



canopy 65

Newsletter of the Native Forest Restoration Trust

Winter 2018

NFRT Chairman's Message

Welcome again to the whole NFRT family with this Canopy 65 giving another update and overview, together with articles outlining the recent work and successes of the Trust. Much of this work, especially where land purchases are involved, is necessarily kept under wraps until agreements have been reached and we can appropriately inform supporters and commence fundraising. Land purchases and formal opening events are exciting milestones, but the ongoing management of all our properties, and enhancement of their ecosystems, is the grunt work that is an essential responsibility of ownership, but is generally far less glamorous or newsworthy.

While we have completed purchase of the wonderful 112 ha Wekaweka Valley extension and had a lovely opening gathering in sunshine on site in mid-March, we have also now moved into the final period of the fundraising campaign for the important Taranaki Mahood-Lowe block. Your very generous donations have ensured that we have covered over 85% of our target. Thank you. We now need to raise the final \$60,000 as soon as possible to help protect this special area forever.

As I have written previously, the carbon income from qualifying areas within some of our reserves funds much of the management of our properties. This income stream has drastically reduced following changes made by Ministry of Primary Industries to the definitions and implementation rules. We had an encouraging reprieve late last year with a resumption of the original rules we had been using, but this turned out to be only temporary and was revoked recently at a higher level within MPI. This chopping and changing at government level certainly makes life difficult for the many individuals and groups trying to achieve ecological enhancement. We now need to investigate other partnerships and income streams, while deferring some management expenditure. Furthermore, we cannot immediately plant open areas within reserves because the appropriately eco-sourced seed needs to be collected and then grown on before field planting – a 2 to 3 year process.

The important Opoutama wetland near the Mahia Peninsula, which was purchased with a bequest from the late Rosemary Middleton, now requires a legal and physical access along the northern boundary for weed and pest control, together with fencing to exclude livestock following a change in management on the adjoining farm. This is a difficult line to fence and would be unsatisfactory in the longer term, so we negotiated with the owners to purchase a buffer extension that would include the small DOC Jobson's swamp, hopefully to the benefit of all parties. Unfortunately, our negotiations were not successful,

with the owners wishing to retain the balance of their land, and so the current legal boundary will need to be fenced.

Sadly, Jim Dart, Chair of NFRT 1996-98, and Trustee and minutes secretary for considerably longer, has recently died aged 90. Jim was an excellent chair with his inclusive manner coupled with a gentle authority that commanded respect and I admired him greatly. Jim was born in London and came out to New Zealand as a young man, loved it and never left. Throughout his life he worked to enhance the environment and help protect its natural values and beauty.

Jim had recently 'retired' from his role as an Environment Court Judge and took over the chair from Owen Lewis in 1996 when we had just completed the Puhoi Far North purchase and were embarking on acquiring the 250 ha Waimahora block that became the Owen Lewis Reserve. However, he kept being recalled to the Environment Court and eventually that workload became too great and he had to relinquish the chair, but Jim retained an interest in NFRT activities throughout the remainder of his life.

The entire NFRT family, and especially those who had worked and interacted with Jim, extend our condolences to Margaret and Jim's wider family at this time, and give thanks for the important work he did so graciously in and for New Zealand.

Tim Oliver, Chairman, NFRT



Jim Dart (11 February 1926 – 13 April 2018)

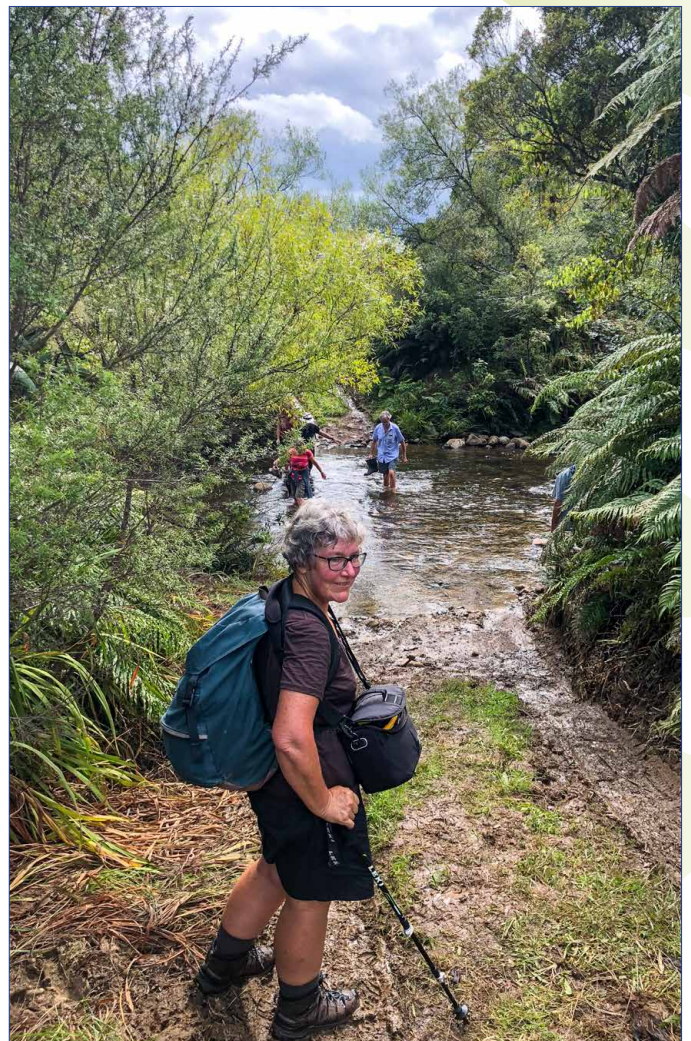
Wekaweka Valley (Kahumaku) Reserve Opening



Once upon a time (as all good stories start) the Trust was small enough to be entirely run by an active core group of passionate volunteers who did everything from calling the meeting to making the decisions to travelling in convoy or by bus to do the work on a distant reserve. There is still a social side of the Native Forest Restoration Trust which is not seen so often these days as we make more use of contractors and staff to accomplish our goals. But when we hold a 'Reserve Opening Day' the common bond that makes us members of the Trust shines through and we once again share in the pleasure of creating a better future for New Zealand. In protecting a reserve in perpetuity we all gain the benefits from a healthier environment.

The day before the opening, my wife Bev and I travelled north stopping on impulse in Dargaville for dinner at the best (only) café in town. As we walked in there was an unexpected chorus of 'hellos' from diners, all long-time supporters of the Trust. Soon after, trustee Warwick Brown walked in and was also surprised by the welcome chorus. We pulled together additional chairs and tables to make for a convivial evening. Bev & I then travelled on to Waipoua to stay at the Trust Lodge for the night together with the Trust Manager Sandy Crichton, Southern Reserves Manager Sharen Graham, Chairman Tim Oliver and his partner Annette. They had been busy pre-cooking the venison sausages which have been traditional since our very first reserve opening. There was an opportunity to catch-up in the morning sun as we ate breakfast, with the view from the deck overlooking the extensive manuka plantings. With Waipoua Forest in the distance we appreciated the foresight and efforts of the first trust members, and recognised the importance of continuing the work of creating and protecting reserves into the future.

After breakfast we departed in convoy to drive through the forest to Wekaweka Road and the Wekaweka Valley Reserve, or as it is called locally Kahumaku. It was a beautiful and fulfilling



Trampers returning from exploring the reserve.



Members of Wekaweka Landcare Group, Max Osborne and Chairperson Dan Mace.



The celebratory BBQ lunch.

day with well over 100 people turning up to celebrate the launch and participate in guided walks. It was fitting we were able to fulfil the vision of former trustee Stephen King, who had long advocated we should purchase the land, and introduce him to our supporters.

The 120-hectare reserve joined the Native Forest Restoration Trust reserve portfolio in 2017 following a successful public fundraising appeal. Overwhelming public generosity helped to ensure that the property will be around for generations to come, enabling the native flora and fauna to thrive.

Following a karakia from Snow Tane of Te Roroa, there were speeches by NFRT Chair Tim Oliver, Founding Trustee Geoff Davidson, Te Roroa Development Group General Manager Snow Tane, Honorary Ranger and former owner Rob Anderson and Reconnecting Northland Programme Manager Eamon Nathan. Attendees included NFRT trustees, donors and supporters, local community and representatives from organisations and groups with a strong interest and passion for conservation and Northland. Ideas and visions were shared, while feasting in the sun, before heading off into the bush.

The reserve includes wonderful examples of successful natural regeneration after periods of farming and logging. The

topography of the property, which stretches from the river flats at 280m above sea level, to the edge of the Waipoua forest plateau at 540m above sea level, provides the ideal conditions for a range of native plants. The regenerating riparian forest at the river's edge gives way to secondary growth broadleaf-podocarp forest as it climbs the hillside. On the day Maureen Young and other members identified 130 species of native plants. Majestic rata stand tall in the forest, with kahikatea, rimu and swamp maire all regenerating within the reserve. Nearer the forest floor the high rainfall is indicated by 9 species of delicate filmy ferns.

One of our main priorities is access to the property, which is currently via a bridge that has been deemed unfit for public use. However this didn't deter our hardy trampers who crossed the river both by foot and with a little help from Honorary Ranger Rob Anderson's 4x4.

We are very grateful to Rob Anderson, Te Roroa and Wekaweka Landcare Group in particular for their ongoing support, and supporters, new and old, who made the trip to Wekaweka and got the reserve off to the best possible start!

Geoff Davidson, Founding Trustee, NFRT



Rob Anderson with Chair Tim Oliver.



NFRT Reserve Manager James McLaughlin (right) with Courtney and Liam from Waipoua Forest Trust.

A Family Legacy Protecting the Future of New Zealand's Native Forests and Wetlands

Dorothea Lewis' parents were lifelong lovers of the natural environment and committed conservationists. When Dorothea's mother, Joy, passed away and the beloved family property in the Waitakere Ranges was sold, Dorothea and her father, Owen, made an extraordinary decision. They donated a significant portion of the proceeds from the sale to help protect native forests to continue the family's living legacy.

The incredibly generous donation helped protect two significant areas – our Ed Hillary Hope Reserve near Raglan, and Matuku Link in Bethells Valley, west of Auckland. We spoke to Dorothea about her family's connection to New Zealand's natural environment and their passion for protecting it.

Thank you for sharing your story with us, Dorothea, can you tell us a little bit more about your parents and their love for nature?

Both my mother and father were passionate about the natural environment that New Zealand had to offer and took every opportunity to spend time in nature. They were both absolutely on the same page on that. When I was younger, that involved family holidays in remote places in the bush and mountains of the South Island. And as time went on, it meant spending more time actively preserving our native forests and wetlands.

What inspired them to become more actively involved?

I think my brother, Warwick, was the catalyst for that. He studied horticulture at Massey University and became really committed to working with, and protecting our native plants and trees. He became quite involved with the Native Forest Action Council (NFAC), which was a force to be reckoned with in the late 1970s, fighting to protect our native forests from logging. That was really the beginning of the protests against logging our natives. My parents followed my brother into getting involved with NFAC and were quite involved around the time of the Maruia Declaration, which was a significant part of New Zealand's protest history against logging.



Dorothea volunteering at Matuku Link.



Owen and Joy Lewis.

So it kind of came full-circle – your parents inspired him and he inspired them?

Yes, exactly. Very tragically, though, Warwick died suddenly when he was just 25. It was completely unexpected, and I think my parents became even more committed to doing what they could to protect native species in his memory. I think it was one of their ways of coping with it. They were very positive, forward-thinking people, and I think they thought of this as a way to turn such a tragedy into something constructive. So they really threw themselves into it.

And how did they become involved with the Native Forest Restoration Trust?

The Trust came about after a group of people got together to protest logging in the Pureora Forest. I wasn't around at the time – I was living in Australia – but I understand that they decided they wanted to put some structure in place for what they were doing and create a long-term plan.

My father, Owen Lewis, was actually one of the founding trustees of the Trust and Chairperson for 14 years from 1982 to 1996. He was a trustee for 33 years in total so he helped drive the creation of the Trust and formulate its mission in the very early days. He remained committed to achieving what he set out to do – to protect native forests and wetlands – for the rest of his life.

And what about you? Has your parents' love of the environment inspired you in the same way?

Yes, I'm certainly very passionate about protecting our native forests and wetlands now. I wasn't quite so enthusiastic as a child when we were taken on weeks-long camping trips to remote areas of the South Island and I was huddled in a tent trying to keep warm while my friends were enjoying the sun at the beach!

But as I've grown older, that love for the outdoors has definitely grown and I love to spend time in nature. I enjoy getting involved as well. I volunteer at the Matuku Link and I love it. I've been involved from the beginning and it gives me the opportunity to make a small bit of difference and carry on our family commitment to working in the environment.

Can you tell us a bit more about the decision to make the extraordinary donation you did after your Mum passed away?

We moved up to Auckland from Christchurch in about 1965 and my parents bought a small piece of land in the Waitakere Ranges. Later on, they sold that property and bought another one, also in the Waitakeres. So for almost five decades, we had a family property out amongst the native bush. And my parents spent a lot of time and effort regenerating the property, making sure that they were using the right seeds for the area, as well as controlling weeds and pests.

By the time my mother died, they'd helped transform it into a beautiful native paradise. It was one of the great joys of their lives when they saw kauri self-seeding and regenerating naturally. They were strong believers that everybody can do a little to help and make a big difference, and I think that really reinforced that for them.

But it was a lot of work. My father was firmly of the opinion that if you own a piece of land, you have a responsibility to actively manage it. In fact, that's something that he helped instil into NFRT as well – it's no good just purchasing land, there has to be a plan to look after it with weed and pest control, supporting regeneration, and the like.

Our property in the Waitakere Ranges had got too much for my Dad to manage, particularly on his own, so we made the decision to sell it. It had been a labour of love for my parents, so it wasn't an easy decision, but we knew it was the right one. And deciding to donate a significant proportion of the proceeds of the sale towards the protection of other areas of native forests and wetlands was a wonderful way to ensure that the work that they had been doing for many years could be continued. Sadly, my father has also now passed away but I

think they would both have been very enthusiastic about the work that has been made possible by the donation.

And finally, what are your hopes for the future of New Zealand's natural environment?

I was cycling, recently, in the Pureora Forest and I took a break on the first day, in one of the densest part of the forest. I was sat quietly and I heard a kōkako, and then another in response. It's the first time in my life that I've heard a kōkako in the wild and it was just wonderful. And that's my hope for all of our native forests – that we can protect them and provide safe habitat for our native species so that they can be restored and we can once again hear the magnificent dawn chorus we would have had a few hundred years ago.

We've done so much damage, plundering our natural resources, but we can fix it. The Pureora Forest is evidence of that – I went three years ago and didn't hear anything like the amount of birdsong I heard this time. Over the past three years, there has been an intensive pest control programme and now it's just wonderful. The Pureora Forest was where it all began for NFRT and it was lovely to have that moment. I hope we can help replicate this across New Zealand.

Thank you Dorothea – to you and your family – for your extraordinary commitment to protecting our native forests and wetlands.

If you would like to honour a family member's love of the natural environment with a legacy gift, or to include a gift to the Native Forest Restoration Trust in your will to continue your own commitment to protecting it long into the future, you can visit our website or contact Sue Cameron at: admin@nznftrt.org.nz for further information. Thank you.



Regenerating marginal farmland and established bush at Ed Hillary Hope Reserve which the Lewis family helped to protect (photo taken shortly before purchase).

An Outstanding Campaign for an Outstanding Property

In the last edition of Canopy, we introduced an exciting new project – the purchase of 133 hectares of rare wetland in Taranaki to create the Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve. We followed the article up with an appeal to help us protect this area for ever and, once again, we have been overwhelmed by the response we received. We would like to thank each and every one of our amazing supporters who have contributed. So far, we've raised almost \$440,000 of our \$500,000 total, which is a fantastic achievement.

We are still in talks with other potential partners and we have another public campaign planned in the local area to raise the balance. Thanks to the enthusiastic support we've had from everyone so far, we're confident we'll hit the target within our campaign timeframe. As always, if you know anybody who you think would still like to contribute, all donations make a huge difference and are very gratefully accepted.

Staff from Taranaki Regional Council, who have been wonderfully supportive throughout the process, recently visited the reserve and made an exciting discovery. The western side of



Blue Ducks near Mt Taranaki. Photo by Rob Tucker.



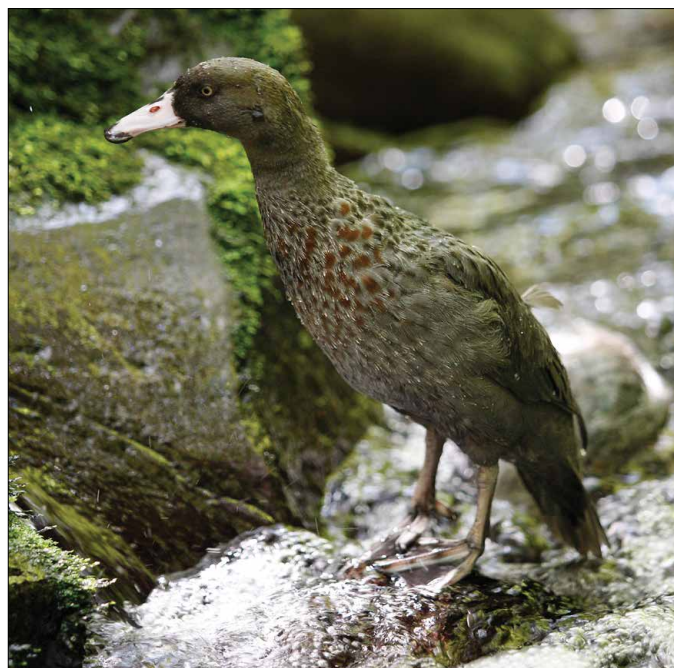
Mahood-Lowe Reserve lies below Mt Taranaki. Photograph by Rob Tucker.

the reserve borders the Kaiauai Stream, which is a fast-flowing stream and ideal whio habitat. We knew that whio were in the area and that protecting this reserve could potentially help provide them with safe habitat, but on this visit, they actually saw signs of whio along the boundary with the reserve, and even found a pair very close by!

As one of New Zealand's endangered native birds, the availability of safe habitat is critical for the whio's survival. The pest and predator control work undertaken at the new reserve will help provide this. Thank you again to everyone who is helping to protect our vulnerable native species by supporting our work.

One of the reasons that we identified this particular property as important to protect was that this type of wetland habitat is acutely threatened, and there is less than 10% of it left. We're immensely proud of everybody who has stepped forward to ensure that we protect what we have left. By working together, we can make sure that our natural environment is protected and can be enjoyed by New Zealanders today and for generations to come.

We'll keep you informed of progress on the reserve and hope to see you at the official opening when that happens.



Blue Duck near Mt Taranaki. Photo by Rob Tucker.

Honeymoon Valley Landcare Group Working Bee at Puhoi

On the 3rd December 2017 27 willing workers met bright and early at the Honeymoon Valley West Road end for a health and safety briefing before convoying the 3.5km up the rugged four-wheel drive track to the Puhoi Reserve. The workers, being a mix of local residents, WOOFers, visiting friends and conservation enthusiasts, had met for the second annual Honeymoon Valley Landcare Group (HMYVLG) working bee.

The Puhoi Reserve is a 255ha block of mature and regenerating native forest acquired by the NFRT in 1995 in response to a threat of roller crushing and pine plantation. The reserve has a good density of Northland Brown kiwi with over five calls per

hour average over the past two kiwi listening seasons. In 2015 NFRT purchased an adjoining 40ha of valuable conservation land. This new land was the location for the working bee.

The working bee was used to maintain the road into the reserve and keep a 2ha grassed site clear of weeds as a potential campsite in the future.

The workers had a range of physical abilities with a variety of tools and expertise, and was a mix of neighbouring landowners and travellers from as far afield as Germany. We all got stuck in and made some great progress. Highlights included:



A well earned lunch – thanks Toyah!

- Clearing gorse around the campsite. There was some mature gorse which we cut down, piled in heaps and pasted the stumps. The smaller plants we grubbed or pulled.
- We had a crew patrolling the driveway grubbing pampus, gorse, thistles and small manuka and clearing back the natives encroaching onto the road.
- The reserve's trapper, Martin, led a crew with scrub bars up the pest control track and cleared a good chunk of that.
- We shifted an old shelter that was sitting overgrown in the bushes out into the open to a usable spot so it won't become a pile of derelict remains in the bushes.
- We pulled out 30 posts that had been put in irrelevant places.
- A mixture of general clearing, rubbish collection and weed work about the place.

After some hard work we met together to enjoy a shared lunch. Roast chicken, beef and cheese sandwiches, local salads and home baking washed down with cups of tea was enjoyed by all, with time to catch up with old friends and get to know new ones.

For the HMVLG, the day was a chance to fundraise \$3500, donated by the NFRT for their hard work, needed to pay the lease payments on a property neighbouring the Puhoi Reserve.

This three year lease was a creative solution to the problem of semi wild cattle grazing an unfenced 200ha block of regenerating bush adjoining the Maungataniwha State Forest. The cattle had been freely roaming through several hundred hectares of private, covenanted (including the NFRT Reserve), and DOC land.

The lease has been managed by the HMVLG until a more permanent solution can be arranged. It has been a resounding success with most of the troublesome stock now removed with just a small remnant still present in the valley.

The Honeymoon Valley Landcare Group, and the protected lands within their rohe, have impending challenges in the years ahead with threats from logging companies, farms and the usual invasive plants and animals. With a strong core of local residents and the support of the NFRT they are well placed to meet these challenges head on.

The next working bee is scheduled for December 2018. If you'd like to get to know a beautiful, but seldom seen, part of New Zealand and make some new friends you'd be most welcome to join us.

Please email Yvonne at honeymoonvalleylandcare@gmail.com to be added to the list for the next one.

Bernard Coogan, Reserve Manager Puhoi Far North, NFRT



It was great to catch up with the neighbours and meet new friends.



James and Bernard pulling out abandoned fenceposts.



Stella and Hazel clearing weeds from the fire pit.



Sandra and Yvonne wrestling with a difficult gorse bush



Toby and Toyah – a great day out for the kids!

Update from Opoutama Wetland

There's lots going on at our Opoutama Wetland Reserve at the moment under the guidance of Project Coordinator Nic Caviale-Delzescaux. Among other things, the car park has been upgraded and the railings painted. A big thanks to HBRC who funded the digger and WDC/QRS who donated the aggregate. Old fencing gear has been removed and the recyclable posts and battens have been put aside. 60 to 70

native trees were also recently donated and have been added to other plantings in the car park area. Nic recently visited the reserve with a couple of families keen to see the local birdlife: "The kids were interested by the birds but were so noisy that they didn't see any :-> ... we will come back." For more information on Opoutama Wetland please visit: <https://www.nfrrt.org.nz/reserves/opoutama-wetland/>



NFRT Wins Taranaki Regional Council Environmental Award

We were thrilled late last year to learn that NFRT had received a Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) award highlighting environmental action in the community.

This award was sponsored by Methanex NZ and is “For restoration and permanent guardianship of native forest habitats”. It recognises our work to purchase and protect the 225 ha extension in 2016-17 to our Omoana Reserve east of Eltham (total area now 550 ha), and our current project: the 134 ha Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve adjacent to Egmont National Park – a valuable example of a regionally rare forest wetland. The awards evening was very well organised and showed how actively TRC supports and encourages individuals, schools, businesses and groups across a wide range of environmental sustainability and enhancement projects in their region. They have been doing so for more than 20 years.

The field staff have always been incredibly helpful to the NFRT, but it was most encouraging to meet senior management and councillors and to feel their passion for enhancing their region.

Chair Tim Oliver attended for the Trust, accompanied by major donors Ray Lowe and his daughter Stephanie, who came down from Auckland with her husband. The following morning the weather gods were kind and we all visited the bush, with Neil Phillips from QEII, to see progress on the boundary fence being constructed with considerable difficulty across a boulder-filled lahar deposit. All credit to the fencing contractor, and to vendor Greg Clement, who cleared the line and then used a vibrating head with a large spike on his 20-ton digger to move boulders and then to push in every single post. The Trust is extremely appreciative of how Greg has helped us with access roading and in ensuring that the boundary is properly fenced.



NFRT Chair Tim Oliver receiving the award from Chairperson of the Taranaki Regional Council, David MacLeod, and Juliet Larkin from Methanex.



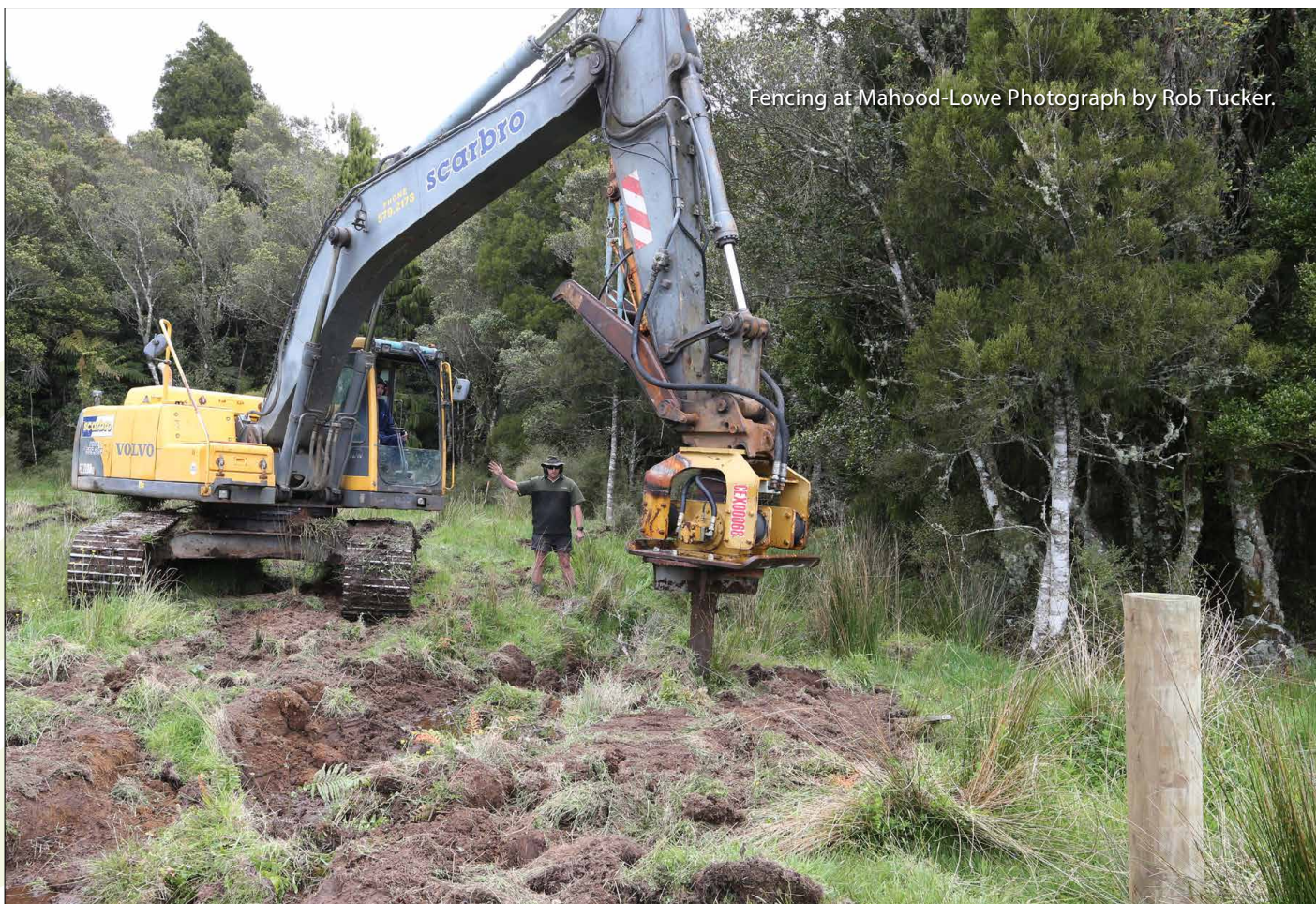
The Taranaki Regional Council Award Certificate.

Have You Let Us Know Your New Email Address?

In November 2017 Vodafone closed the following email services: clear.net.nz, es.co.nz, ihug.co.nz, paradise.net.nz, pcconnect.co.nz, quik.co.nz, vodafone.co.nz, vodafone.net.nz and wave.co.

Many of our supporters have let us know their new email addresses, but some have not, so we have a few email addresses in our database that are now outdated. Is one of them yours?

Please email Sue at admin@nznfirt.org.nz with 'New email address' in the subject line to ensure your supporter details are kept up to date.



Fencing at Mahood-Lowe Photograph by Rob Tucker.

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: Robyn Jones (03) 524 8266 mangarakauswamp@gmail.com
www.mangarakauswamp.com



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



BECOME A FOREST GUARDIAN

Join us as a Forest Guardian with a monthly donation and help keep our native forests safe forever.

Your generous gift will help with the ongoing maintenance of our reserves, ensuring they're protected from invasive weeds, pests and predators. Thanks to you, native plants and animals will have a safe habitat where they can thrive.

For more information and to sign up, please visit www.nfrrt.org.nz/forestguardian



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