



NFRT Chairman's Message

Welcome to the Autumn 2017 issue of *Canopy* and an overview of some of the exciting work that NFRT Trustees, staff and supporters have been involved in over the previous several months. Publication has been delayed while we improve our database, but the work of the Trust has continued apace as you will read below.

As we made clear to supporters in the previous *Canopy*, a substantial annual income is now required to manage our reserves and fulfil our charity status obligations in a timely manner. Trust Manager Sandy Crichton has been negotiating with some new carbon partners and has also been working with NS Fundraising on a range of more public fundraising initiatives. We are now seeing positive results from these efforts. We recently launched an appeal to raise \$185,000 towards the purchase of 112 ha of special rainforest in the Wekaweke Valley adjacent to the Waipoua Kauri Park, and I have been humbled and blown away by the generous response from so many supporters, many of you first-time donors to our work. Thank you so much, and I look forward to meeting you at future reserve openings and other Trust events.

We have also commenced work on a project in Taranaki to purchase and protect a very significant block of wetland forest adjacent to the Egmont National Park. But more about this in the next issue of *Canopy*.

Our two new Trustees, Dell Hood and Andrew Tuckey as Treasurer, are being introduced in this issue, and we also very sadly farewell Treasurer Hugh Graham, who is stepping down at the end of March. Hugh brought a commercial imperative to our decision making and business dealings and he introduced levels of delegation and responsibility for Trustees and staff. He pre-empted the business changes now being required by the Charities Commission and has made it much easier for us to meet these new obligations. The entire NFRT family owes Hugh a huge debt of gratitude for his persistence in an unglamorous and sometimes misunderstood role and for what he has effected in bolstering the financial security of the Trust.

The recent fire in the Port Hills is a devastating reminder about our vulnerability in terms of both environmental loss and carbon liability. The profile and publicity with this Christchurch fire may assist our ongoing compensation claim for restoration in the William Upton Hewett memorial forest west of Whangarei that was severely burned in a fire two years ago.

Tim Oliver, Chairman, NFRT

Introducing New Trustee Andrew Tuckey

Andrew has just retired after 45 years in business. The last 35 years were spent as a Chartered Accountant in Public Practice.

With more time to spare Andrew can now devote more time and energy to conservation projects. As one of our new Trustees Andrew will take responsibility for the finances of the trust by taking up the formal role of Treasurer.

His main outdoor interests are skiing in the winter and boating on the beautiful Hauraki Gulf. However in the last year two overseas trips have given Andrew the opportunity to see for himself the very real need for conservation efforts to be encouraged throughout the world. The trips were to:

- Rara Tal National Park in the Mugu Province of Nepal and to Bardia National Park in the South East of the Nepal.
- South Georgia Island and the Antarctic Peninsula. The rusting ruins of whale and seal processing plants on South Georgia are a very stark reminder of why we need to protect our wildlife from the predatory efforts of mankind.

Introducing New Trustee Dell Hood

Dell Hood recently retired from a long career in public health medicine but has been an active conservation volunteer for many decades.

She was involved in the restoration of Tiritiri Matangi from the project's inception, and was a founder member of the Supporters' committee, chairing the group for a period before moving to Hamilton in the mid 90s. The Tiritiri Matangi experience led in time to her covenanting a small regenerating bush property in northern Coromandel with QEII.



New trustees Andrew Tuckey and Dell Hood.

She was a member of the Waikato Conservation Board for 9 years during which time she contributed to the writing of the current Conservation Management Strategy.

In addition to caring for her covenant she is involved in many local environmental and conservation initiatives in and around Hamilton where she lives, and is an active member of many conservation groups. She also volunteers for Kaivolution, Hamilton's food rescue initiative, is currently a member of a city council group working towards Hamilton's earning WHO "Age friendly city" status, and a member of an external reference group supporting a local indigenous biodiversity initiative in Hamilton City.

Although still learning about the work of NFRT, Dell is taking a particular interest in our Ed Hillary Hope Reserve, a major new asset for recreation, conservation and the environment near Hamilton. Visitor facilities and restoration work on this 466 ha reserve are still in their early stages but it is already attracting visitors and will in time contribute to reducing the pressure on other conservation areas from the rapidly growing urban populations of Auckland, Hamilton and surrounding districts.

When she can find the time, Dell and her partner are enjoying exploring the country's more remote places, on foot, bike and by kayak wherever possible.

Trust Patron: Pat Cowan, 13 July 1930 – 12 August 2016

All the partners of all of the trustees will know how much time and energy is required to enable a trustee to participate actively in the affairs of the Native Forest Restoration Trust.

None more so than Pat Cowan - Trust Patron, 2012 – 2016.

During the 1980s and '90s, within the Native Forest Restoration Trust (or the NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust as we were more commonly referred to back then), everyone knew Arthur Cowan, the genial mover and shaker who made things happen. He got trees planted, he raised funds, he initiated purchases, and he made 'darned sure' we purchased the properties he had brought to our attention. Most of us knew Arthur's wife Pat. She was the quiet, attentive voice of moderation that gently directed Arthur's enthusiasm and energy to good purpose.

Of course nobody should remain known as someone else's support person, but be known for their own talents, strengths and interests. Gracious and dignified, Pat Cowan was an amazing person of great warmth, perception and wisdom who lived her own life while so actively supporting Arthur achieve his goals and passions.

The 1970's are now nearly half a century ago and Pat and Arthur had already lived their lives on the Otorohanga farm, having met after World War II in Waikato Hospital when occupational therapist Pat helped Arthur recover from injuries sustained on the farm. Their four children had all established their own lives and the eldest, Evan, had taken over the farm. Pat and Arthur were looking forward to a peaceful retirement and sufficient leisure time to follow their interests. Pat had many passions and she was keen to devote her energies to them all. They included her church and community, her kitchen, garden, music, art, and of course the 13 grandchildren and growing number of great grandchildren. As events occurred, none were neglected, but they had to be fitted into the schedule according to Arthur's passion for conservation issues.

In the late 1970's the Pureora tree-top protest drew attention to the perilous state of New Zealand's forests and Arthur was determined to do what he could to stop the logging and the deteriorating quality of our rivers. Together, they supported the protestors who sat up the trees, and Pat's inexhaustible cooking nourished them. In 1980, the idea of a positive response to the Government's 3 year moratorium on logging at Pureora was strongly supported by Arthur, and when the NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust was established Arthur became a founding trustee. No doubt Pat was again a keen supporter at the time, but she had no way of knowing what



Pat and Arthur Cowan both preparing fire for cooking venison sausages and billy tea.

they were getting involved in. The Trust grew slowly and quietly, transitioning from planting trees to securing land, not making headlines, but establishing its own particular brand of conservation. At every stage Pat and Arthur were there, always with home baked scones or cakes, usually with venison sausages to be cooked over an open fire and gallons of billy tea.

One of the early land purchases was in the King Country, high on the slopes of Mount Ranginui and Mount Rangitoto. As visitors to Rangitoto Station had to pass the road to the Cowan's home, most made the short detour to call in, attracted by the smell of freshly-baked bread, to chat, have a taste of whatever cake was in Pat's pantry and the inevitable cup of tea. The warmth of the reception, no matter how inconvenient the timing, was always memorable. The old farmhouse kitchen was expansive to hold any number of visitors, and the callers often

over-lapped and the conversation always revolved around conservation. While Arthur was the focus of these discussions, Pat was always there with her own view of the issues, frequently illustrated with her latest painting, and on rare occasions with her latest piano composition. And no matter how often you had been to see them, nor how recently, no visit was complete without a tour of Pat's garden to see what was in flower, or about to flower, or ready to pick.

The abundance of that garden overflowed and many a visitor went away with fresh vegetables, fruit, flowers and of course, plant cuttings. All Pat's most beloved plants were given away freely to ensure they gave others the pleasure that Pat got from

nurturing them. The climbing *Geranium* in our Oratia garden is almost the only exotic allowed in our native garden, not just for the inherent beauty of its deep rich red, almost black flowers which appear year round, but because it reminds us of Pat.

The NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust was honoured when Pat and Arthur accepted the joint role of 'Patrons of the Trust', and when Arthur died, we appreciated that Pat continued as our patron. It was a great pleasure she was able to attend the Ed Hillary Hope Reserve opening day, and we will all cherish that memory.

Geoff & Bev Davidson

Pigeon Bush Reserve: A Ranger's Viewpoint

A childhood memory: the Rimutaka Hill – a winding goat-track of a road and an endless sea of bright yellow. That was gorse in flower. Nothing else seemed to grow on that hill! I would not have believed anyone who might have said those hills would once again be lush and green with regenerating native bush. But it is – and a good part of that green cloak are the trees growing in Pigeon Bush Reserve.

PBR lies on the western side of Lake Wairarapa and stretches almost to the summit of the Rimutaka Ranges. It is a mostly rugged block, with deep valleys and gullies, with the only flats being on the east, alongside Prince Stream.

Parts of the block were farmed up until 1946. Fortunately, enough mature forest remained to be the backbone of a healthy, regenerating forest.

I was introduced to PBR (by David Burson) nearly three years ago and my first impressions were: that's a lot of gorse... how far does it extend? More questions, like how do you get around this vast 1178-hectare block with almost no tracks? What fish life exists in the main stream? What bird-life does PBR hold?...and of course what plant and animal pests were lurking?

After a planning session with Sharen Graham, our Southern Reserves Manager, a plan was formulated and produced. The priority was to establish tracks, as without these, managing the threats would be very difficult. This block was previously almost impassable. Larger animals (mainly goats and pigs and a few deer) could be controlled by helicopter but that is expensive.

We have established a main track into the centre of the block. From this, other tracks come down off the ridges, like

fingers, to join the centre track. By providing access to all corners of PBR and allowing controlled hunting, we will be able to control pest animals. The tracks also support maintaining bait stations and traps to control the smaller critters: possums, rats, ferrets, stoats and hedgehogs which are present, as to be expected in such a large area.

Plantings of the flats along Prince Stream is reversing the effects that farming had on this block. In some cases smaller trees and plants have been transplanted from areas within the reserve to the flats, where currently only rank grass exists. Other eco-sourced plants are purchased to supplement this.

Pest plants (a legacy of the old farming days) are present: blackberry, thistle, ragwort, Japanese honeysuckle, broom and gorse of course. Forest and Bird members have been great in helping to plant out natives and with the eradication of pest plants. A contractor plays a big part in track work and pest control.

Volunteers have a significant role in PBR when it comes to helping out with tasks. Along with Forest & Bird and the hunters, Ed Tressida and his Conservation Volunteers have also been busy planting and doing track maintenance. There are two adjoining landowners who help from time to time by clearing tracks and hunting.

Once the track work is complete and the pest plants and animals under greater control, the bush and all the native wildlife it supports will thrive. I am encouraged by the positive changes I am seeing – less animal browse and greater bird-life for example and I am proud to be able to help NFRT make this happen.

Colin Shore, Honorary Ranger, Pigeon Bush Reserve



Waipoua/Mataraua Kokako Recovery Project Significant Milestone of 60 Pairs Confirmed

There is a relict kokako population at the top of the Waipoua forest, on the Mataraua plateau.

Sustained nest protection work by the Department and community, over the past 20 years, has seen this population grow from 5 pairs in 1990 to 60 pairs and 29 single kokako in October 2016. This population now represents one of the most robust in the country.

“Because it is a remnant of the once extensive Northland population, the Waipoua/Mataraua kokako are an important contributor to genetic diversity nationally and their continued management and population growth is a high priority for the Kokako Specialist Group.” (Barea, L. 2016).

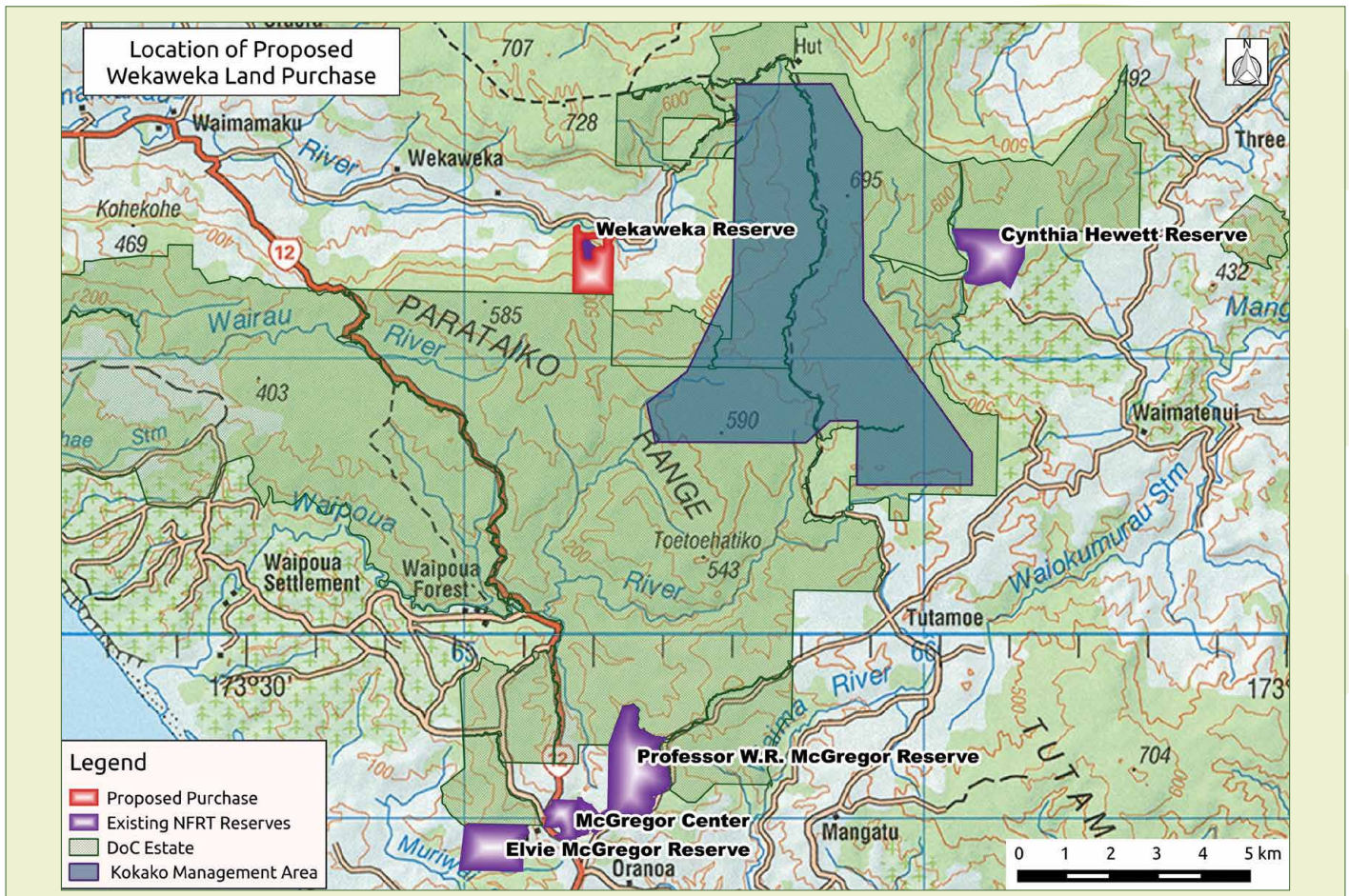
Successful nest protection work depends on effective rat, possum and stoat control during the vulnerable nesting period. Rats, possums and stoats are known to eat the eggs and chicks of the kokako and are the most significant threat to kokako persistence. Possums and stoats will also take adult kokako on the nest. Along with predation, possums and rats also compete with kokako for food.

Effective control of these three predators has occurred through ground and aerial control. There have been 4 aerial 1080 operations since 1990 (the most recent being the spring of 2014) with ground control being used in the years between. The aerial 1080 operation during 1990 is credited with saving kokako from local extinction.

Control during the past nesting season occurred using a bait station network, to deploy rat and possum bait, and a stoat trap line network, that has grown from 300 hectares in 2003 to the current 913 hectares. There is also an additional 200 hectares of sustained ground control of these predators on privately owned forest in the upper Wekaweke Valley. This work is run by the Wekaweke Landcare Group, who have been undertaking pest control measures in the area since 2002. A hundred of those hectares under community pest control are on the proposed new Trust Wekaweke reserve. This land has had the dedicated environmental stewardship of Rob Anderson and friends for over 20 years. Matthew Calder, DoC Kauri Coast



Kokako Calling. Taken by Kim Montefiore, a Wekaweke local resident in 2016



A Hidden Gem of Iconic Forest Awaiting our Protection

Travelling north on State Highway 12 through the Waipoua Forest, you know you're somewhere quite special. The biggest draw is, of course, Tane Mahuta, our largest kauri tree, with the entrance to the short walk to it marked by the multitude of parked cars on an otherwise empty road.

As magnificent as Tane Mahuta is, visiting it doesn't really give you a wild experience. For people who are a bit more adventurous and prefer their bush a bit quieter, there's a hidden gem a few kilometres up the road. At the moment, it's under private ownership but thanks to the amazing generosity of our supporters, we're confident that's about to change.

The Wekaweka Valley, which lies along the northern edge of the Waipoua Forest is remote and isolated. The gravel road that winds its way up from SH12 provides the only access and you're not likely to pass anyone on your way up who isn't a local. This is somewhere you can come to get really away from it all.

The proposed new reserve is around 12km from the highway but it feels like a world away. When you arrive, you can see the forest stretching up before you from the river flats to the top of the plateau that marks the boundary with the Waipoua Forest. The moderately steep setting of the block, which ranges in altitude from 280m to 540m above sea level is part of what makes it so special.

With both riverine and upland podocarp-broadleaf forest within the block, it's the last remaining fragment of its kind in this catchment. The riverine forest is particularly precious as it's rare both regionally and nationally. This makes it one of the

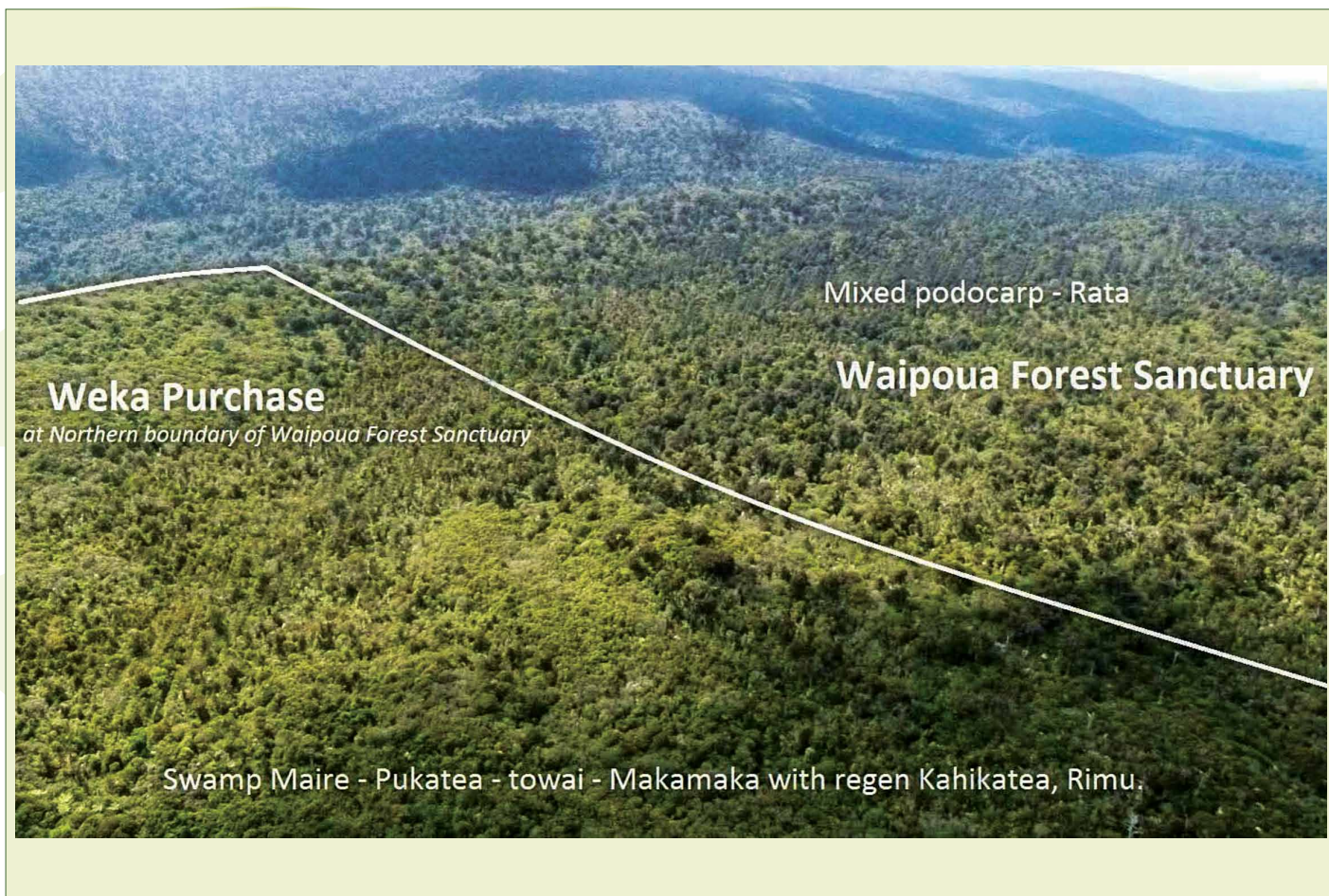
Department of Conservation's top priorities for protection within their Conservation Management Strategy.

That's not to say that the upland podocarp-broadleaf forest isn't important. In fact, this type of forest is unique to Northland and is prime habitat for kōkako. The Department of Conservation has a kōkako breeding programme in the close vicinity and the proposed reserve provides the perfect conditions for the kōkako to expand into.

Over 60 native species can be found in the proposed reserve. Rata, rimu, kahikatea and swamp maire make up much of the forest, supporting a multitude of birdlife. New Zealand wood pigeon, fantails, pied tits, tui, grey warblers, shining cuckoos and sacred kingfishers all reside there, along with North Island brown kiwi. The pest control programme that has been operating for the past 15 years is an important contributor to the national kiwi protection programme.

Both long-tailed and short-tailed bats have been recorded on neighbouring properties and kauri snail are present along with Northland green gecko. The incredibly rare scarlet mistletoe was also spotted just a few kilometres away and, in an area known for its wealth of endemic species, it's likely that more are just waiting to be discovered within the property. It is, quite simply, a haven for our native plants and wildlife.

The block will complement our current reserves in the area the Cynthia Hewett reserve around 10km to the east and the Waipoua Reserves to the south. Designating the area as a reserve will also bring significant conservation benefits to the

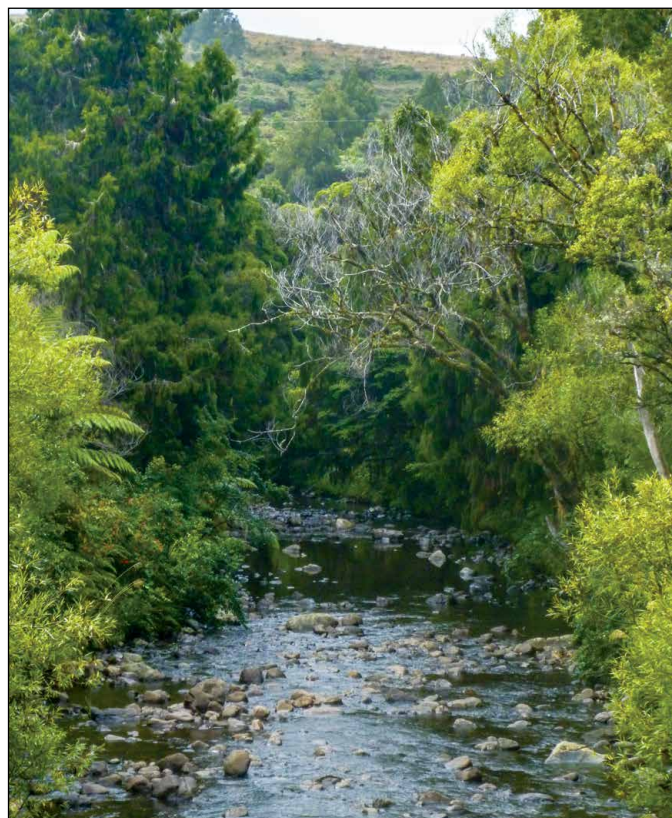


area including the strengthening and extension of the northern boundary of the Waipoua Forest. It will also provide a link to the Waimamaku River below and create a formally protected buffer to the Parataiko Range.

Looking ahead, DOC currently have a proposal to create Kauri National Park covering the Waipoua Forest and a handful of scenic reserves in the area. The Wekaweka Valley block could be considered for inclusion in the Park if the proposal is successful, further contributing to the ecological value of the area.

Our objective as a trust is to ensure that representative types of forest are secured, large enough to ensure their viability in the future; that all our remaining native birds and animals have an assured future; that the full diversity of our native forests is preserved for all time. The ecological importance of the Wekaweka Valley property makes it an ideal addition to the Trust's portfolio.

We would like to thank everyone who has generously donated to the Wekaweka campaign. The support you have shown has been overwhelming. We're still in the process of raising the funds to complete the purchase so if you know of anyone who may be interested in helping to purchase this significant area of natural heritage, please direct them to our website: www.nfirt.org.nz/wekaweka or ask them to get in touch by emailing admin@nznfirt.org.nz. Thank you.



(Above) Wekaweka.
Photograph by Northern Reserves Manager Chris Wild.

(Left) Kahikatea seedlings taking root in the proposed reserve.
Photograph by Sarah Nutbrown.

(Below) The Weka property will link Waipoua Forest to the Waimamaku River – an outstanding boulder river habitat with potential for Whio re-establishment. Photograph provided by Stephen King.



Waipoua Reserves and William Upton Hewett Memorial Reserve

The Trust has decided to undertake a two-year period of more intensive restoration work on its Waipoua and Whangarei reserves. The Trust ranks its reserves as A, B or C to prioritise work programmes within annual budgets but it also dedicates funding to intensive projects as the need arises. This need has arisen in two areas of Northland.

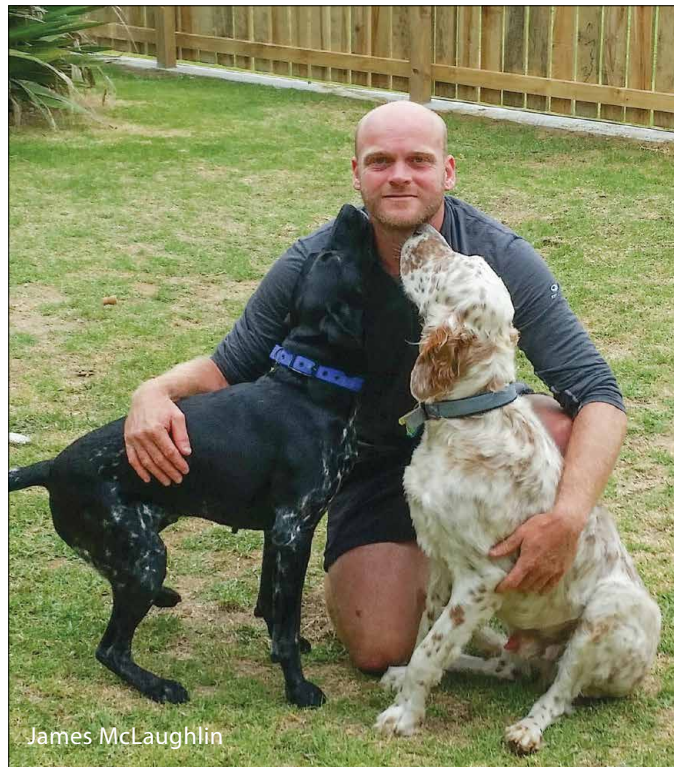
Firstly, there is a new era beginning in the Waipoua with the coming together of the local Iwi Te Roroa, members of the local community, adjoining landowners and the Department of Conservation to sustain its natural and social environments. The Waipoua community has many challenges with Kauri dieback disease threats and opportunities with the prospect of the forest becoming a National Park. The first joint initiative is a three-year project by Kaitiaki Kiwi to control mustelids funded by a Community Partnership Fund grant of over \$200,000. In spirit with new community aspirations for the area, the Trust has committed to fund additional weed control and re-vegetation effort on its three Waipoua reserves.

The second intensive project for 2017/18 is the restoration programme at William Upton Hewett Reserve. In 2014, 60 hectares of the reserve was destroyed by fire. The restoration requires an extra ordinary work programme with the planting of a fire break, ten two-hectare re-vegetation islands, invasive weed control, repairing slips and increased pest control. To manage these two intensive programmes the Trust is employing James McLaughlin.

James comes to us from DoC where he has spent the last 18 years working as a biodiversity ranger. James has extensive fieldwork experience where he has managed Kokako, Kiwi and

Blue duck recovery programmes. James has been working at the Kauri Coast office since 2009 and is a valued community member.

Chris Wild, Northern Reserves Manager, NFRT



James McLaughlin

Come and stay at Mangarakau Wetland Field Centre, North-west of Nelson

Attractive 10 bed lodge situated amid wonderful scenery with walking tracks around the swamp. Close to outstanding natural wilderness areas with access to Kahurangi National Park, Farewell Spit and Te Tai Tapu Marine Reserve. Bring own bedding and food.

For more information and Lodge Bookings:
Ph/fax Jo-Anne Vaughan (03) 525 6031 javn@extra.co.nz



Come and stay at Rangitoto Station Reserve, The King Country

Modern 3-bedroomed house, 34km from Otorohanga, King Country. Well-equipped and ideal for small to medium groups but sleeping space depends on how many workers are there at the time. Camping permitted near the woolshed. Hours of walking tracks through bush or open country with superb views. Many native bird species including kokako, kaka and falcon.

Relax and enjoy the peace and quietness.

House Bookings: Ph. Judy (09) 817-7604 (pte@jrhanbury@actrix.co.nz)



WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP US DO MORE?

The Trust owns and manages over 7,000 hectares of native forest and wetland reserves. If you would like to help protect our precious natural heritage, please make a donation using the form below. Thank you.

Yes, I would like to help protect our native forests for generations to come.

I enclose a donation of: ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 \$ (other)

All donations over \$5 are tax deductible.

Name

Address Post code

Phone E-mail

Make cheques payable to: NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust

Send to: NFRT, P.O. Box 80-007, Green Bay, Auckland 0643

To make your donation online, please click on the following link:

<http://www.nfirt.org.nz/make-a-donation>

If you wish to keep your copy of *Canopy* intact, please provide the above details with your online donation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!



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