



# canopy 66

Newsletter of the Native Forest Restoration Trust

Summer 2018

## NFRT Chairman's Message

While there is still the occasional frost to confirm reality, as I write this summer is definitely advancing. So, this is a warm hello and thank you again to all our supporters, friends, volunteers and staff. There is so much good conservation work being achieved on our properties, mostly unsung other than the regenerating understorey and increasing birdsong. The kereru have stripped my poor kowhai tree (plus many of the apple buds!) and shining cuckoo are now here in numbers too. I always feel a twinge for those poor warblers and other nest mamas forced into servitude for these hungry usurpers. Dotterels on the Coromandel Peninsula are also commencing laying eggs in their beach depression nests and it is so sad that those that do survive the stoats and other predators are often either washed away by a higher tide or lost to stress and disturbance from the influx of humans and their pets as we move towards Christmas. However, people do appear to be growing more aware of the sensitive natural environment surrounding our coasts so we remain hopeful of improved fledging successes.

It is easy to say a heartfelt thank you to our supporters at this time because you have once again fronted up and completed a major property purchase. Yes, the special Taranaki Mahood-Lowe wetland forest butting up to the Egmont National Park boundary has been purchased and paid for. A massive achievement, which was started by the hugely generous Lowe family \$250,000 donation followed by over 640 generous donors contributing to the appeal. A final substantial donation

from a wonderful couple who have supported several of our projects previously, and who wish to remain anonymous, not only completed this TM-L purchase, but has allowed us to proceed towards acquisition of the final 9 ha of this native forest on the adjoining farm.

We cannot purchase and protect any of these forest and restoration sites without your help. Sometimes I muse that it would be nice to be like the US Federal Reserve and other Central Banks and just print enough money to buy and enhance the long list of worthy properties stretching ahead of us. However, we have to face our reality that there is always a shortage of funds and cut our purchase wish list accordingly. Consequently, we must be very selective with properties to buy or even accept as gifts. Time is against the world banks and individuals as debt levels skyrocket and "their chickens must eventually come home to roost", whereas our properties, once purchased and covenanted with QEII National Trust, improve with time. This is especially so where we can immediately implement best practice pest, weed and restoration management. We always aspire to achieve more successes, and to do so cost-effectively, but our systems are steadily improving and what we learn from an associate group or a contractor in one part of NZ can often be adapted to improve outcomes in another region. But even where management funds are more restricted, the whole ecosystem is generally improving and growing more diverse and resilient. Despite some external opposition, we



native forest  
restoration trust

ISSN 1170-3172 (Print) ISSN 2463-2783 (Online)

[www.nfirt.org.nz](http://www.nfirt.org.nz)

f / NativeForestRestorationTrust

🐦 /NZNFRT

Native Forest Restoration Trust, PO Box 80-007, Green Bay, Auckland 0643

always believed covenanting our properties with QEII to be the best avenue to permanently protect the investments you have all made in the environment through NFRT. In recent years QEII has faced legal challenges to the integrity of their covenants, but now, having won right through to the Supreme Court, we know that your Trustees have made the correct choice.

There has been much publicity with numerous political photo ops about the Billion Trees programme, but we have yet to see tangible support flowing through for permanent native forest restoration and consequent ecosystem enhancement. We remain optimistic that something positive and relevant will eventuate. The government review of the whole ETS and carbon programme should also lead to greater consistency moving forward, but there will still be uncertainty for at least the next 18 months. This also impacts our potential funding for budgeting and planning the forest management programmes. We are supporting a major DOC-Waikato Regional Council proposal to eliminate possums from a large area centred on Pureora, the genesis of NFRT. This is a trial towards Predator Free NZ 2050 and it is hoped that other predators (mustelids and, later, rats) and deer will be added to the list. The area includes our Rangitoto and Owen Lewis blocks, plus the adjoining Cowan family bush.

Not only do most of your donations come unannounced, even though we may have specifically asked for help with a particular project, but bequests come totally out of the blue and are often not tagged to a particular project. Sadly, it is then too late to thank that kind individual, although sometimes we can be in touch with surviving family and gain some guidance as to the deceased's preferences for purchase versus restoration and any areas in NZ for which they had a special affinity. Where possible, we do like to honour these bequests with a memorial name in a reserve. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who supports our cause in any tangible way.

I hope you enjoy the wide range of contributions in this issue of Canopy, and wish you all a safe and happy summer with family and friends. If you are touring, please remember that most of our NFRT properties are accessible for a visit and two (Rangitoto and Mangarakau), with prior booking, offer accommodation. The Trust is in good heart and I would like to thank Sandy, our trust manager, together with the trustees, our field managers, Sue in admin and all the honorary rangers, contractors and consultants for the massive effort that they have contributed during this past year.

Tim Oliver, Chairman, NFRT

## Rare Taranaki Wetland Safe Forever – Thank You!

Once again, the extraordinary passion and commitment of NFRT supporters has saved a rare, and important, part of New Zealand's natural environment. The campaign to raise \$500,000 to purchase a 133-hectare block of forest wetland, which borders Egmont National Park, has been a huge success and we're delighted to announce that we have met the target.

The campaign began with a hugely generous donation of \$250,000 from Ray and Jan Lowe. Sadly, Jan passed away not long after their donation was made, but we're sure she would have been thrilled to know that the property is now safe forever. We're pleased to name the new reserve the Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve in her and Ray's honour and we offer our sincere thanks to both of them.



Clematis by track. Photograph by Tim Oliver.



Grey Warbler. Photograph by Rob Tucker.

The remaining \$250,000 was made up of donations from hundreds of generous donors. They gave anything from \$5 to a fantastic donation of \$50,000 that we received at the end of the campaign. This not only got us to our target, but also allowed us to begin negotiations on a further eight-hectare piece of land on the northern border of the reserve. Every dollar was vital to allow us to purchase the reserve and we'd like to thank each and every person who has helped make this possible. Thank you all for your passion for the natural environment and your commitment to protecting it.

The area is a high quality example of an acutely threatened ecosystem and a regionally rare wetland type so ensuring that it is protected forever is a significant win for New Zealand's natural environment. Having previously been logged, the forest is now in recovery, with the canopy up to 20 metres in height in





Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve watched over by the majestic Mount Taranaki. Photograph by Rob Tucker.

some places. This recovery will now be able to continue for generations to come, allowing the swamp maire, northern rata, rimu, thin-barked totara, hinau and miro, and many other native plant species, to flourish.

There is also a diverse range of native birdlife in the area, including bush falcon, North Island brown kiwi and whio, who will all be able to benefit from the protection put in place to encourage and support the area's biodiversity. With its border with Egmont National Park, the Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve provides an extension to the protected habitat of the maunga, including along the Kaiaua Stream, which is home to whio.

But, of course, purchasing the land is only the beginning of the story. To ensure the continued recovery and regeneration of the area, we will be putting long-term pest and predator control measures in place. Possums, in particular, can quickly devastate native forest so ensuring that they are kept under control will be vital.

We also want to encourage New Zealanders to visit and enjoy this beautiful part of our natural environment, and we'll be putting in a walking track and interpretive signage to help enhance people's experience. We believe that getting out and about in nature is a great way to relax and escape the pressures of daily life and we're sure that the Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve will be a peaceful haven for generations of New Zealanders.

Keeping areas like this safe forever is only possible when we all work together, which is exactly what NFRT supporters did for this campaign. That's definitely something worth celebrating so we'll be planning an official opening ceremony to do just that in the next few months. We'll be in touch to let you know when we've set the date and we hope to see you there.



Recovering margins on the forest edge.



# William Upton Hewett Fire Restoration Work Continues

Contractors and volunteers have been busy again this year in the William Upton Hewett Reserve, north-west of Whangarei, undertaking fire restoration work.

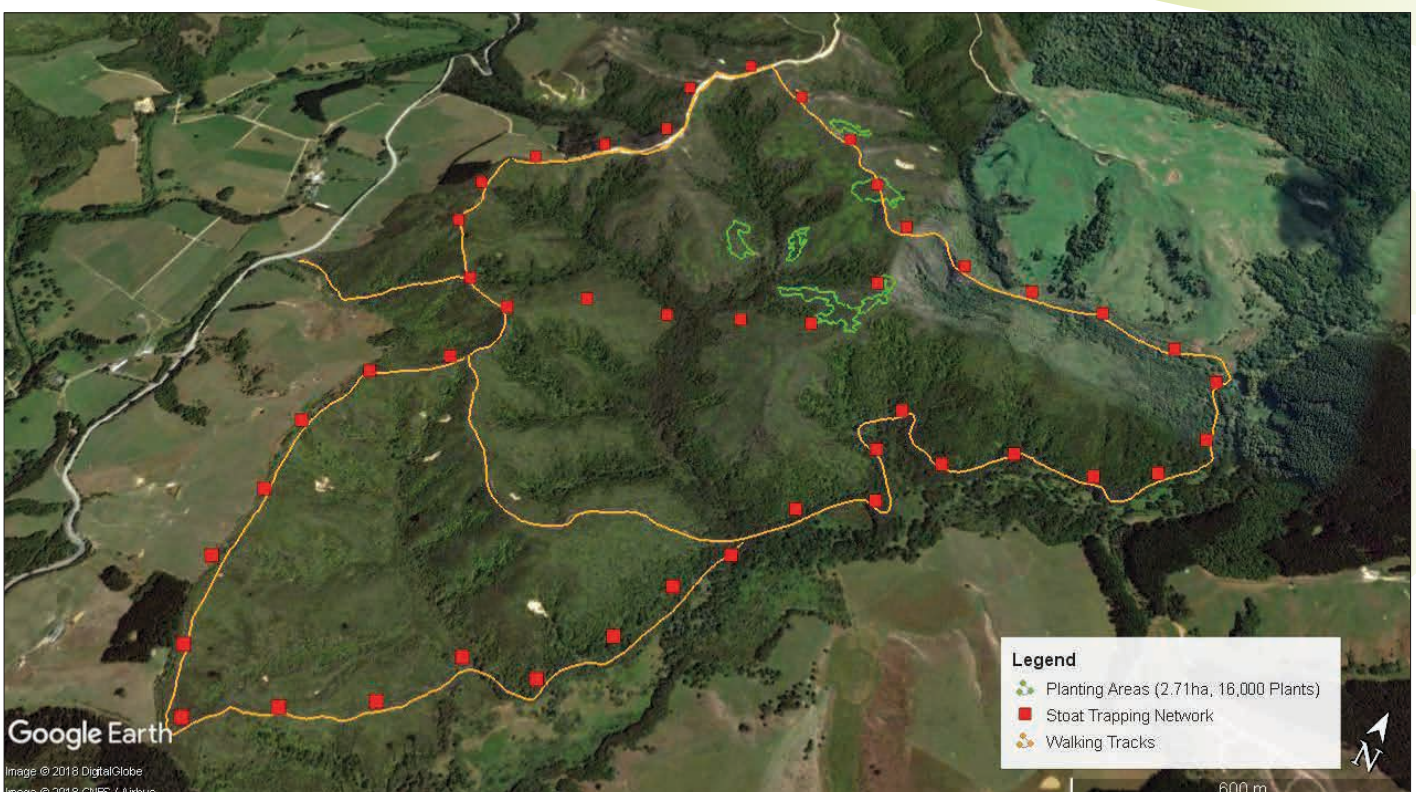
This year 8,500 native seedlings were planted in key areas to create green fire breaks and central patches of plantings from which birds can disperse seed. In total there has been 16,000 plants planted within the reserve covering close to 3ha over the past two years. Due to the difficulty of getting the

plants to the planting areas a helicopter has been utilised. There have been 3 helicopter operations that have moved 120 bags of plants into place.

A plant survival audit of the seedlings planted in 2017 showed that over 80% had survived. Notably the Titoki, Totara and Coprosma are really thriving. Titoki is the name of the local area which seems appropriate considering how well the plant is doing in the reserve.



James McLaughlin track cutting







Receiving the plants by helicopter  
Photograph by James McLaughlin

Hakea, an early weed coloniser post fire disturbance, had taken off over the past three years. There were several areas of young plants right up onto the top ridges which posed a serious risk of seed dispersal. The team have targeted these top areas and removed over 2ha of hakea, leaving only the hakea on the edges of the forest which will be shaded out eventually. Honeymoon Valley Landcare Group who also help out at the Trust's Puhoi Far North Reserve came down to undertake a fundraising exercise which involved pulling hakea over a further 2ha.

Contractors were recruited from both Whangarei and Dargaville this year to make up an excellent, efficient team. Local iwi Te Roroa and NFRT worked closely together to provide consistent work for two young men, sharing their time between each organisation's reserves when work was required.

Track cutting has been undertaken this year and is just about complete with the track well marked. The quad bike parts of the track still need a bit of clearing but are also clearly marked. This walk offers some amazing views and diverse areas of vegetation and native birdlife. The walk would make a good day trip, but be prepared for one steep section leaving the river heading up to the planted areas shown on the map.

An exciting new project is the setting up of a large stoat trapping program to protect native birds which will help disperse native seeds and speed up the regeneration of the reserve. A third of the traps are now in place and we hope to get the remainder in this summer. Rats are still going to be a problem for nesting native birds and we are thinking of options for rat control.

Although much of our focus has been on fire recovery in William Upton Hewitt over the last 6 months, we have also been busy in the Wekaweka Reserve. Along with our partners, Wekaweka Landcare Group, we have been establishing our pest control regime with pleasing results. We will be updating you more on this in the next edition of Canopy.

James McLaughlin, Reserve Manager  
Waipoua and William Upton Hewett Reserves, NFRT



Volunteer prepping stoat trap.  
Photographs by James McLaughlin



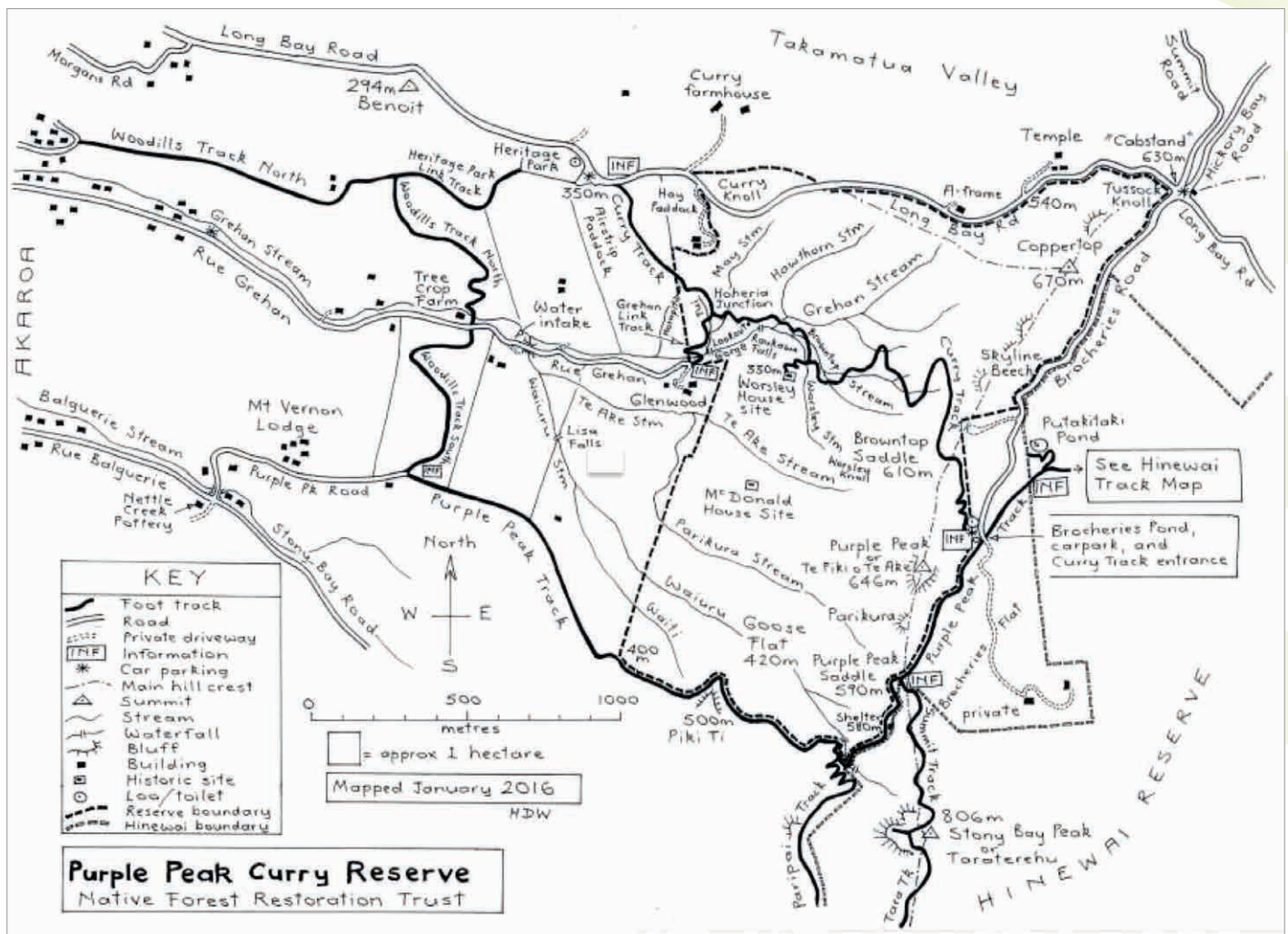


## Update from Purple Peak Curry Reserve

The Trust's second South Island reserve (the first was Mangarākau in Northwest Nelson) occupies the upper catchment of Akaroa's Grehan Stream on Banks Peninsula. 192 hectares of bushy gullies, rough pasture, gorse scrub, old-growth beech and podocarp remnants, and park-like native treeland, were purchased from Graeme and Maryn Curry in 2015. Christchurch City Council and the Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust came on board with substantial financial contributions. The Maurice White Native Forest Trust agreed to provide as much management time, energy and resources as they could spare from their own 1,250 ha Hinewai Reserve, which neighbours Purple Peak Curry Reserve to the east.

A management plan was finalised in May 2016; it emphasises natural regeneration of native forest, protection of biodiversity and landscape values, water catchment enhancement (Grehan Stream is part of Akaroa's town water supply), and carefully planned walking access freely available to the public.

The lowermost edge of the reserve is right on the back doorstep of Akaroa, at 240m. From there the land rises up to and over the crater rim of the late Miocene-age Akaroa Volcano (active around 9 to 8 million years ago). The highest point is "Coppertop" (670m), but Te Piki o Te Ake ("Purple Peak", 646m) is a more prominent summit.







Installation team with new interpretive panel at the historic Worsley House Site.

The Curry family settled here in the 1870s and continue to farm nearby. Ernest Shackleton's famous Antarctic navigator Frank Worsley was born in Akaroa in 1872 and spent part of his childhood in the upper Grehan Valley where his dad Henry built a small house and cleared forest from the family's 20 hectare holding, now part of the reserve. Less obvious now are a few echoes of 5 or 6 centuries of pre-colonial Māori lives, both on the ground and in the oral traditions of Waitaha, Ngāti Māmoe and Ngāi Tahu.

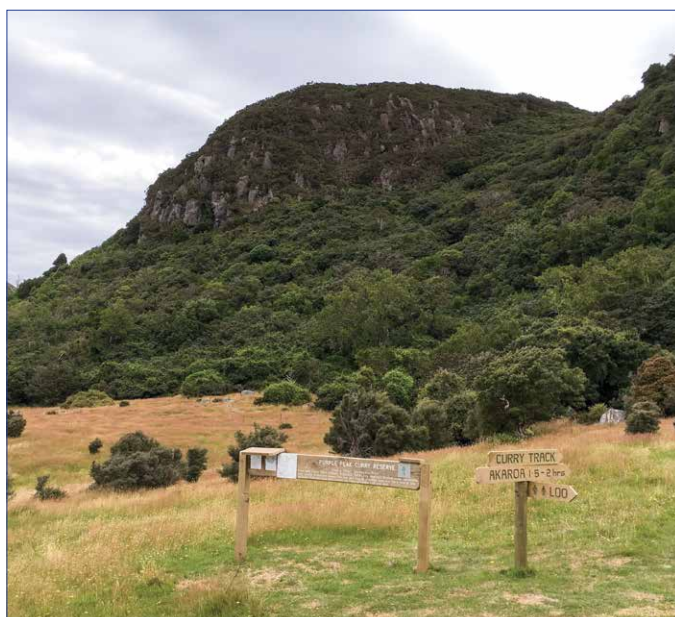
The land transferred to the ownership of the Native Forest Restoration Trust on 11 September 2015. Everyone involved had a great celebration on site on 27 February 2016. By then Curry Track (the main walking route through the reserve had been formed by Hinewai staff, along with a loo, a picnic table, signs, boardwalks, and numerous little bridges to keep dirty human feet out of Akaroa's water supply. Curry Track has proved wonderfully popular to both Akaroa locals and visitors. It links with Grehan Valley Road, Heritage Park on Long Bay Road, Brocherie's Road on the Ōtānerito side of the skyline, and to existing tracks on Hinewai and elsewhere. More recently a side loop was created to Skyline Beech Lookout, a really magnificent vantage point.

At the historic Worsley House Site, with help from the Antarctic Heritage Trust and the Rod Donald Trust, an interpretive panel now summarises the Antarctic connection.

Work continues on track maintenance, removal of invasive exotic trees and vines (including sycamores, conifers and old man's beard clematis), possum control, and (a big job) elimination of gorse and broom along boundaries with farmland and roads. A few straying feral deer pose a new threat, despite being hunted by some chosen skilled local assassins.

Botanical diversity is impressive, ranging from warm temperate species like kawakawa, here at their southern natural limit, to upper montane snow tussock. The reserve hosts the best Banks Peninsula population of Raukawa, vanishingly rare in the Region. Notable among the native birds are abundant bellbirds, kereru, brown creepers, fantails, grey warblers, shining cuckoos, tomtits and harrier hawks, stirred in with a few tūi, riflemen, moreporks and falcons.

Hugh Wilson, Conservationist, Botanist and Manager of Hinewai and Purple Peak Curry Reserves.





## Successful QEII Stephenson Fund Grant Applications

In addition to our very supportive business and private donors, the Trust is very grateful for grants received from many environmental and conservation organisations towards maintenance and pest control work in our reserves.

Several reserves were recently awarded funding from the QEII Stephenson Fund, a fund set up in honour of Gordon and Celia Stephenson who, among other interests, were supporters of NFRT and key founders of the QEII National Trust.

*Marie Neverman Reserve* near Auckland received \$9,000 towards contractor weed control which will be used to continue the intensive weed control that commenced at the time of purchase in 2009. At this time all forest and marsh areas were severely impacted by pampas, woolly nightshade, climbing asparagus and moth plant. There can be no let up with this work

until weeds are reduced to a low level and seed sources are diminished. Some volunteer weed work has been undertaken but it is difficult work most effectively undertaken by a contractor.

*Pehitawa Kahikatea Reserve* near Te Kuiti received \$9,065 towards contractor weed control. Species targeted in this reserve are crack willow, tradescantia, privet, blackberry, Japanese honeysuckle, gorse and glyceria. Willow and glyceria are the most prolific and persistent species here that cannot be allowed to go without a season of control until they are at zero density. Weed control here also includes releasing plantings that have taken place over the last 4 years from strangulation by bindweed.

Sharen Graham, Southern Reserves Manager, NFRT



KCC Planting Team at Mangarakau Swamp Visitor Centre in 2017.

## New Roof for Mangarakau Swamp Visitor Centre

Friends of Mangarakau Swamp are very pleased indeed to have also succeeded in getting an \$8,000 grant from the Stephenson Fund. This funding will help cover the cost of re-roofing the Visitor Centre. The Visitor Centre was the old hall for the community that lived at the swamp when it was a township. There has been a lot of work carried out on the roof to keep it going but it finally rusted right through and started to leak.

The Visitor Centre has multiple uses as the reserves Information Centre, tool room, mower room, toilet, kitchen, spare sleeping area and general gathering area when volunteers are working there.

The new roof is going to be a great improvement and will allow the 'Friends' to put our energies into other important work within the reserve.

Robyn Jones, Chair of Friends of Mangarakau Swamp







Mangarakau Swamp Visitor Centre.

## Riparian and Wetland Restoration at Pehitawa Kahikatea Reserve

Pehitawa Kahikatea Reserve is a remnant representing a wetland forest type that once covered 41,000ha in the Waipa Ecological District but is now sadly reduced to only 158ha following land clearance.

Kahikatea dominated, it has an intact hydrological regime of a high water table and periodic flooding. It is impressive to stand within this forest mid-winter, when sediment filled flood water has inundated neighbouring low-lying farmland and observe the slow flow of clear water over the forest floor towards discharge into the Mangapu Stream. Massive kahikatea and pukatea buttress roots and the pneumatophores of swamp maire filter out flood sediment, retaining nutrient for the benefit of the forest and preventing it from entering the waterway.

The north and western reserve margins were previously illegally cleared and were quickly colonised by invasive

weed species detrimental to the ecological health of the forest and the adjoining stream. Once weeds are under control, these areas are restoration planted, providing stream-side shade for fresh water fish habitat, stabilising banks and preventing sedimentation.

Sharen Graham, Southern Reserves Manager, NFRT





# Permanent Forests NZ and NFRT: using carbon credits to help native forest restoration

## *A perfect partnership*

Last month marked 8 years since we first started working with NFRT to help them earn carbon credits within their native forest reserves. With the renewed focus on climate change and forestry under the current Government, it feels timely to reflect on the past and also to look at what the future holds.

## *Permanent Forest Sink Initiative*

While many people will be familiar with forestry under the emissions trading scheme, our company, along with partners like NFRT, have focused on the lesser-known permanent forest sink initiative. Unlike the emissions trading scheme where trees can be cut down at any time, the permanent forest scheme legally commits landowners to maintain and protect forests for at least fifty years making it perfect for long term conservation projects, particularly indigenous restoration.

In addition to maximising carbon stocks, long lived protected forests deliver a host of other ecological co-benefits such as enhancement of biodiversity, bird habitat, soil conservation, and water quality improvement which is why the permanent scheme is considered the gold standard in carbon forestry. We've developed a premium carbon credit market for exemplary projects, thanks to NFRT's involvement.

There are around 340,000 hectares earning carbon credits across New Zealand, most of which is radiata pine plantations under the emissions trading scheme. Only about 3% is native forest under the permanent forest sink initiative, so the carbon credits generated by NFRT reserves are considered both unique and of high value.

NFRT's longstanding involvement with the permanent forest scheme has been vital to its development and recognition as a special carbon mechanism. This partnership has helped promote other landowners to follow suit. Likewise, NFRT has derived value from selling carbon credits over the years. This revenue has greatly boosted NFRT's ability to manage and expand its restoration activities.

## *Noteworthy achievements*

Since 2010, we've assisted NFRT with registering 1,400 hectares into the permanent forest sink initiative from seven reserves, the largest of which is Pigeon Bush in the Rimutaka ranges north of Wellington. Collectively, these reserves have removed hundreds of thousands of tonnes of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

Instead of trading the resulting carbon credits in the emissions trading scheme, which is similar to a commodity market, NFRT have focused on long term partnerships and the voluntary carbon market where environmental integrity and quality is prized. So, despite the NZ carbon price collapsing in 2011, NFRT has been able to build and maintain strong relationships with carbon buyers, including the landmark deal it struck early on with Mercury.

Over the last 7 years we've helped NFRT become an ongoing trusted supplier to CarboNZero, New Zealand's best known

carbon neutral certification run by Enviro-Mark Solutions. A major highlight for us was helping develop credible carbon credits for Air New Zealand's customer offsetting program called FlyNeutral. We've worked close to 3 years with Air New Zealand developing the program and NFRT was the first carbon credit supplier.

## *The future of carbon and indigenous forest restoration*

The Labour led coalition is taking climate change seriously with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern declaring it her generation's 'nuclear-free moment'. Government is pushing for zero carbon emissions by 2050, and trees are seen as a massive part of the solution, especially indigenous forests.

The emissions trading scheme and the permanent forest sink initiative are both under review on ways to promote more afforestation. Officials are particularly keen to make permanent forests a more attractive option for vulnerable land unsuitable for radiata pine harvest regimes. The change we believe will benefit NFRT the most and encourage more landowners towards conservation forestry is a proposal to remove carbon credit liabilities if carbon forest stocks decrease (for example through fire).

Other initiatives announced in the past year include the One Billion Tree program of which \$240 million has been earmarked to fund tree planting schemes, and 2/3 will be indigenous species. While we're still waiting on the details of these new schemes, we expect there will be some big opportunities for native conservation groups like NFRT to access funding support.

The future is looking very bright for increasing indigenous forest restoration under the current Government's climate change policies, but the long-term outlook relies on cross party political consensus. We hope climate change can at last transcend partisan politics.

Ollie Belton, Permanent Forests NZ Limited



Ollie Belton is consultant at Permanent Forests NZ Limited. He is a pioneer in New Zealand's carbon forest industry with 14 years' experience. Offshore, he has worked on avoided deforestation research for the European Commission, and rainforest projects in South America and the Pacific. Ollie is a member of the Ministry for Primary Industries Climate Change Forestry Reference Group. Permanent Forests NZ Limited works with forest owners, including farmers, local government, iwi, and not-for-profits on realising their carbon value with a particular emphasis on permanent non-harvest forests and indigenous forests. As supporters of native restoration efforts they provide discounted services for charitable trusts such as NFRT.



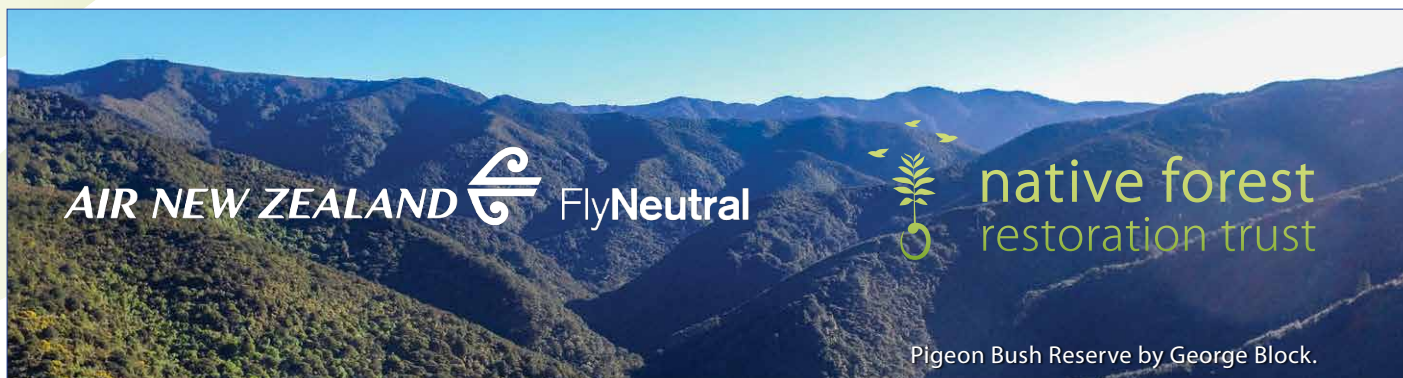
# Native Forest Restoration Trust first supplier of carbon credits to Air New Zealand's FlyNeutral programme

The Native Forest Restoration Trust was the first supplier of carbon credits to Air New Zealand's new FlyNeutral programme, and has been supplying credits from various permanent forestry projects, including the Pigeon Bush Reserve, which lies between the Rimutaka and Tararua Conservation Parks just west of Featherston.

Air New Zealand is thrilled to be able to purchase offsets from projects like those owned by the Native Forest Restoration Trust on behalf of their customers. These projects provide permanent, verified and sustainable emission reductions and have measurable positive environmental impact – including absorbing carbon from the atmosphere and supporting positive conservation, biodiversity, water quality and community outcomes.

There's tremendous demand for air travel and there is no doubt aviation creates strong economic and social benefits. However, the flipside of growth in aviation is more emissions – this is an absolute tension and one Air New Zealand is striving to balance by enabling customers to voluntarily offset the emissions they create by flying. This offsetting goes over and above any emissions trading scheme obligations that Air New Zealand meets.

Permanent native forestry reserves like those created by the Native Forest Restoration Trust are key to helping Air New Zealand customers get onto a lower carbon footing with quality carbon offsetting – together, making our country a better place for future generations.



## 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](http://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](http://www.nfrrt.org.nz/forestguardian)



PO Box 80-007,  
Green Bay,  
Auckland 0643

New Zealand  
Permit No. 98632

