust and collaboration with schools and community partners in the district. Helping us to do this we will integrate te ao Māori, tikanga and te reo throughout the programme by working alongside local Iwi groups.

In the words of David Attenborough, "No one will protect what they don't care about, and no one will care about what they have never experienced".



The crew enjoying lunch at top Mt Tihia.

Climate Change

In February of this year our Executive Board held a session on climate change, facilitated by Nic Etheridge, our former President who's the Porirua District Council's Environmental Services Manager. We looked at what climate change might mean for our society over the next 10 years and how we might want to position ourselves and what role modeling we want to undertake.



Kiri visiting historic Waihohonu Hut.

We discussed the typical climate framework - adaptation, mitigation and climate economy, and what national policy direction and trends are being currently observed. We also looked at likely impacts for the Central Plateau. This really hit home for me, and conversationally in the following 2 weeks I talked about it a lot! Things like;

- A likely temperature increase between 0.7°C to 1.1°C by 2040
- By 2090 we will have 10-60 more days per year of temperatures greater than 25°C

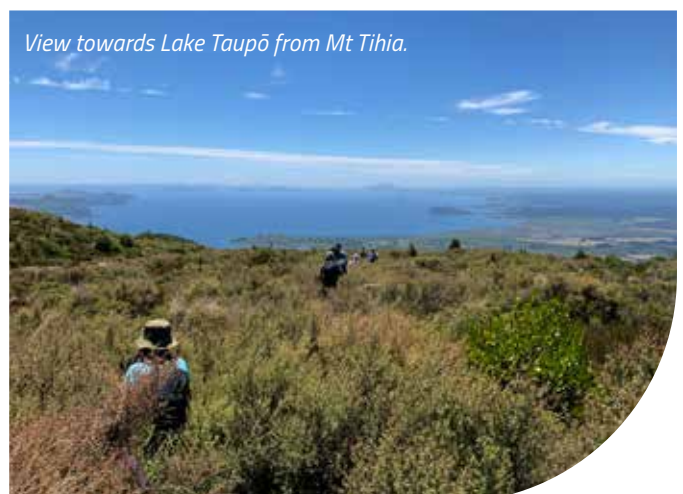


Project Tongariro girls on the Lahars Walk during Mahi Aroha.

- Frosts will decrease by 5-13 days per year
- Winter rainfall to increase 4-7% spring decrease 6%
- Inland flooding will increase
- Droughts likely to increase in frequency, fires, water shortage
- Disease and invasive species pests/ weeds will likely increase
- High lake temperatures, higher lake levels
- A longer growing season
- Reduction in number of snow days, snow cover, less snowfall and an earlier spring melt

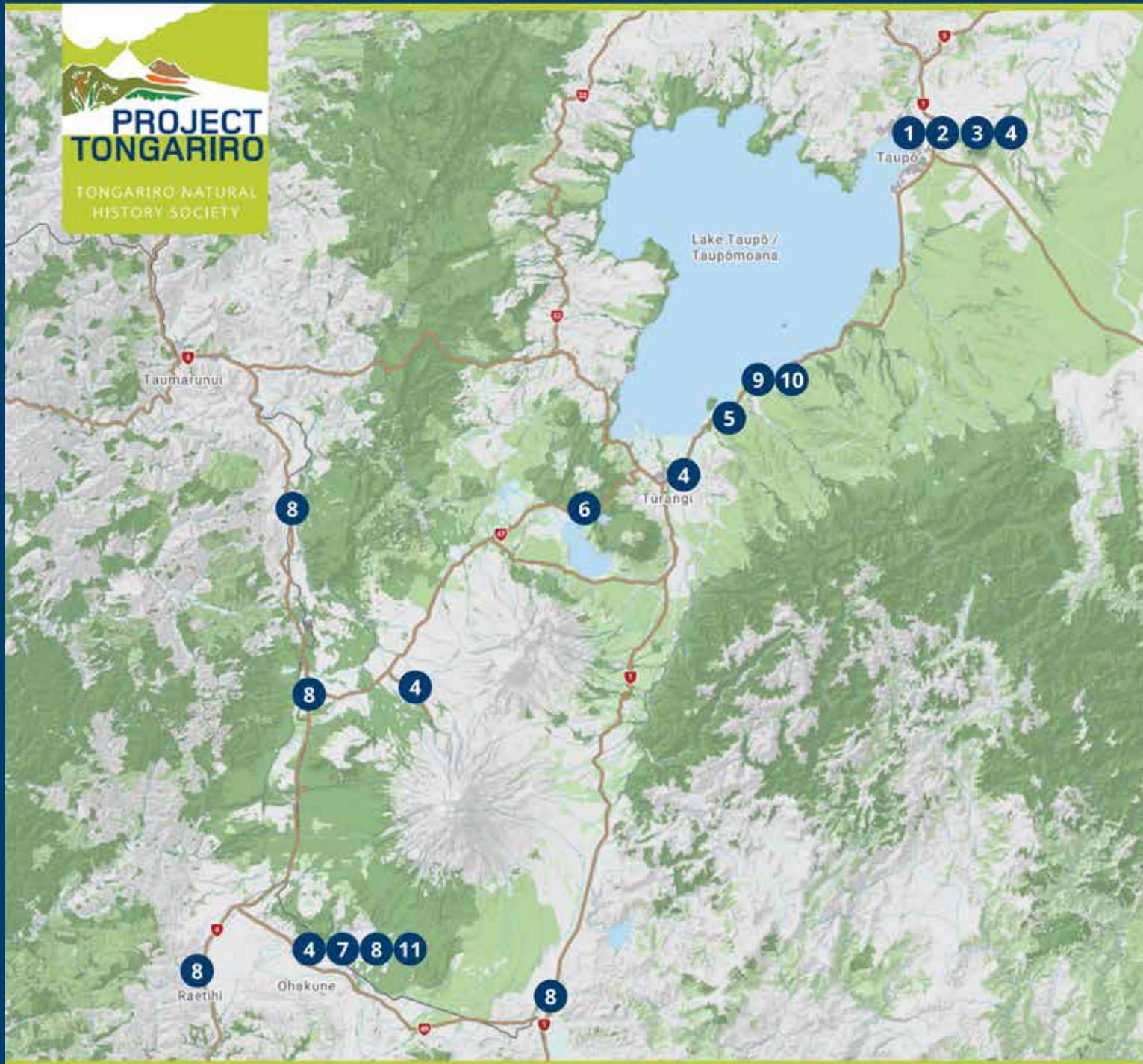
Thank you to all our members and supporters alike! Our organisation continues in good heart with long-term volunteers involved on a weekly basis - trapping, weeding, planting and of course those on our governance board. I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to this engaged, committed and passionate Executive Board!

Kiri



View towards Lake Taupō from Mt Tihia.

Current Projects & Activities @2022



1. Greening Taupō
2. Kids Greening Taupō
3. Predator Free Taupō
4. Mahi Aroha - Summer Programme
5. Te Matapuna Wetland Restoration
6. Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu Forest Restoration
7. Rongokaupo Wetland Restoration
8. Waimarino Conservation Education Programme
9. Oruatua Recreational Reserve Restoration
10. Predator Trapping
11. Kiwi Forever Programme

RECORD OF VOLUNTEER HOURS

2021-2022

7,206

Volunteers

Volunteer activity	Volunteer No's	Volunteer total Hrs
Rotopounamu-Pihanga	22	557
Seed Gathering	2	60
Greening Taupō	3,752	10,103
Te Matapuna (Waiotaka River Restoration)	50	300
Waitetoko Trap Line	4	79
Waiotaka Correction Hrs	8	1,890
Corrections Nursery Hrs	8	5,408
Predator Free Taupō	347	4,498
Oruatua, Motuoapa & Waitetoko Restoration	65	2,700
Kiwi egg transfers	4	8
Kids GT	2,833	6,241
Events	35	255
Mahi Aroha	10	160
Journal	40	120
Visitor Centre	2	120
Exec Board	11	165
Tech support [Nick]	1	200
IT Support (Kim Manunui)	1	144
Director/ Admin [Paul]	1	1,000
Other Conservation Activities*	10	120
Total	7,206	34,128

34,128

Hours

TREASURER'S REPORT PROJECT TONGARIRO

For the year ended 30 June 2022

There is a separate full Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2022 available but it is not included in this bound Annual Report. Just two pages are reproduced here. They are the Performance and Position and are summarised below.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Statement of Financial Performance records a Deficit for the Year of \$71,766 compared with a Surplus of \$53,956 last year.

The Gross Income during the year was \$718,227 after deduction of Unspent Grants and Donations of \$161,770.

2021 - \$549,189. Note Unspent Grants and Donations were not accounted for this way last year.

Total Grants Received were \$726,795. (2021 - \$376,584)

We are very appreciative of all the Grants we receive and in particular the continuing contributions from the Bay Trust and the Len Reynolds Trust. Together they contributed \$194,000 (2021 - \$168,000) towards the funding of staffing and overhead costs in 2022 and there are commitments for future years.

It is also pleasing to note that there were Donations of \$79,908. (2021 - \$85,798). The public appreciates the work of this organisation and its volunteers.

There was no revenue from Marshalling as there has been in previous years. We hope these special Events will be again scheduled and able to be held.

Total expenses were \$789,993 (2021 - \$495,233)

The major items are Wages and the direct costs of Purchases of Plants, Materials & Equipment and Subcontractors.

Subcontracting Expenses increased substantially this year due to the Wilding Pines Projects and also, because 2021 was an even more difficult year for planning than 2022.

Of course, these reports do not reflect the invaluable contributions of time, energy and enthusiasm from our wonderful volunteers. 7,206 Volunteers contributed 34,128 hours this year. (2021 - 5,245 Volunteers contributed 42,720 hours)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

The Equity or Accumulated Funds at Balance Date is recorded as \$73,355. (2021 - \$304,406). Grant Income not yet spent in 2021 of \$159,285 has been removed as an Asset, so the comparative would be \$145,121.

PATRICIA TAYLOR
TREASURER



Current Assets

Bank Accounts and Cash (Including the \$100,000 Term Deposit)	\$412,069
Accounts Receivable	\$59,351
Stock of Publications	\$9,473

Fixed Assets

The Book Values are:

3 Motor Vehicles, 2 Trailers and a Tractor	\$33,095
Field Plant & Equipment	\$14,336
Office Equipment	\$1,002

There is a Schedule for these items with the full Financial Statements.

Liabilities

Accounts Payable - including Employment Accruals and GST	\$134,916
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Unspent Donations	2022	2021
Greening Day Donations	9,116	7,845
Mahi Aroha	4,387	2,411
Whio Creche	5,263	0
	18,766	10,256

Unspent and Committed Grants are as follows:

Grants	2022	2021
Aratiatia Restoration	1,156	0
Greening Taupō	37,191	6,967
Kids Greening Taupō	23,411	23,299
North Taupo Bay Wilding Pines	93,707	0
Oruatua Trapping & Restoration	26,220	18,708
Predator Free Taupō	3,918	31,125
Rotopunamu Restoration	27,936	22,150
Rongokaipo Wetlands	19,000	0
Tauhara Wilding Pines	1,612	0
Turoa Alpine Flush	8,620	9,000
Waiotaka River Restoration	0	5,893
Waimarino Enviro Education	37,572	0
Wairakei Corridor	20,919	31,887
Whakaipo Bay	1,027	0
	302,289	149,029

Summary

As the expenditure is rising significantly, the decision has been made to appoint an Auditor for the year ended 30 June 2023. This will provide transparency and certainty for the future applications to our funders. The organisation is in good hands with a dedicated and enthusiastic team applying for and receiving grants and administering the expenditure of these funds.

Donations are received regularly which indicates good community involvement and participation.

Pat Taylor -Treasurer
1 October, 2022

*Summary
Of course,
these reports
do not reflect
the invaluable
contributions of
time, energy and
enthusiasm from
our wonderful
volunteers*



Statement of Financial Performance

Project Tongariro For the year ended 30 June 2022

	NOTES	2022	2021
Revenue			
Donations, fundraising and other similar revenue	1	662,520	470,381
Revenue from providing goods or services	1	51,315	78,697
Interest, dividends and other investment revenue	1	1,848	110
Other revenue	1	2,544	-
Total Revenue		718,227	549,189
Expenses			
Costs related to providing goods or service	2	429,209	241,861
Volunteer and employee related costs	2	343,660	229,710
Grants and donations made	2	4,050	10,680
Other expenses	2	13,075	12,982
Total Expenses		789,993	495,233
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year		(71,766)	53,956



Statement of Financial Position

Project Tongariro As at 30 June 2022

	NOTES	30 JUN 2022	30 JUN 2021
Assets			
Current Assets			
Bank accounts and cash	3	312,069	237,581
Debtors and prepayments	3	59,351	29,318
Inventory	3	9,473	10,400
Total Current Assets		380,893	277,300
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	4	48,433	54,773
Other non-current assets	3	100,000	159,285
Total Non-Current Assets		148,433	214,058
Total Assets		529,327	491,357
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Creditors and accrued expenses	5	106,672	37,922
Employee costs payable	5	47,010	-
Unused, committed, donations and grants with conditions	5	302,289	149,029
Total Current Liabilities		455,971	186,951
Total Liabilities		455,971	186,951
Total Assets less Total Liabilities (Net Assets)		73,355	304,406
Accumulated Funds			
Accumulated surpluses or (deficits)	6	73,355	304,406
Total Accumulated Funds		73,355	304,406

What a change of pace 2022 has been! After spending the past 5 years in Wellington working in advertising, my family and I made the decision to relocate to Taupō at the end of 2021. I was thrilled to be appointed Conservation Coordinator and welcomed the opportunity to give back to my local community with open arms. Like many, the Covid-19 pandemic made my family stop and rethink what we wanted out of life, but more importantly, what we wanted life to be like for our two year old daughter.

A huge highlight for me has been the community planting days! I love how everyone comes together, rain or shine to help with the planting mahi. I've spent many mornings this planting season on the back of Murray's truck from Corrections helping to unload the thousands of plants while also learning a great deal as we go. The wealth of knowledge and experience I've observed is incredible and I feel very fortunate to be on this learning journey with such a passionate team.

Another highlight was being part of the wāhine only team that got flown up to the top of Mt Pihanga to help with the annual heather control work in March. What an amazing experience! I was teamed up with Shirley Potter, as we all know is an absolute PT legend, who led the charge into neck deep mountain shrubbery at times whilst on the hunt for this invasive plant.

I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know and work alongside the Project Tongariro Executive Board, Greening Taupō, Kids Greening Taupō and Predator Free Taupō teams over the past 7 months. I'm so amazed at the number of hardworking and passionate volunteers that make this special mahi possible.

Anna

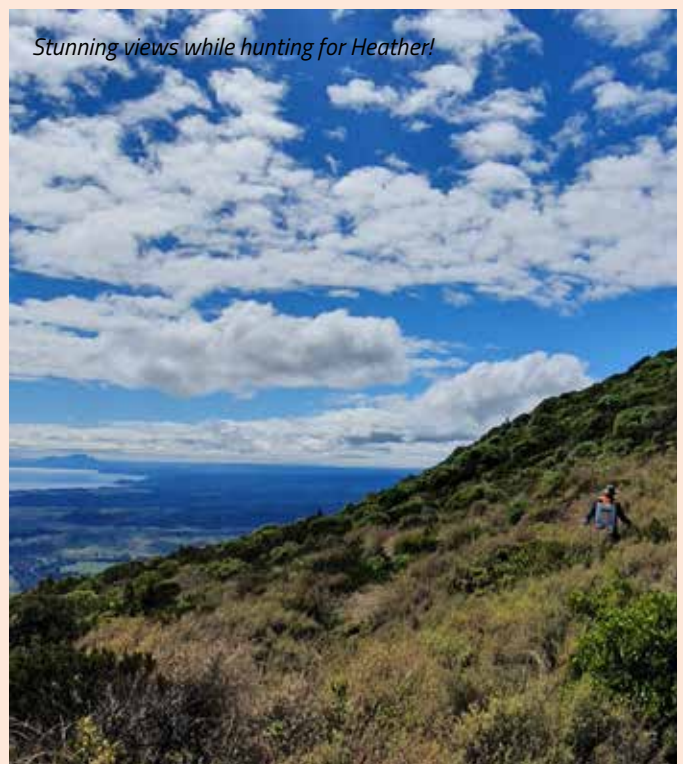


Unloading the plants for another community planting day.



ANNA CALVERT
COORDINATOR

A huge highlight for me has been the community planting days! I love how everyone comes together, rain or shine to help with the planting mahi.



Stunning views while hunting for Heather!

WHIO HARDENING FACILITY REPORT

COLLETTE TAYLOR



The 2021/2022 Whio season got off to a slow start with the first clutch of eggs at Pukaha being unviable. Subsequently, the trusty vollies (Helen and Jim Boston, Di and Roel Michels, Sarah O'Sullivan, Collette Taylor) aided by Karen Ardin (DOC), had the facility in tip top shape well before the first arrivals.

With much anticipation, our first intake of 4 whio arrived at the Whio Hardening Facility on 21st January. An initial health check undertaken before settling them into their new environment was followed up with micro chipping, carried out by Becky O'Sullivan. Owing to their friendliness and aquatic antics, these birds were quite a hit with the vollies. However, much to our consternation, two of these whio became ill unexpectedly and needed an emergency trip to Wildbase at Massey University on 8th February with one dying on arrival.

The other was monitored and returned to our facility when fully recovered. Extensive tests were undertaken, including a post mortem, but failed to show a cause for their mystery illness.

Although not attributed to its illness, small metallic bits were found in the gizzard of the whio which survived. The vollies scoured the facility for a potential problem and found some small pieces of metal/rust in the water near the intake and covered them with a rock. It is still inconclusive as to whether this was the source or what made the deceased whio ill. There were no further problems with any other whio.

On 10th March, 4 new whio arrived from Pukaha and for a while, we had both aviaries working. This meant extra cleaning for the vollies but they saw it as a bonus having more ducks on site. A further whio, younger than the others, arrived on 30th March. A little juggling was done moving whio between the aviaries and choosing a suitable mate for Cruiser to be with in the single aviary.

With the original 3 swimming, diving and flying as expected, they were released onto the Tongariro River

at the Poutu on 14th March. As usual, we vollies were reluctant to see our 'babes' fly the coop, but were rewarded with how quickly they adapted to their new surroundings. The male swam straight into the swift current and was swept downriver. He managed to get into an eddy and hop up onto a rock. After sitting forlornly for a while, he suddenly worked out that he could fly and rejoined his sisters, whereupon they swam happily, diving and grazing the rocks for tasty morsels.

The remaining 5 whio were not quite as entertaining or responsive as the previous ones but still managed to worm their way into our affections. On 22nd April they were released onto the Whakapapa River at Ohinetonga Reserve, Owhango. We rocked up thinking there would be the usual 10-15 people present but were surprised when a crowd of approximately 50 people turned up. Word had gotten out that Kiri Allen, the then Conservation Minister, was to be present. She was extremely interested in the programme and was a delight to talk to. The whio were ignorant to the specialness of their release, and in keeping with their laid back characters, took to the water quite nonchalantly. They cruised along the edge of the river for quite some time, seeming reluctant to leave the limelight of clicking cameras. Five wild whio on the opposite side of the river, swam over for a korero before returning to their patch.

Recently, a fisherman mentioned that while fishing at the reserve, some whio were swimming close to him. I wondered if they were our 'babes' and thought how this made all our mahi so worthwhile.

A final working bee was held some time later, to leave the facility neat and tidy in readiness for the 2022/2023 season. Since then we have had word that the programme is in doubt, with the death of the male whio at Pukaha—sad news for us.

Collette Taylor



GREENING TAUPŌ

ROBYN ELLIS

GREENING TAUPŌ COORDINATOR

It has been another successful 12 months for Greening Taupō. We continue to provide 10 community planting days a season and regularly have 100 happy planters turning up for each event. We wouldn't have thought we could do much better, but with the growth of Kids Greening Taupō encouraging more and more students to get involved, some of the planting days this year have been on steroids!

Our annual Arbor Day planting, promoted as Greening Taupō Day in 2021 was a massive success and was repeated again in 2022. Even with the threatening rain on the event day, the planting was a hit with heaps of Taupō



The wonderful Wicked Weeders.

The event had over 1,500 attendees, and was supported by many local businesses and organisations.

Matariki planting event 2021.



schools participating. The event had over 1,500 attendees, and was supported by many local businesses and organisations. 4,500 holes by Taupō District Council, 4,500 trees planted, 2,000 trees funded by Trees That Count and the remaining trees funded by last year's Greening Taupō Day donations.

Greening Taupō continues to work alongside Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board and held another planting to celebrate Matariki in July 2021. This planting was held mid week and Kids Greening Taupō encouraged many of the nearby schools, ECE centres,

Wairakei Drive planting site.



kura kaupapa and kōhanga reo to attend. Over 500 students joined in to help plant, mulch and enjoy the event. This multi-year restoration project is funded by Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust, Trees That Count, One Billion Trees and Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, along with support from Taupō District Council and advice from local experts.



Rainy Contact Energy community planting 2021.

We have continued our annual plantings with the Taupō Golf Club after the successful planting event in 2021 and the relaunching 'Project Birdlife', a Taupō Golf Club initiative to improve the area surrounding the greens for native wildlife. Greening Taupō received plants again from Trees That Count for another successful community planting event in April 2022. It was still pretty warm and dry when the plants went into the ground which encouraged Club President, Grant Hill to invest in some portable water storage to make watering the plants easier.



Taupō Golf Club project Birdlife community planting 2022.

Along with providing additional trees for the Golf Club planting, Contact Energy continues to plant along Wairakei Drive and with Greening Taupō provide an annual planting event for the community. Contact's plantings are regularly held in the middle of winter and the weather is usually unforgettable. Everything from snow, wicked frosts, thick fog and 2021's planting had vertical rain, but we still had a great turnout.

Shawn Vennell once again transformed another blackberry and pine tree ridden site between Wairakei Drive and the Wairakei Golf Sanctuary into a planting site. Shawn cleared and prepared the site for two successful community planting events.

The annual iconic Whakaipo Bay Planting with Department of Conservation and the Girl Guides and one

of the Wairakei Drive plantings were the only community planting events that got disrupted with Covid this year, but we managed to reschedule and still got a good turnout at each of the events.



Sarah Battson at Acid Drop planting 2022.

In early 2022, Sarah Battson cycled the length of Aotearoa in a blistering 21 days and raised \$10,000 for Greening Taupō. What an awesome achievement! These funds went towards a community planting project, restoring Acid Drop, a mountain bike track that goes from Control gates hill and drops down into Gates park. Blackberry was cleared by Aaron with his remote mulching machine and any returning blackberry was sprayed. The planting day had a great turnout from the community, plus many of Sarah's friends and work colleagues from Fox Physio attended the event and they're keen to maintain the site and also undertake pest control.

What a massive 12 months! Greening Taupō couldn't have achieved what we have done without the amazing support from the local community, regular volunteers (such as the Weekly Wicked Weeders who contribute many hours maintaining our Greening Taupō sites), partners such as Taupō District Council, long-running supporters Wairakei Golf and Sanctuary and the always supportive and encouraging Project Tongariro and Kids Greening Taupō team! Looking forward to more greening in the next 12 months.

Hamilton family at Whakaipo Bay community planting 2022.



BBQ at community planting days.



Project Birdlife watering system.



Contact Energy planting 2022.



Getting ready to plant at the Wairakei Drive community planting 2022.



STATS

34,128 hours by

7,206
volunteers

42,818

trees planted across all projects **this year**

12,551

pests trapped across all projects

Total plants planted **so far**

333,318+

240

new traps built
and set by our
community
this year

41
trapping
sites



KIDS GREENING TAUPŌ



At the end of 2021, a position as a Kairuruku reo Māori was appointed to Tākoha o te Rangi Pitiroi. He worked with the local kura kaupapa and kōhanga reo, created te reo Māori resources, and supported our programme. The te reo Māori resources were our highest shared and liked Facebook posts in 2022. After a year with us, he has moved on to a new role and the position has been filled by Hinemoa Karaitiana.

Sian Moffit finished her contract at the end of 2021. Her position was filled by a 20-year primary and ECE teaching veteran, Heidi Pritchard. She has immersed six ECE centres in outdoor education as well as supported Rachel Thompson with on-going projects.



Student leaders at Spa Park Bug Hotel Photo credit: Stevie Mananui

A second junior leadership team and our first ever Predator Free Kids Team were added this year making the tally 4 teams, composed of



*New employee Heidi Pritchard
Photo credit: Rachel Thompson*



*Hinemoa Karaitiana
Photo credit: Rachel Thompson*

100 students, aged 7-18, from a range of local schools. Large projects included making educational signs for a Bug Hotel, setting up and monitoring trap lines, and organising a community planting to continue their previous plantings in Spa Park. Partnerships with New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA), Blake Virtual Reality, and other local environmental organisations and individuals such as Epro, Crombie Lockwood Kiwi Burrow, Alana Delich and Shirley Potter help to keep our programme dynamic.

In 2021 and then again in 2022, KGT hosted a two-day Collaborative Community Education Model hui to help support and encourage other organisations around New Zealand in their journey to set up or support their local programmes based on the KGT model.

Since 2020 Greening Taupō has been collaborating with Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board to restore the banks of the Waikato River.

Each year 2000-3000 trees have been planted.

We continue to provide teacher professional development in conjunction with Taupō Environmental Education Collaborative (EEC). Attendees from in and out of town learned seed propagation from Nick Singers and predator control from DOC and Predator Free Taupō, how to set up conservation projects, and toured important conservation sites such as the Community gardens, MyNoke, and Taupō Waste Management services.

'Greening Taupō Day', the annual Arbor Day planting and the only KGT community fundraiser, saw 4500 native



Rachel Thompson teaching Jr student leadership team how to plant during the CCEM 2-day hui Photo Credit: Heidi Pritchard

trees planted by 1500 people in Crown Park. Local businesses fundraised with green window displays, with Town Centre Taupō offering prizes. Over 30 local schools and ECE centres participated in various ways to be a part of a school competition. Contact Energy awarded a prize of a \$1000 restoration planting, which went to Waipahihi Primary School. Mitre 10 gave a further \$700 worth of prizes, which were shared between Taupō Educational Preschool, Taupō Kids Community and Taupō Children's Corner. Huka Honey Hive ran an art competition for all local school children, collecting thousands of entries.

The event has become a festival of environmental education. The mayor opened the day and planted the first tree. Ruud Kleinpaste (The Bug Man) ran a bug hunting activity with Waipahihi School student leaders. Forest and Bird, DOC, Taupō District Council, Waikato Regional Council, Enviroschools, Tongariro

Trout Centre, Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari, Wingspan Birds of Prey, Huka Honey Hive, Mynoke, Epro, Civil Defence, Taupō Disc Golf, Kids Bike Taupō and many more organisations were there to educate. Big thanks goes out to the many sponsors, including, Trev Terry Marine who cooked 1000 free sausages, The Bistro for providing free hot soup, Pak n Save for the buns and condiments, and DJ Alexi for the awesome

Student led planting at Spa Park Photo credit: Lilja Tinworth



PROJECT TONGARIRO Annual Report 2022

music. Korio and Mediaworks advertised the event. Holes dug by Taupō District Council were filled with Mynoke vermicast to fertilise the trees, which were paid for by Trees that Count.

Since 2020 Greening Taupō has been collaborating with Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board to restore the banks of the Waikato River. Each year 2000-3000 trees have been planted with funding from Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust and Ministry of Primary Industries One Billion Trees, with support from Taupō District Council and Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board. This annual planting event has become one of the main Matariki events for Taupō.

In continuation, Term 4 saw surrounding schools mulch the area; 150 students watered the previously planted trees in Term 1; and multiple groups of students in Term 2 involved themselves in weeding and releasing, and setting traplines to control the pests. At the time of Matariki, 400 students from 16 different schools/ ECE centres booked in to come and businesses sent staff along too. We planted 2500 trees very quickly, all joined in to mulch the site, then we all enjoyed some hot kai thanks to Miraka Limited.

This project is bringing a community together as more local schools and ECE centres are adopting it as an authentic learning space to do hands-on mahi while learning about and restoring our unique biodiversity.



TKKM | Te Reo Ki Tuwharetoa opening the Matariki Planting Photo credit: Rachel Thompson



Kid's Greening Taupō students Judging Businesses in preparation of Greening Taupō Day Photo Credit: Heidi Pritchard



Rachel Thompson with Taupō Mayor opening the Greening Taupō event to the 1500 people at Crown Park Photo Credit: Project Tongariro.



THE WAIMARINO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROJECT

CLODAGH COSTELLO
WAIMARINO ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION COORDINATOR



Below is a brief overview of how I have been involved with schools and their projects in Term 3:

At Waiouru Primary School, guided by the teacher's native bird investigation, the new entrance class explored what birds eat (and don't eat!) and where they can find food on the school

grounds. The following visit we made bird feeders for the students to take home and observe being eaten.

Ohakune Primary School also made bird feeders to put up in the school grounds. The already established Enviroleader students have lots of learning going on and I have been supporting the lead teacher in their plans. Some of the activities in Term 3 included sewing vegetable and flower seeds, learning alongside the students from Ruud Kleinpaste (The Bug Man), and planting native trees gifted from Paper4Trees.

Owhango School invited me to their winter camp at Tūkinō. While we were hoping to ski, the lack of snow didn't allow the rope tows to spin. I spoke to the students about alpine plants and how they grow in this unique environment. Then we went out with paper, clipboards, and pencils to find different species and record observations through drawings and notes. They made some awesome discoveries! We also did a maunga clean-up and I was blown away by the enthusiasm of the students for this- they found rubbish from decades ago!

At Kaitieke School we have been investigating soil. Over three sessions the students have done a Visual Soil Assessment (comparing soil from their garden beds, their restoration area, and school field), a soil texture test, and garden design/preparation. Led by the teachers, the students were split into groups and each group has an identical garden bed to plant with food crops this term.



Raetihi School planting - Mākōtuku Track 2022.

Each group brought in garden amendments (sheep/horse manure) from home and added these to their beds in preparation for planting this term.

Each group brought in garden amendments (sheep/horse manure) from home and added these to their beds in preparation for planting this term. We weeded and prepped the beds at the end of term, and sowed seeds to grow over the holidays in the green house.

Raetihi School has been involved with the Mākōtuku Track. Last week, Carina McNie (Carina's Native Nursery) had 200 plants for the students to get in the ground. A group of 22 year 7 and 8 students came down to the track and learnt about how to plant. It was great to hear their ideas around why it is important to plant natives; they included 'to make the area more beautiful' and 'to feed and give homes to birds.'

I joined Ruapehu College's water testing trip with 5 senior students. I learnt from them about the species they were looking for and how this indicated the health of the stream. This term, I will assist the year 9 students with a planting at Lakes Reserve.

I am looking forward to joining Orautoha School on the 9th of November in their bush area!

Who helps make us 'Tick'?

	Projects contributed to;	Total	Total from Funder
Alaister Bamford	Donation towards Oruatua Restoration	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Bay Trust	2021 Strategic Funding Grant Kids Greening Taupō	\$70,000.00	\$164,000.00
	2021 Strategic Funding Grant Project Tongariro Overheads	\$63,000.00	
	2021 Strategic Funding Grant Predator Free Taupō	\$16,000.00	
	2021 Strategic Funding Grant Greening Taupō	\$15,000.00	
CAF America	Grant from the KBIH Fund for Waimarino Enviro Education	\$46,702.80	\$55,702.80
	Grant from the KBIH Fund for Rongokaupo Wetland Restoration	\$9,000.00	
Contact Energy	Sponsorship Agreement for Kids Greening Taupō	\$35,000.00	\$40,000.00
	Take Action Fund for Kids Greening Taupō	\$5,000.00	
Department of Conservation	DOC CF5-351 Grant for Kids Greening Taupō	\$10,000.00	\$27,186.75
	DOC CF6-122 Grant for Predator Free Taupō	\$2,986.75	
	Grant for Whio Creche Management	\$7,200.00	
	Contribution towards Mahi Aroha	\$4,000.00	
	Contribution towards Whakaipo Bay Restoration	\$1,500.00	
	Contribution towards Oruatua Restoration	\$1,500.00	
Drive EV	Donation towards Kids Greening Taupō	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Element Events NZ Ltd	Donation towards Kids Greening Taupō	\$3,884.13	\$3,884.13
Fearon Investment Trust	Donation towards Oruatua Restoration	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
First Credit Union	Donation towards Kids Greening Taupō	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
	Donation towards Greening Taupō	\$1,000.00	
Fox Physio Taupō	Donation towards Greening Taupō	\$9,500.00	\$9,500.00
Geyser Community Foundation	Donation towards Oruatua Restoration	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Horizons Regional Council	Grant for Rongokaupo Wetland Restoration	\$18,296.00	\$18,296.00
Lava Glass	Donation towards Wairakei Drive Restoration	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Len Reynolds Trust	Partnership Funding for Project Tongariro	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Lottery Grants Board	Northern Taupō Bays Wiling Conifers	\$166,441.00	\$166,441.00
Ministry for Primary Industries	1BT 01662 Waikato River Restoration	\$2,448.00	\$135,035.39
	1BT 01663 Grant for Whakaipo Bay	\$3,795.00	
	MTR-58 Grant for Oruatua Restoration	\$2,084.35	
	MTR-105 Grant for Oruatua Restoration	\$11,113.04	
	CC1794. #C0032966 Grant for Tauhara Maunga Wilding Conifers	\$49,864.00	
	CC1794. #C0032966 Grant for Western Lake Taupō Wilding Conifers	\$65,731.00	

Projects contributed to;		Total	Total from Funder
Rotary Club of Taupō	Donation towards Wairakei Drive Restoration	\$5,000.00	\$6,000.00
Moana	Donation towards Kids Greening Taupō	\$1,000.00	
Sarah O'Sullivan	Donation towards Oruatua Restoration	\$1,765.50	\$1,765.50
Spacecraft Taupō	Donation towards Wairakei Drive Restoration	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Taupō District Council	Service contract Greening Taupō	\$40,000.00	\$47,500.00
	REF210918036 Turangi Tongariro Community Grant Funding for Oruatua Restoration	\$7,500.00	
The Honey Hive Ltd	Donation towards Greening Taupō Day	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
The Sargood Bequest	Donation towards Oruatua Restoration	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Total Sport	Donation towards Greening Taupō	\$2,761.00	\$3,998.00
	Donation towards Project Tongariro	\$1,237.00	
Traverse Environmental Ltd	Contribution towards Kids Greening Taupō	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
	Contribution towards Greening Taupō	\$1,000.00	
Tumbleweed Tees	Donation towards Whio Creche	\$1,760.00	\$1,760.00
Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board	Community Partner Contribution towards Kids Greening Taupō	\$4,347.83	\$4,347.83
Val Burns Photography	Donation towards Greening Taupō	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust	Ref 2020/25 Grant for Whakaipo Bay	\$2,721.87	\$8,182.77
	Ref 2020/19 Grant for Oruatua Restoration	\$5,460.90	
Waikato Regional Council	ICM2019/2022-2522 Grant for Kids Greening Taupō	\$13,333.33	\$28,502.18
	Grant towards Waiotaka River Restoration	\$13,447.35	
	Grant towards Aratiatia Restoration	\$1,721.50	
Wairakei Golf + Sanctuary	Donation towards Wairakei Drive Restoration	\$4,000.00	\$11,750.00
	Donation towards Greening Taupō	\$7,750.00	
World Wildlife Fund NZ	2021/EEAF08 Kids Greening Taupō Kairuruku re Māori	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00



Whio release at the Poutu Intake on Tongariro River

DODGING THE SHOWERS

WHAKATĀNE FIELD TRIP JUNE 2022

BY LESLEY MOCHAN

Rain was forecast as the Project Tongariro group entered the Ōhope Scenic Reserve. Darkness had descended and the air had a slight wintery chill. Headtorches beamed through the bush, lighting up the forest in a way that made it feel like a new kind of exploration. Joining the group were the hosts from the Whakatāne Kiwi Trust; Wayne, Stewart (aka Russell) and Clive. The night walk was an opportunity to experience the bush from a different perspective, to enter a world of wonderful fluorescent creatures (note – this can be scary if you are averse to spiders). Not only was it a lesson in flora of the area, but it was also a chance to get to know the fauna – lots of wētā, tunnel web spiders, harvestmen, peripatus, glow-in-the-dark fungi and glow worms. The hosts were extremely knowledgeable in all areas of the bush environs and gave an excellent overview of the Whakatāne Kiwi Trust. They also had eagle eyes that spotted crawlies in crannies of trees or under leaves. To everyone's delight these and the fungal world are incredibly mind blowing under UV lights. To top the evening off, a kiwi called, and unlike other previous participants, the group was not disappointed with non-sighting of kiwi. The rain arrived just as the group exited the bush.



Rain fell gently through the night. A break in the clouds and a glimmer of sunlight appeared on Saturday morning, the timing perfect for the next visit with Stuart and Margaret Slade from the Nukuhou saltmarsh care group. These amazing, not so young couple, not only developed the project idea, but they also oversaw the development of the Burke Road lookout, the two-kilometre Nukuhou river walk, and pest trapping/weed control around the estuary and



the local Uretara Island. Luckily, they have help now, with a base of volunteers protecting this significant salt marsh, and so caring for the resident population of marsh birds; fernbird, banded rail, spotless crane, pūkeko, and bittern. Part of the volunteer's role is monitoring bird numbers monthly. From the lookout Stuart and Margaret gave an overview of the history and the scope of the project. The unique lookout has an informative interpretation panel, and pottery designs and footprints of the local birds (created by the amazing hosts). Next stop was the home of the hosts and the Cheddar Valley pottery shop (the old Cheddar Valley dairy factory) for a presentation on the project development and a very welcome morning tea. Once refreshed the group followed the boardwalk/walking track alongside the Nukuhou river which has been replanted with natives including sedges to enhance the environment, but also to stop bittern crossing the road and being killed by traffic. This area is also an important spawning area for whitebait. On return to the pottery shed, it was time to shop. If you haven't stopped here before, you should, as the pottery and art works by Stuart and Margaret are incredible. This couple is incredible!



Next stop was the Ōhiwa headland for a bite of lunch with Mike O'Sullivan at Bryon's Beach. The rain returned but luckily the next segment of the field trip was inside. The party was joined by Andrew Glaser and Mithuna Sothieson, a crucial part of the driving force to connect the community and individuals to form the Ōhiwa Headland Sanctuary. An informative presentation by Andrew and Mithuna set the scene of the development of a 400ha

predator free sanctuary. Locals, including surrounding farmland owners have set up a network of traps which are monitored regularly alongside the shooting of unwanted pests. The PT group was given the opportunity to try out thermal imaging glasses which are used as part of this process. The locals are also invited to take part in research projects. Aerial maps of the trap network, and results to date were very impressive.



The Ōhiwa headland is a diverse area of wetlands, coastal habitat, farmland, and the Te Mawhai Regional Park. Several species of native fauna including sea birds and marsh birds have set up home here. Revegetation is undertaken as part of the project. A Kiwibank Predator Free Grant was gained when the Trust submitted a video and gained 1001 votes, the most for the competition. Not bad for a small community with around one third permanent residents.

Post presentation and discussion, it was time to stretch the legs, and low and behold the rain had stopped. Most of the group headed up to the lookout area in the Te Mawhai regional park. The climb had the heart pumping, but it was well worth the effort with the breath-taking coastal views from Ōhope in the West sweeping through to the East Coast. A shorter track led down to the Ōhiwa harbour motor camp, past the Ōhiwa harbour library, and back along the beach to the starting point, just as it started to rain.

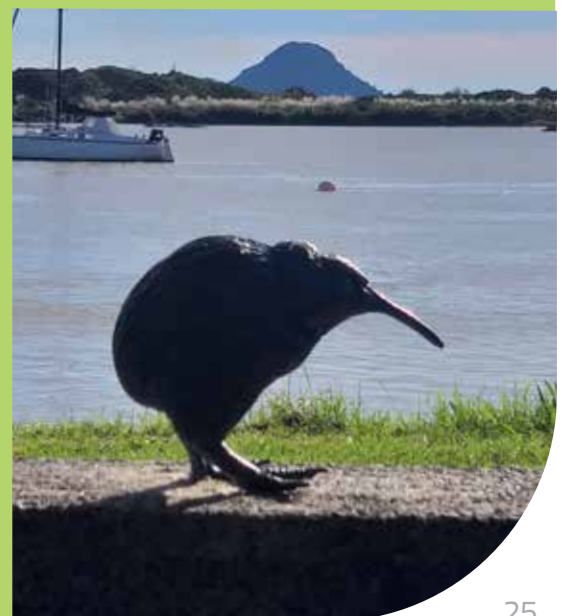


After a glorious hot water soak at the Ōhope Top 10 motor camp, the team donned more appropriate clothing for dinner at the highly rated Fisherman's Wharf café restaurant in Ōhope. It was smiling faces all round as the group dined on delicious food and recounted the happenings of the day.

After a very wet night, the rain stopped allowing the group to pack up in dry weather. The last visit was a meeting with the Whakatāne Kiwi Trust, and this was held in the very comfortable board room at the Whakatāne Regional Council building. The hosts were Gaye Payze (Pest Control Team Leader) and Hilary Sheaff (Marketing and Funding coordinator). Once settled in with a cuppa, Gaye and Hilary gave a presentation on the Kiwi Trust covering the project history, main activities including daily kiwi monitoring, pest control methods and results, funding, and the future. The hosts were very keen to share experiences and knowledge and a great discussion ensued.

Protecting kiwi is the key objective, it is estimated there are now over 300 in the three main scenic reserves surrounding the town. This is a significant increase since 1999 when 8 birds were discovered in the Ōhope Scenic Reserve. Kiwi have also been established on the pest free Moutohorā (Whale Island) just offshore from town. The project has been so successful that the move to in-situ management of chicks was undertaken from 2011 with excellent success rates. Residents close to the project regularly encounter kiwi in their gardens. This increase in numbers is a testament to the dedication and effort of the Trust, funders, and volunteers.

To complete the visit to Whakatāne, a few of the group walked down to the river walkway to the Whakatāne heads and notorious bar. A few kiwi were spotted along the way.





PREDATOR FREE TAUPŌ

ROBYN ELLIS
PFT COORDINATOR

Another challenging 12 months has passed, but with great support Predator Free Taupō has been able to continue encouraging community groups, schools, and individuals towards a Predator Free 2050. We partnered up with Forest and Bird Taupō in August and hosted Kelvin Haste for our annual speaker. Kevin provided an entertaining talk to the trapping community, sharing his experience from setting up Predator Free Crofton Downs back in 2013, how to empower the community and the mammoth efforts of what's happening today on the Miramar peninsula.

Forest and Bird and PFT winter talk with Kelvin Haste.



Predator Free Taupō continues to provide trap building workshops to the community and was part of Mahi Aroha at Motuoapa, market day at Kuratau, school events and Greening Taupō Day. ITM Taupō has continued to be a wonderful supporter of Predator Free Taupō and provides the timber for all our workshops.

Local trapping projects continue to catch many pests, and many report back on the increase in birdlife they are noticing. Volunteer trappers come and go, at present we could do with a few extra volunteers to fill in a few gaps. Waikato River Corridor trapping project, who have recently changed their name to Huka Trapping, continue to grow in volunteers and traps, expanding into Craters Mountain bike park. Opepe trapping are looking at different techniques of how they can improve and be more effective at removing



Heidi (KGT) setting a tracking tunnel on Mt Tauhara.

Local trapping projects continue to catch many pests, and many report back on the increase in birdlife they are noticing.

pests from Opepe Forest. Laurie Back has refreshed and expanded the trapping network over at Whareroa and with support from King Country Energy he has joined forces with Russel the Rat and established a trapping network at Lake Kuratau.

In 2021 it was with much appreciation that we received \$5,000 from the annual Rotary Charity Golf Tournament. These funds went towards supporting trapping groups with lure which is an ongoing expense for all trapping projects and the purchase of more traps and materials for workshops, projects and the trap library.



The Pataka Lions groups acknowledged Predator Free Taupō at their celebration of 40 years of service for providing opportunities for the team. We were invited as a friend of the Lloyd Morgan Charitable Trust. The Pataka Lions club have been a great support cutting the mesh and timber for trap building workshops and then rebuilding all the 'wonky' tunnels from the workshops. They go beyond what is required with all the edges rounded off nicely on the tunnels. Predator Free Taupō is then able to sell these fine traps boxes with traps to the community.

Mt Tauhara

March 2022 Tracking Tunnel Data TrapNZ

100 Tunnels March 17th 2022

Hedgehog	Rat	Mouse	Possum	Insect	No prints
31	20	12	7	14	46

checked, showed an array of pest animals, such as pigs, deer, possums and rats.

We will continue with monitoring March and November each year and build a picture over time. The information/ data gathered provides good baseline data and will complement, support and strengthen any future applications for ongoing work and any new restoration work.



Trap building at Motuoapa - Mahi Aroha 2022



Another event that kept getting rescheduled due to Covid was a Large Scale Pest Control meeting hosted by Wairakei Estate, a forum to learn more about the PF2050 initiative, hear from experts, and discuss potential next steps for interested parties. Brett Butland from PF2050 was one of the speakers and discussed relevant cases under the PF2050 banner and potential PF2050 contribution for a suitable project. This led into a facilitated discussion of potential next steps of a large regional project with the group which consisted of many local organisations, land owners, managers and interested parties.

After many Covid delays the establishment of a permanent monitoring network on Mt Tauhara, initially planned in 2019 finally got established and the first run of tracking tunnels was undertaken in March 2022. With support from the Tauhara Maunga Joint Trusts Working Group, funding provided by WWF in 2019 to purchase the resources and many hours of support from the Owhako Rangers, Wairakei estate, Shorty from Waikato Regional Council and the Kids Greening Taupō team, ten permanent lines with ten tunnels at 50 metre intervals on each line have been installed on the Maunga. Monitoring will be undertaken twice a year in March and November to collect baseline monitoring of pests on Mt Tauhara with the establishment of tracking tunnel lines to measure rodent and mustelid relative abundance & chew card monitoring to record possum presence.

From here a committee has been formed to investigate further and to keep a dialogue going with PF2050, we need to gather more expressions of interest from local stakeholders and develop a preliminary outline of a potential project. Predator Free Taupō and Project Tongariro are part of the committee and are keen to contribute and to also keep the community informed of any developments.

It's very interesting and exciting that we could have a potentially large landscape pest eradication project that could contribute to PF2050, but there is a lot of work to be done and conversations to be had.

In the meantime keep your lure fresh, your trap set and happy trapping!

In March 2022 with awesome support from the Epro apprentices: Ollie and Helene, Shorty and Kynan from Waikato Regional Council, Jeff Willis, Heidi from Kids Greening Taupō and Nigel from ARCO put out tracking papers and chew cards for a night and then collected the following day, a massive task that ran so well. ARCO and Epro provided trail cameras to place out at two of the monitoring stations. The cameras, when



Predator Free kids listening to Jason Day Call of the Wild.

ORUATUA RECREATION RESERVE

SHIRLEY POTTER
PT EXECUTIVE MEMBER

From July 2021 to the end of June 2022 we have planted 8300 trees, making our total since 2014 an impressive
30,000



This report covers the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Another busy, productive and fun year has been spent in the reserve. I wish to acknowledge our funders who make this project possible: Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET), Te Uru Rakau (Ministry for Primary Industries), Waikato Regional Council (WRC), Department of Conservation (DOC), The Sargood Trust, Turangi Tongariro Community Fund and Geyser Foundation. Donations from locals are also gratefully received and put to good use. The Department of Corrections are also a key part of this project, growing the trees for us to purchase at a very good rate, providing bamboo stakes, cutting old woollen carpet and making signs for us. It is a pleasure to work alongside Murray in the nursery.

COVID-19 has made life difficult for Murray with his workers being unavailable for long periods of time.

We also had some donations from businesses for equipment that is essential for our work.

Croplands donated a boom spray which we mounted on Mark's quad bike to keep our access tracks open. Milwaukee donated a battery powered knapsack. Lyn River donated gloves for our hard working weed pulling crew. WRC have kindly helped us with an 'end of year windfall' of some herbicide and PPE. Many thanks to you all.

COVID-19 has reduced our visiting volunteer groups to zero, but we are lucky to have a few hard core helpers who love the work as much as we do. Rosie Bennett joined our crew of paid part timers in October, with Nicky Schrader and Suzie Deroles. Rosie has been quick to learn about the native fauna and her passion for the job was evident when she was working with a couple of young lads on holiday, she was nervously watching to make sure they didn't stand on any young seedlings, or pull out the wrong things! Sadly Nicky has left us again for her second baby. Steve Bell developed a strong dislike for Canadian fleabane and became a valuable member of our weeding crew, helping greatly with the spraying. Alison Downes has joined us as a keen Wednesday weeder and morning tea supplier! Thanks to all the other helpers not specifically mentioned, you know who you are and your help is valued.

I must make mention of our July 2021 planting. It was the unveiling of Jim Maniapoto's memorial and heavy rain was correctly predicted. It was great to have four generations of the Maniapoto family in attendance. We had our best turnout ever with over fifty people, who all stayed the distance, most drenched to the skin at the end. Anne (Jim's wife) was with us again the following morning tending to our plants and she said it was the best memorial possible for Jim and he would have loved it. I am very sad to say that Anne Maniapoto passed away in March. Our community is poorer without her lovely presence.

Jim's granddaughter Candace Graham has been on hand to continue this connection with the whenua. This year we have had another three community planting days, with new faces turning up each time. Our range



Shorty with a tough decision to make! A great smoko spread.



The spray crew - Steve, Mark and Shirley.



When Canadian fleabane goes bad.

of volunteer ages was from four months to eighty nine years young. Several holiday homeowners are making visits specifically to join in the planting days, with around two thousand plants each time. The dates were 8 May, 28 May and 9 July (postponed from 11 June due to flood waters).

From July 2021 to the end of June 2022 we have planted 8300 trees, making our total since 2014 an impressive 30,000. Our volunteer hours just keep climbing as the project gathers momentum, with 2700 hours this financial year. Bryan Lawrance as usual is key to our initial access and follow up mulching. He has helped Warrick Simmonds and his crew again pulling over wilding pines. We still have a few wilding pines to be removed, but the landscape is well on the way to being pine free now. There are lots of willows ahead of us in the next few years to keep us busy.

Nick Singers has contributed many hours to the project once again. Nick and I did a massive 1800 litre spray session one day in December. There is always something to learn when being out with Nick. Two years ago he showed me a native grass, *Dichelachne crinita* – plume grass. I have successfully spread the seeds and it has grown and seeded in our 2021 plantings. This year Nick spotted another endemic grass, *Poa anceps*. These grasses have been tagged and seeds will be collected in the future.

One discovery had him a little stumped - a plant that Nick was unsure of - was I hearing things?! It is a special bog yellow cress, *Rorippa palustris*, that has been hiding for 20 plus years under a canopy of blackberry and honeysuckle. There are now five plants all doing well and producing seeds.

Karen Ardin (Ardy), Collette Taylor, Sarah O'Sullivan and many others are all instrumental in different aspects of this project. Mark Brightwell is a full time volunteer



has provided some shade in drought times and shelter for young native seed germination. Careful hand pulling is ensuring that most of these precious native seedlings are surviving.

On the Thursday before our planting days we have a big job laying out plants in the correct locations. These days are being well attended, with helpers and flat deck



The unremarkable but special Bog yellow cress.

Highlights

The number of volunteers turning up to our plantings and layout days

Miomiro (tomtit) seen and heard daily

Working with all those who help our project

Finding new special native plants

Nicky's dog, Rocky, finding paper wasps nests for us

Securing funding from Sargood for three years to help pay part timers

Mark diving and catching a small hare in the tall grass - Beauden Barrett style!

Watching three piwakawaka nests fledge three chicks each

The civil defence guys filling our spray water tank

Rosie caught a small rabbit, dispatched it humanely and fed it to her dogs!

Finally finding a tui nest - at the end of the road in an elm tree

utes coming from DOC, TDC, WRC, EPRO and volunteers. Our May layout day had 33 people so we were able to prepare the site with a mat and bamboo stake by each plant. Following the flood in mid June it was great to see that our plants had been placed appropriately. Sadly the flood waters ripped some plants from the ground for replanting. Dozens of mats went swimming and had to be retrieved. The damage was not too bad considering the depth of the water that flowed through.

Worse flood damage is being wrought on the mature native trees as river banks collapse in floods. The adjacent river gravels are locked solid with invasive willows, buddleia etc forcing the water to take the easy route. It is very distressing to see yet another one hundred year old kowhai fall into the river as the bank is eroded yet again. I am progressing discussions with WRC to look at removal of invasive species on the river gravels.



Wednesday weeding crew - smoko time.

Ian and Frances Jenkins have again donated 850 beautiful trees for the season. There is a site named 'Jenkins' around our oldest tree in the reserve, an estimated two hundred year old silver beech tree. Predator trapping is able to be expanded as we now have easier access to more land following weed removal. I'm hopeful for successful funding from the WRC small scale fund that will also help replace old rusty traps too.

Miomiro (tomtit) are still present, serenading us every day. A Toutouwai (North Island robin) is sometimes heard over the river. In May 2022 we all saw and heard the robin again, just a day visit, but we live in hope. Three piwakawaka (fantail) nests were closely observed over several weeks. We all delighted in watching the sweet young birds being fed by their parents and eventually fledging.



Three lovely piwakawaka chicks.

Lowlights

Drought again this year and worse than before

Increasing paper wasps numbers

German wasps getting me on my leg and back late in the season

40 plants were stolen from our August planting



Jim Maniapoto memorial - planting day July 2021



The layout crew testing Collette's baking before the planting day.

MT PIHANGA - LAKE ROTOPOUNAMU FOREST RESTORATION PROJECT

KIRI TE WANO

The Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu Forest Restoration project is Project Tongariro's oldest running restoration project - **now in it's 21st year!**

We partner DOC with this restoration project and credit has to be given to the local team here who this year have dedicated a lot more time and effort into clearing windfalls on the trap lines, checking the lake traps regularly while on amenity runs, purchasing half of the bait used in traps and undertaking trap maintenance - cleaning, checking the integrity of the trap boxes and trap calibration. Regular trap maintenance is something volunteers do not always have the time to undertake, so it is good to know that this is being done regularly. We are getting to the point now where some of the trap boxes are becoming too old and rotting, so we are investigating some different options.

This summer we have also been asked to be a part of a future-science project that will look at what mustelids are eating. Our trappers are now collecting trapped stoats and weasels for freezing so they can be isotope tested to investigate their diet and look at this in relation to what prey species are present.

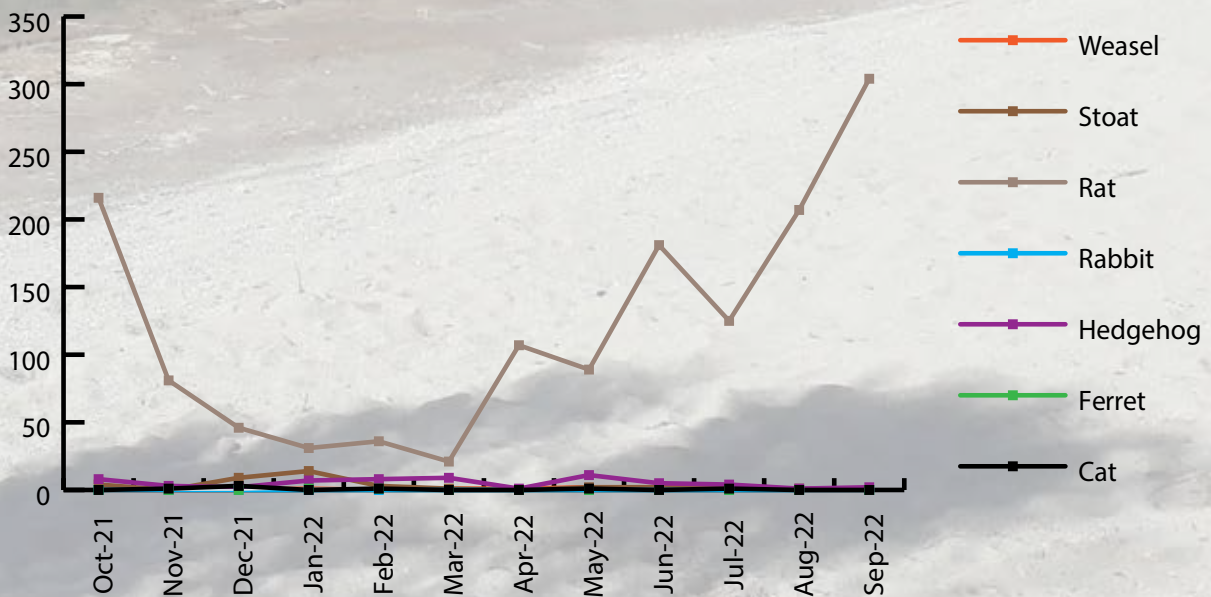
We undertook another day of wāhine-only heather control in March this year. This consists of being flown to the top of Mt Pihanga to 'search and destroy' heather plants, using a variety of methods, including all wāhine carrying 15L packs of herbicide! This is the 4th year of annual control (organized by the local DOC team and flights paid for by PT) and it is always eagerly sought after volunteer work!

Future plans for urgently needed animal pest control are unfortunately still on hold due to a breakdown of local iwi relationships with DOC, over the 1080 issue. Local and government agencies are working together to try and highlight the absolute reality that something needs to happen as the local forest habitats cannot support all those who live there. Project Tongariro is continuing to support DOC at a local hapu level where we can, and advocate at a national level - but it is an anxious time for us and our trapping volunteers who cannot pull rats out of our traps at Rotopounamu forest fast enough.

Finally, we must acknowledge our amazing, passionate and dedicated group of volunteer trappers who schedule themselves fortnightly to walk the trapping lines. You are the last line of defense here, and without you, this magical bit of forest wouldn't be what it is today. Thank you for your energy and stickability! Mention must

also be made to those who contribute financially to this project. Our adopt a hectare crowdsourcing project is an equally important way of supporting this project with donations being used for bait, replacement traps, volunteer support and occasional contractors.

Mt Pihanga Lake Rotopounamu Trapping record - Oct 2021 - Sept 2022



TE MATAPUNA WETLANDS RESTORATION

KIRI TE WANO

We have temporarily paused work on this project, with the completion of the Waiotaka River Forest Restoration project at Rongomai, near Turangi. This project saw a fantastic group of funders from Waikato Regional Council (WRC) and the Department of Conservation come together with ourselves, Ngati Rongomai, the Department of Corrections and Project Tongariro members who along with contractors and correctional manpower, enthusiastically cleared approximately 9ha of weed infested land next to the Waiotaka river, and plant 45,000 trees! Thanks again to Nick Singers for project managing this project to its successful completion. Ngati Rongomai has been continuing this progress and successfully secured further funding from WRC to continue land clearing, fencing and planting this year. We are ecstatic to see this project continuing on.

Project Tongariro is continuing to look for funding to continue willow control work in the reserves that make up Te Matapuna wetlands. We have good relationships with the hapu involved at these places so we are confident that our work will continue, in partnership with the Department of Conservation.



WILDING CONIFER CONTROL PROJECT

KIRI TE WANO

In October 2021 Project Tongariro successfully bid for funding via the Wilding Conifer Control Project and the NZ Wilding Conifer Management Strategy 2015-2023. This is funded via the Ministry of Primary Industries. We were successful in two areas - the Western Lake Taupō Shore Reserves and Mt Tauhara Maunga near Taupō. We also bid for a 3rd area (known as Northern Lake Taupō Bays), but this ended up being funded via the Lotteries Commission. All in all, we have a total of \$450,000 spread over 2 years to control wilding conifers around Lake Taupō at significant sites.

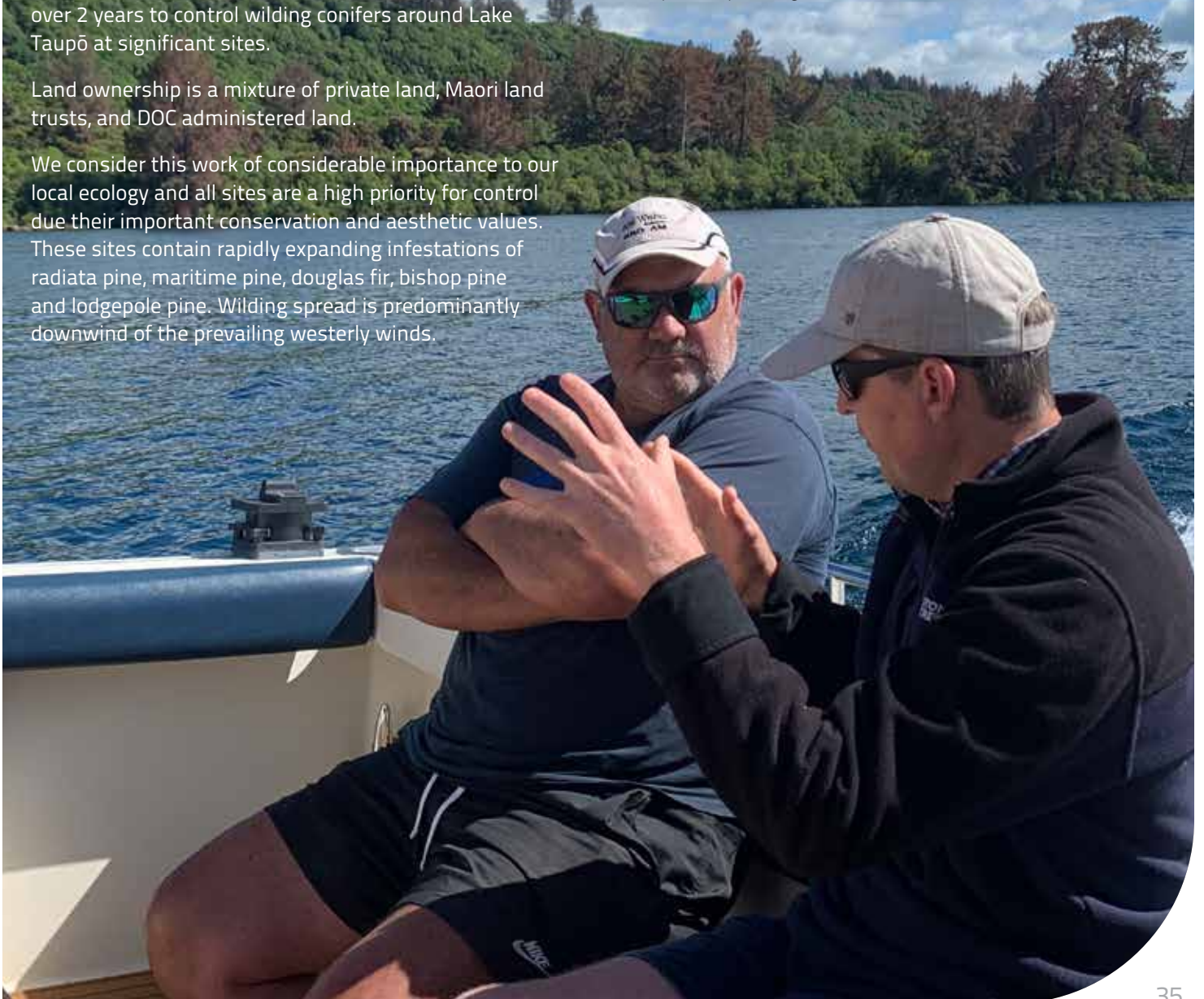
Land ownership is a mixture of private land, Maori land trusts, and DOC administered land.

We consider this work of considerable importance to our local ecology and all sites are a high priority for control due their important conservation and aesthetic values. These sites contain rapidly expanding infestations of radiata pine, maritime pine, douglas fir, bishop pine and lodgepole pine. Wilding spread is predominantly downwind of the prevailing westerly winds.

We are undertaking this project with support from the Waikato Regional Council and we have engaged project managers Singers Ecological Ltd (Nick Singers, Alana Delich), who look after the work on the ground, undertaken by 3 different local contractors - Arco Environmental, Marshalls Eco Ltd and Te Waa Logging Ltd. We are very grateful to the team involved in this project, and work is being carried out to a very high standard!

Another rewarding aspect of this project has been working with Māori land owners to ensure the contractors are not only physically safe, but are culturally safe, should they come across wāhi tapu sites.

Viewing progress on Rangipoia Point and Whakaipo Bay conifer control with hapu members from Ngāti Te Rangiita and the Rangatira 8B1 Trust, Nick & Alana from Singers Ecological, along with Kiri and Paul from Project Tongariro.





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