

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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## OUR VISION

Enjoy, discover, know and care for Tongariro / Taupō / Central Plateau.

## OUR MISSION

Inspiring New Zealanders and international visitors to connect physically, emotionally and spiritually with Tongariro National Park and its surrounds.

## OUR GOALS

In one hundred years, Project Tongariro's over-riding goal is to see Tongariro National Park and its environs pest and weed free, with our members and all New Zealanders enjoying our special place in its natural state. In 10 years, our goal is to see significant environmental enhancements at the sites we have chosen to work and for our community to be adopting sustainable practices.

- Connect like-minded people
- Work together to improve our place
- Create opportunities for others
- Share knowledge and experience in conservation
- Achieve organizational sustainability and resilience
- Promote sustainability in our rohe

## OUR CORE VALUES

### KAITIAKITANGA

Strong conservation ethics, a spiritual connection to the whenua and caring about our environment.

### MAUMAHARATANGA

We value the tradition of our story and that of others.

### MANAAKITANGA – MAHI TAHI

We value working collaboratively with respect, honesty, integrity and aroha.



## OUR STORY

The Tongariro Natural History Society (TNHS), which operates under the name of Project Tongariro (PT), is proof that one event can change the direction of many lives and have significant impact on future generations, and our environment.

Tongariro Natural History Society, later Project Tongariro, was formed in 1984 as a living legacy to Tongariro National Park staff who died in a helicopter crash on Mt Ruapehu near Tūroa Skifield on 9 December 1982.,

Those in the helicopter were:

- Keith Blumhardt: Ranger Whakapapa
- Bill Cooper: Senior Ranger Ohakune
- Derek White: Ranger Whakapapa
- Marie Williams: Park Assistant
- Doug McKenzie: Pilot

The founding members of TNHS were friends and family of the four park staff who died. These people were already strong supporters of Tongariro National Park, but this event created an impetus to do more.

Early efforts focused on assisting with the Summer Nature Programme (now Mahi Aroha), taking visitors on field trips to showcase the Park's special values. Project Tongariro also commissioned and published books on the natural values of Tongariro National Park. The funds raised were used to assist the Department of Conservation (DOC) with targeted projects DOC was unable to fund itself.

Over the decades Project Tongariro has grown enabling members and volunteers to have a bigger impact on conservation work, undertaking many land-mark projects, such as the much-needed restoration and interpretation of the Historic Waihohonu Hut and the Alpine Garden at Whakapapa. In 2008 PT took on funding responsibility for the restoration of the Hapuawhenua Viaduct along with interpretation of the site, and the Ohakune Old Coach Road, both significant local landmarks and popular visitor destinations today.

Project Tongariro has taken on the prime responsibility for the ongoing restoration of Rotopounamu-Pihanga, an important podocarp forest in Tongariro National Park, Rotopounamu being one of the most popular and visited sites in the park. The work is ongoing and has involved biodiversity surveys, monitoring, and pest control. A trapping network was established and extended over Mt Pihanga as well as an aerial poisoning programme. All this work has taken PT closer to the long-term aspiration of reintroducing endangered species to the area.

Project Tongariro has also taken on work at the large 1,500 hectare Te Mātāpuna Wetlands, adjacent to Lake Taupō, forming important partnerships with DOC and local iwi to enable this work to happen effectively. Funding from DOC, Waikato Regional Council, and Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust procured by PT has contributed to significant projects in undertaking willow control and restoration planting of natives to greatly improve the biodiversity and habitat at Te Mātāpuna.

Project Tongariro has planned and managed numerous and varied projects over the last four decades, too many to list, but here are a few examples; revegetation of the Lord of the Rings film sites on Mt Ruapehu; a weed project at the site of the old Whanganui Bridge SH47; ongoing flora monitoring and propagation; and the coordination of volunteers in TNP, restoration work at various sites including Oruatua Recreation Reserve (Tūrangi) and the Rongokaupo Wetland (Ohakune), administration of the Kiwi Forever Education Programme, environmental education projects via Kids Green Taupō and Waimarino Restoration. PT also provides support for sporting events in the park as a way to raise funds. Also field trips and educational/informational activities for members as a way to socialise and see what other conservation groups are doing. PT recently became an Environmental Hub which has extended our networks and added another layer of environmental and sustainability awareness to our work.

Today, Project Tongariro and the brands it represents (Greening Taupō, Kids Greening Taupō, Predator Free Taupō, and Waimarino Restoration) work towards a vision, and the underlying goals required to focus on restoring degraded environmental assets by carrying out active restoration projects of all sizes, ranging from planting out podocarp forest in the Tongariro National Park World Heritage Area, to increasing biodiversity in school backyards.

Through effective collaboration across all levels, Project Tongariro is a key facilitator ensuring local councils, Department of Conservation, iwi, landowners, businesses, schools, and individuals are inspired to connect with nature. PT does this by advocating for, and working to strengths to achieve community-driven conservation outcomes.

Project Tongariro has also been able to support the work of others with funding applications, financial management and administration support, including staffing. This has led to the establishment of community projects such as Greening Taupō, Kids Greening Taupō and Predator Free Taupō and Waimarino Restoration, and assisting with Kiwi Forever.

We look forward to a future of more of the same essential biodiversity work. PT increasingly looks to extend out into the field of education and bring others, especially our local communities, and the younger generation, along with us on the journey. We hope to inspire the young to carry on our work to care for nature.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

MIKE O'SULLIVAN

Already 2023 is proving to be the year that the worst effects of climate change were brought into sharp focus by ex-cyclone Gabrielle. This catastrophic weather event highlighted that our current planning and infrastructure is unfit for the challenges ahead and that immediate action is urgently required to ensure that the next generations will have a sustainable future.

While here in the Central Plateau we escaped the ravages that destroyed homes and livelihoods in Auckland and our near neighbours in Hawkes Bay, one look at the damage evidenced in the Wairakei corridor and the forests surrounding Tūrangi is indicative of how serious the situation has become.

I understand how it is very easy to feel overwhelmed and helpless by the challenge of climate change. However, I firmly believe that much can be done to protect the future of our wonderful country at a local level through the work of organisations such as Project Tongariro. Not only is this work empowering, purposeful and energising, the sense of personal achievement is enormous. While we need government and industry to provide leadership in this area, it is the invaluable work of community organisations such as ours that can do so much to support the biodiversity that is unique to the Tongariro area.

I am inspired by the hundreds of community volunteers that week in, week out give their time to control weeds and pests, restore waterways,

*Damage caused by ex-cyclone Gabrielle along Wairakei corridor.*



plant thousands of native trees, and inspire future generations with their dedication and commitment.

At Project Tongariro we are really good at this work; our achievements to date are truly impressive. One small but not unusual illustration of this occurred on 24 June when over 50 volunteers met to plant over 1500 native trees along the Tauranga-Taupō River. It was a beautiful winter's day, the sun was shining, the spirits were up, the catering was delicious and everyone went home that afternoon with a sense that they as a community had done a good thing. Days like these are special but not unusual in the Project Tongariro calendar; a month later another group met to plant even more trees.

While we cannot let central government off the hook, it is the work of communities that will continue to be key drivers in building a sustainable future for our children. With this in mind, Project Tongariro continues to be a key partner of the Department of Conservation, and together we have developed significant strategic relationships to achieve our conservation goals for the Tongariro region. These include the important restoration of Rotopounamu and the Te Mātāpuna Wetlands. These conservation projects have benefited not just from DOC resources but technical expertise and personal support.

Other invaluable supporters include Bay Trust, Environment Hubs Aotearoa, Len Renyolds Trust, Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust, Contact Energy, Waikato Regional Council and

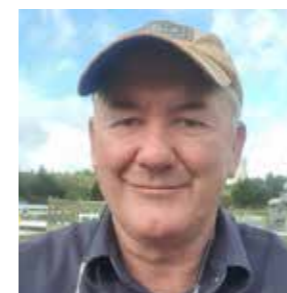


*Above: Oruatua Recreation Reserve community planting day morning tea. Below: Oruatua Recreation Reserve community planting day volunteers Mike, Sarah, Helen and Collette.*

Taupō District Council whose support for Greening Taupō and Kids Greening Taupō is key to the success of these community projects.

None of our work would be possible without our Project Tongariro team lead by Kiri Te Wano; her amazing team includes Anna Calvert, Robyn Ellis, Rachel Thompson, Heidi Pritchard, Benoit Midwood-Murray and Clodagh Costello. It is a cliché to say that their work is invaluable, but it is and the impact of their dedication and commitment will be experienced by many generations to come. Thank you to all of you.

And lastly I want to thank our many volunteers. Your work is extraordinary and your commitment to the biodiversity and the ongoing ecological health of this wonderful part of the world is inspiring. Without you, Project Tongariro would not be the best-in-class community conservation operation that it is today. We celebrate your work, energy and dedication to your community and salute you for it.



Ngā mihi,  
Mike O'Sullivan  
President

## FROM THE CEO

KIRI TE WANO

This year has been a year of recognition for our society, and I feel that we have continued to embed our place in the communities we live and work. This can be evidenced by the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network awards we were recognised with in November 2022. We were very proud that Paul Green (QSM), our former Director and noted conservation advocate was awarded a lifetime achievement award, and our society was awarded the community conservation award.

The level of support our communities continue to show is seen via our amazing group of key volunteers who show up every time we have an event or activity, and this wonderful group of people are continuing to grow. We are continuing to learn about what attracts and how to keep our volunteers happy. Greening Taupō and Kids Greening Taupō continue to grow their amazing supporter base, and this was highlighted by our recent Greening Taupō planting day and environmental festival. Heavy rain did not deter stallholders and over 1,500 students, parents and teachers turned up to plant 3,000 trees, adding to last year's planting at Crown Park in Taupō.

We are now in our second year as a hub for Environment Hubs Aotearoa (EHA) and as with each funding partner, we have different measurements to which we must report on. Not only is EHA supporting us with Governance and Tiriti o Waitangi training, inspiring and engaging conferences and monthly managers hui (that are excellent for networking!). The figures and statistics we



have committed to report on are growing. You will see this growth in our 2023 highlights, the small indicator logos that accompany a set of impressive figures I am very proud of. This is a quick, visual way to demonstrate the impact we are having in our communities and environments we are present in. But to keep the statisticians and figures people happy, there is very real data to back these figures up should you want to dig deeper!!

Volunteer hours, numbers of trees planted, traps and trap lines and social media visits are some of the original tallies we've kept over the years and the numbers dip and rise depending on what projects we are doing, but it always amazes and humbles me the time amassed by those wanting to participate, to care for and to know our environment. People also are continuing to donate to our various projects, and a cleverly designed 'native tree donation drive' leading up to Christmas for Greening Taupō was well received. I would also say that professional volunteering - people who offer their expertise at a much discounted rate, or even free of charge, is quietly growing. Nick and Alana of Singers Ecological, Kim of Koiro Marketing, and Shawn of Quality Print are just a few of the long standing ones.

Some of our challenges this year included the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle on Wairakei Drive, north of Taupō, where our Wairakei Corridor Restoration project is situated, championed by Shawn Vennell of Quality Print. There are many old man pines that got blown over causing some damage to planting sites, but the silver lining being that these weeds have been dealt with! Not to mention the fire-wood-fairies who then tidied up what they could access, and other agencies who have interest in this area. Covid and the cyclone continue to affect the events community. Entries are still climbing back to previous levels, but the number of those attending in support of competitors (whānau and friends) was noticeably down this summer.

A constant challenge for us (and many not-for-profit community groups) is sustainable funding. This last year has seen the usual 'you win some, you lose some' funding bids, but we are picking up signals that there will be a funding crunch coming up, evidenced by a long-time overheads funder, struggling with low-performing investments and indicating that they might not be able to continue our funding relationship next year. This has been the

*Checking out fallen pine trees along Wairakei Drive after cyclone Gabrielle with Robyn.*



*PT's BBQ setup for February's Ruapehu Trail Festival event, beneath the now closed Chateau.*

topic of many conversations around our governance board and this has rallied us to ensure that we're nimble, focused and ready to 'see the bridge' to new funding opportunities.

We continue to struggle with our long-term forest restoration project at Mt Pihanga -Rotopounamu.



There is still a strong local aversion to aerial 1080, and relationships with hapu and iwi over this issue continue to be tense. We are considering returning to using a ground control operation. However disappointingly, we know it is resource-heavy, super expensive and delivers low ecological outcomes. However, we need to attempt to halt the wholesale degradation of the mature forest at Mt Pihanga - Rotopounamu! But, we can only do complementary work alongside DOC - and we cannot do it without a mandate from the community and at the moment, our community is not cohesive nor engaged around Rotopounamu. However hui is beginning again and renewed relationships are being forged. In the meantime our volunteers will continue to check and bait our trapping network of over 300 traps.

My favorite highlight from 2022-2023 is successfully completing our Wilding Conifer control projects. With funding from MPI and the Lotteries fund, we financially managed \$453,500 over the last two years and managed to control 14,644 trees in three separate project areas! Funds were also given to us from a forestry company who wanted control work completed on their land. This has been achieved through team effort, in no small part to Singers Ecological who project-managed these projects for us and to the landowners who put their faith in us to do what we said we would.

However, work still continues to advocate to Waikato Regional Council and DOC to finish off some remaining outstanding sites with difficult to reach trees, and to maintain the ecological gains we have achieved.

*Rachel Thompson with other Project Tongariro volunteers working on the rear of Waihothonu Historic Hut.*



Ardy finds a Douglas Fir seedling during one of January 2023's Mahi Aroha wilding pine control seedling pulling day, near Waihaha, Western Bays, Lake Taupō.

Investment in the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme (NWCCP) has seen a huge boost in funding with \$37 million invested from July 2016 to June 2021. Additional investment was made in the 2020 budget with \$100 million committed over four years to the NWCCP under the Jobs for Nature Programme. This allowed national wilding pine control operations to scale up significantly and make great progress (including our projects). However, the Jobs for Nature funding comes to an end from 2023/24 with ongoing funding being cut to only \$10million per annum to the NWCCP. This will see the significant progress made by regional and unitary councils, community groups, iwi and landholders - put at significant risk. Without sustained funding, we will not only lose our gains, but also the massive public investment.

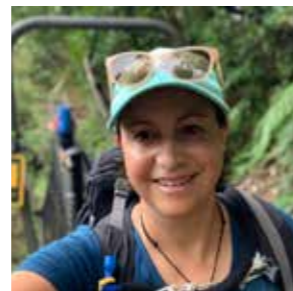
Completing the job ensures that the funds already invested are not wasted and that the future expenses are much reduced. Not to mention the ecological implications if work is not continued at the same level. The spread of wilding pines is not limited to one region. Everywhere faces the pervasive threat of these invasive trees, putting our iconic landscapes, biodiversity and productive lands at risk. We must advocate to all decision makers to commit to increased funding so we can finish the job.

In conclusion, this is my second year in the Director role (a recent name change is now identifying me as the CEO!) and I now feel 'in the groove'! I have an amazing team of staff and an engaged, passionate and experienced governance group. This means myself and my team are empowered to run our



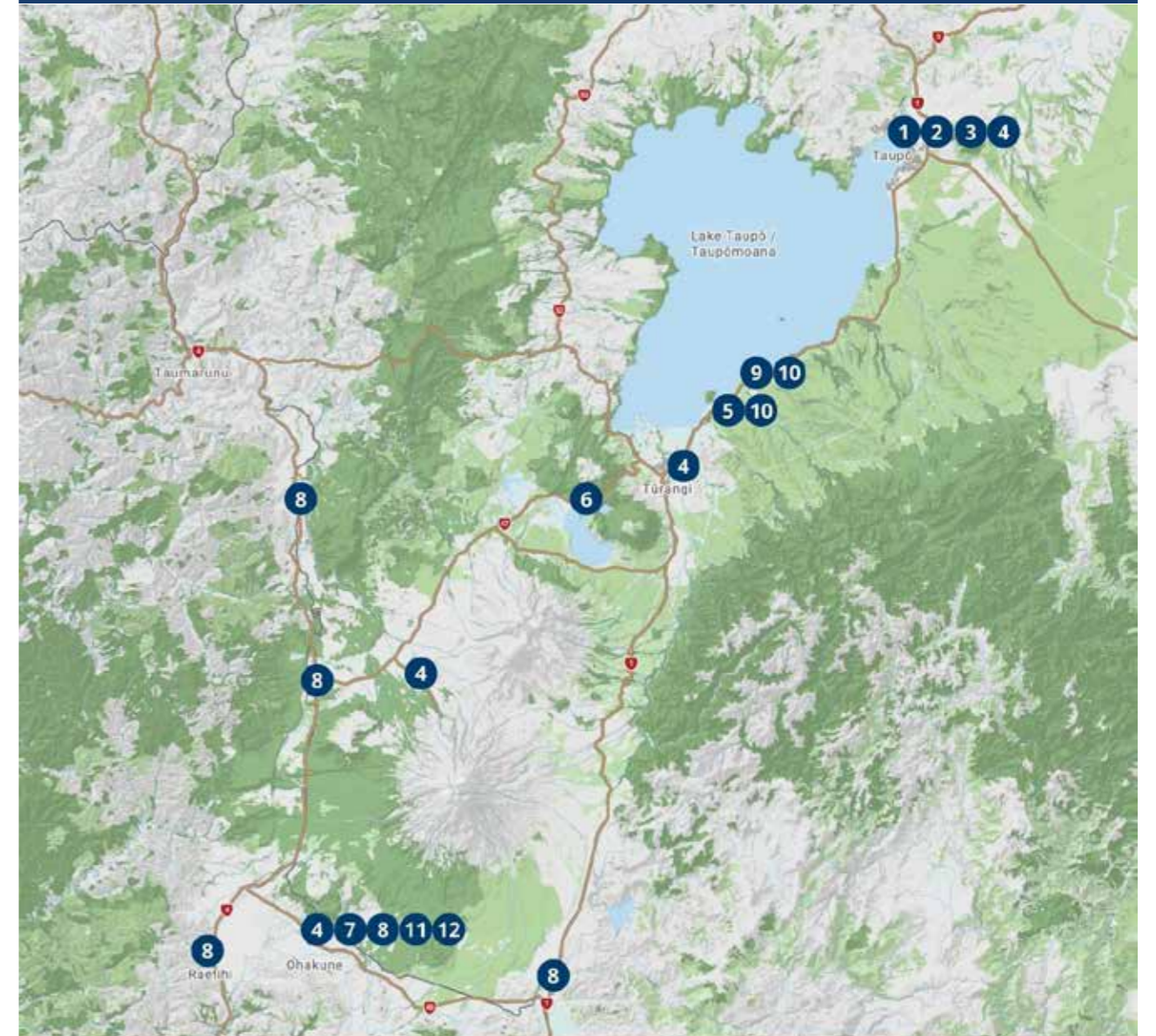
Eager participants build predator traps at Junes Carrot Festival in Ohakune.

respective programmes, encouraged to take risks and continually grow. Support also comes from our long-term funders such as Bay Trust, Len Reynolds, Mccarthy Trust, Taupō District Council, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Education and many local businesses who continually support. Without the support of many, we cannot do the job we do - so thank you!



Ngā mihi,  
Kiri Te Wano  
CEO

## 2023 PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Greening Taupō                                   | 7. Rongokaupo Wetland Restoration           |
| 2. Kids Greening Taupō                              | 8. Waimarino Restoration                    |
| 3. Predator Free Taupō                              | 9. Oruatua Recreational Reserve Restoration |
| 4. Mahi Aroha Summer Programme                      | 10. Predator Trapping                       |
| 5. Te Mātāpuna Wetland Restoration                  | 11. Kiwi Forever Programme                  |
| 6. Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu Forest Restoration | 12. Predator Free Ohakune                   |

# OUR TEAM

## VOLUNTEER EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS



Mike O'Sullivan  
*President*



Pat Taylor  
*Treasurer*



Paul Green  
*Past Director*



Shirley Potter



Karen Grimwade



Allan McKenzie



Lesley Mochan



Steve Bell



Sarah Tunnicliffe  
*DOC Representative*



Lilja Tinworth  
*KGT SLT Representative*



Bruce Jefferies  
*Honorary Vice President*

## ORIGINAL FAMILY REPRESENTATIVES

Karen Williams  
*Marie Williams Family*

Belinda Callaway  
*Derek White Family*

Edna Williams  
*Marie Williams Family*

Gavin White  
*Derek White Family*

Evelyn Cooper  
*Bill Cooper Family*

Heather Cooper  
*Bill Cooper Family*

## PATRON

Sir Tumu Te Heuheu DCNZM

## ADVISORS

Ken Horner  
*Honorary Solicitor*

Nicholas Singers (volunteer)  
*Ecology Technical Advisor*

Kim Manunui (volunteer)  
*Marketing and Website*

Thea DePetris (volunteer)  
*Environmental Education Specialist*

## STAFF



Kiri Te Wano  
*Project Tongariro  
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)*



Anna Calvert  
*Project Tongariro  
Conservation Coordinator*



Robyn Ellis  
*Greening Taupō Coordinator  
Predator Free Taupō Coordinator*



Rachel Thompson  
*Kids Greening Taupō  
Lead Environmental Education  
Coordinator*



Heidi Pritchard  
*Kids Greening Taupō  
Environmental Education Coordinator*



Benoir Midwood-Murray  
*Kids Greening Taupō  
Kairuruku Reo Māori*



Clodagh Costello  
*Waimarino Environmental Education  
Coordinator*

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



**10,458**  
VOLUNTEERS



**35,071**  
VOLUNTEER HOURS

**31,352**  
NATIVES PLANTED  
ACROSS ALL PROJECTS



**364,670+**  
NATIVES PLANTED  
TO DATE



**5,144**  
PESTS TRAPPED  
ACROSS ALL PROJECTS



**283**  
NEW TRAPS BUILT  
AND SET BY THE  
COMMUNITY

**1,649**  
ACTIVE TRAPS



**34**  
TRAPPING SITES



**8,518** HECTARES  
WILDING PINES  
CONTROLLED  
OVER 3 PROJECT SITES



**15,223**  
WILDING PINE TREES  
CONTROLLED TO DATE

**31**  
SCHOOL & ECE  
CENTERS WITH  
RESTORATION PROJECTS



**19,229**  
STUDENTS WORKED  
WITH IN ONE YEAR



**2,400**  
FACEBOOK  
FOLLOWERS



**277**  
INSTAGRAM  
FOLLOWERS



**17,000**  
UNIQUE WEBSITE  
VISITORS



**1,334**  
NEWSLETTER  
SUBSCRIBERS



**514**  
PROJECT  
TONGARIRO  
MEMBERS



## RECORD OF VOLUNTEERS & HOURS

| VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY                        | VOLUNTEER NO. | VOLUNTEER HOURS |
|---|---------------|-----------------|
| Corrections Nursery                       | 8             | 5,408           |
| Events                                    | 46            | 460             |
| Executive Board                           | 10            | 530             |
| Greening Taupō                            | 3,667         | 7,559           |
| IT Support (Kim Manunui)                  | 1             | 144             |
| Kids Greening Taupō                       | 5,547         | 8,308           |
| Kiwi Egg Transfers                        | 8             | 40              |
| Mahi Aroha                                | 22            | 76              |
| Mentor Role (Paul, Karen, Shirley, Thea)  | 4             | 656             |
| Oruatua, Motuoapa & Waitetoko Restoration | 274           | 5,201           |
| Other Conservation Activities*            | 14            | 274             |
| Predator Free Taupō                       | 382           | 4,308           |
| Lake Rotopounamu - Mt Pihanga             | 20            | 543             |
| Seed Gathering                            | 3             | 23              |
| Society Treasurer (Pat Taylor)            | 1             | 150             |
| Te Mātāpuna (Waiotaka River Restoration)  | 160           | 320             |
| Technical Advisor (Nick Singers)          | 1             | 40              |
| Tongariro Journal                         | 18            | 100             |
| Waimarino Restoration                     | 267           | 809             |
| Waitetoko Trap Line                       | 4             | 80              |
| Whakapapa Visitor Centre                  | 1             | 42              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                              | <b>10,458</b> | <b>35,071</b>   |

*This table represents the many people who volunteer freely of their time and energy, including those volunteering their expertise philanthropically. The projects listed here represent those areas we receive the most volunteer time in and it is not an exhaustive list, but one where we maintain regular records for.*



# GREENING TAUPŌ

ROBYN ELLIS - GREENING TAUPŌ COORDINATOR

This year we hit a huge milestone. We celebrated 10 years of Greening Taupō! We're blown away by the amount of continued support we receive from local businesses, organisations and the community. It is incredible to see our growth and the positive impact we're making together.

Greening initiatives bring numerous benefits far beyond enhancing the appearance of urban areas. They increase native biodiversity, prevent soil erosion, improve the air quality, health, comfort, and well-being of the community and much more. Today, there is a wealth of evidence that highlights the importance and benefits of greening initiatives and urban green spaces. Early initiatives, such as the Green Seattle Partnership established in 2004 and the Hamilton Gully Restoration Project established in 2001, got local ecologists thinking about how something similar could be replicated in Taupō. As people became more aware of the benefits of improving the environment, projects like Greening Taupō were born.

In 2009, Wairakei Golf Course owner Gary Lane constructed a predator-proof fence around the course, encompassing approximately 180 hectares, to create a unique experience where golfers can experience New Zealand's wildlife. Inside the Sanctuary, with the exception of mice, all mammalian pests were eradicated in 2010. The Sanctuary undertook extensive indigenous forest restoration to enhance habitat for native birds. From

there, the concept for Greening Taupō arose from a discussion between Wairakei Golf & Sanctuary, the Department of Conservation and Project Tongariro. Their combined vision was to expand the conservation efforts beyond the Sanctuary and create a network of native plant corridors for birds to thrive in.

To further develop the Greening Taupō concept and collate an action plan, local botanical expert and conservation advocate Nicholas Singers was contracted by Project Tongariro, with funds received from the Wairakei International Golf Course Pro-Am Charity Golf Competition, to write an initial scoping study. Through this study, Nick laid the strategic foundation of the organisation, including long-term objectives and methodology. The fact that having large areas planted around Taupō with community engagement would have significant environmental, economic, and social benefits led to Greening Taupō's clear mission "to improve the Taupō environment for people and native wildlife through restoration planting and pest control.

The consultation process identified that there was considerable support from the wider community to re-vegetate areas. Organisations such as Taupō District Council, Waikato Regional Council, DOC, Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, and Mercury Energy, all long-standing partners since our inception, provided industry support and advice.

*Environmental Hubs Aotearoa mapping of Greening Taupō restoration sites (highlighted green) - powered by Takiwā.*



*Top Right: Nick Singers and his daughter Zoe planting at the Greening Taupō launch in 2013 (Contact Energy site). Top Left: Greening Taupō and Contact Energy planting site in 2023. Bottom Right: Greening Taupō community planting with Contact Energy celebrates 10 years. Bottom Left: Planters enjoying a slice of the 10 years celebration cake.*

On Saturday 1 June 2013, Greening Taupō held its first-ever community planting event. This was the official launch of Greening Taupō; 300 people came along to help plant 3,000 native plants provided by Contact Energy. Ten years later, on Saturday 17 June 2023, Greening Taupō held its 10th annual community planting with Contact Energy; 170 volunteers joined in the celebration and helped plant 2,000 native plants, helping to restore another section of Wairakei Drive, and to, of course, eat cake!

We are so grateful for our long-term relationship with Contact Energy. In total, over 1,000 volunteers have helped plant 25,000 natives as part of the Greening Taupō and Contact Energy community planting events. These plantings have been focused

on Wairakei Drive, which has not only improved the ecological corridors for native biodiversity from the Wairakei Golf & Sanctuary, but also helped create a sense of arrival into Taupō along the Drive. This restoration work also greatly supports Greening Taupō's champion Shawn Vennell with his passion for improving Wairakei Drive.

Over the past 10 years, the community has helped Greening Taupō to plant over 200,000 native plants since 2013 at community planting days. With support from Environmental Hubs Aotearoa, we have now mapped out these sites and calculated that we have successfully planted a total of 45 hectares of land. This achievement is truly remarkable. Hundreds of thousands of additional plants have also been planted within the Greening



Community planting event on Centennial Drive.

Taupō area by local and regional councils and businesses (including Wairakei Golf & Sanctuary and Contact Energy). Collectively, all these plantings are joining the dots to create ecological corridors for native wildlife.

We continue to plan and host 10 community planting events each year, with 25,000 native plants going into restoration projects over the last 12 months. We also continue to plant at Centennial Drive, Taupō Golf Club, Hipapatua, Whakaipō Bay and Crown Park (our annual Arbor Day planting site). Our planting events would regularly have 100 volunteers turn up, but with the growth of Kids Greening Taupō encouraging more and more students and their whānau to get involved, the number of volunteers attending the planting days just keeps increasing. The 2023 planting season is looking like Greening Taupō's biggest ever.

A total of 14,000+ volunteers have attended our community plantings over the past 10 years. This does not include the many hours of dedication

Wicked Weeders enjoy afternoon tea at Hipapatua.



from the Wicked Weeders and other passionate supporters such as Shawn Vennell, who continue to prepare and maintain planting sites.

Greening Taupō also provides volunteering opportunities for local businesses and organisations that want to get their staff involved in our restoration projects. We regularly host Pathways students, and the Huka Lodge gardeners love mucking in; even the military recently returned to battle some blackberry for us. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, these opportunities were limited for several years, but it is good to see support returning.

We look forward to another action-packed decade with plenty more native trees going into the ground which will continue to improve the local environment for people and native wildlife. Greening Taupō has only been able to undertake all this amazing mahi with the fantastic support of our funders, partners, supporters and volunteers.

A big thank you to all!

## GROWING A GREENER FUTURE WITH GREENING TAUPŌ

Recently, while explaining to an external partner, how we source locally grown trees, and then keep them thriving, we came up with this nifty cycle, graphically explaining what a \$10 donation for 1 tree allows us to do, from seed to forest!

### 5. Growing Native Habitat

This dedicated effort guarantees the long-term survival and thriving growth of each tree. The reason behind our work is to link up corridors of native bush in and around the Taupō region to allow fauna & flora to flourish. Healthy environment, healthy people.

### 4. Weeding

Our passionate volunteer group, the Wicked Weeders, takes on the responsibility of nurturing and caring for the trees through a process known as "hand releasing" for the following three years.



### 1. Collecting Native Seeds

Volunteers eco-source seeds from local native trees. Seeds are collected from native varieties that thrive in the Taupō region.

### 2. GROWING SEEDLINGS

The seeds are then propagated at the Tongariro Prison nursery by inmates and are grown into seedlings. After nurturing the seedlings for a year, it's time for them to find their new home at one of Greening Taupō's planting sites.

### 3. Planting Trees

With over 10 community planting days a year, these events bring together enthusiastic kids, their whānau, and the local community to make a lasting impact. Each tree is carefully planted, accompanied by a fertilizer tablet to provide essential nutrients. To safeguard their growth and vitality during the warmer months, a protective layer of mulch is applied, effectively minimizing weed growth and reducing moisture loss.

## NZPCN AWARDS 2022

### NEW ZEALAND PLANT CONSERVATION NETWORK

6 December 2022

*Botanical greats, hard workers and inspirers of the next generation have all been honoured in the awards announced by the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) in Queenstown this week. The awards recognise special people, and projects that have captured the interest of local communities. These individuals and groups are the leading guardians of our country's native plants and ecosystems. They include a Tongariro legend, and nationwide plant conservation initiative, a northland legendary botanist, a Queenstown primary school, a plant nursery in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, a Southland farmer and an enthusiastic young conservation leader. These awards are indicative of the huge effort that is being exerted all around the country by a large number of dedicated individuals, communities and businesses to protect and enhance our unique native plants.*

#### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Paul Green has been awarded a 'Life Time Achievement' award by the Network for the work done through numerous roles within Project Tongariro. This not-for-profit organisation is focused on restoring the mauri of Tongariro National Park and its surroundings. It includes flagship projects such as Te Mātāpuna Wetland, Greening Taupō and Lake Rotopounamu Restoration Project. Strong partnerships with the Department of Conservation, regional and local councils and iwi have allowed Project Tongariro to achieve volunteer participation on conservation projects that protect flora restoration and pest control. Paul unfailingly gives of his time and wisdom to support these projects. His mana in the local community, extensive connections and ability to think and work strategically are invaluable. His unfailing work to protect the biodiversity of the Central North Island goes on. Through his strategic leadership, encouragement, and endless dedication. Paul provides opportunities for conservation specialists and volunteers, actively supports public participation and education, is out planting and connecting key agencies to achieve conservation outcomes at scale. And encouraging others to do so too. Paul is a well-deserved recipient of this award.

#### COMMUNITY GROUP AWARD

The NZPCN's 'Community Plant Conservation Project' award has gone to Project Tongariro for their outstanding work done to protect the native biodiversity of the Tongariro National Park and its World Heritage sites. Project Tongariro is a hugely successful environment/conservation group that has had an extraordinary and positive impact.



## ORUATUA RECREATION RESTORATION

### SHIRLEY POTTER - PROJECT CHAMPION

This season can be summed up with a few words; rain, floods, weeds, fabulous plant growth and more weeds, and yet another flood in the reserve!

From July 2022 to the end of June 2023 we have planted 2700 trees, making our total since 2014 just under 30,000. Our volunteer hours just keep climbing as the project gathers momentum, with 3300 hours in the last year.

Our funders deserve to be mentioned and thanked again, namely: The Department of Corrections, Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET), Te Uru Rakau (Ministry for Primary Industries), Waikato Regional Council (WRC), Department of Conservation (DOC), and the Ron and Edna Greenwood Trust. The Sargood Trust and Tūrangi Tongariro Community Fund have provided grants for paying part timers. This is so important as we can't keep on top of the weeds with volunteers only. Generous donations from locals add a significant boost to our funds as well.

We are fortunate to have had a few post Covid volunteer groups return. Saint Kentigern College came in late November/December 2022. The 18 groups (of up to 32 students) were shared with us and Rongomai. Strangely for that time of year we were able to put on a couple of days of shocking weather, fortunately this did not deter them. Flooding meant we had to send a couple of the groups over to Oruatua Ave to help Collette in a dry patch! The

broom was given a hiding with students working in pairs with loppers and gel. A dozen Air Force guys joined us for a morning and a group staying at the Christian camp also gave us a few helpful hours dealing with weeds. These groups are a valuable resource for us and we encourage their ongoing commitment. One of my highlights has to be the girls that found the bird's nest fungus. Take a look at Youtube to see how a raindrop spreads the tiny seeds from their 'nest' - it's very cool.

Volunteers including Mark, Alison, Helen and myself are the regulars of our volunteer Wednesday



Right: Saint Kentigern 'what are these?'. Below: Saint Kentigern College group on a fine day.



Weeders. There are a few others who come as they can, we value everyone's help, and especially love Alison's home baking. It is a lot of fun listening to our crew talking to the plants, "here you go", "there's a bit of light for you", "hang on I'll give you a tie", "oh aren't you a beauty", "ah you'll be much happier now", "oh my goddess look at all those seedlings". The comments made to the weeds are mostly unprintable! Rosie Bennett is our main part timer, ably accompanied by her border collies, Lilly and Fox who have fun flushing out pheasants and sniffing out rats! Zoe is a newer member of our "staff" usually for one morning a week. Stu and Robin have done some fabulous work hedge trimming Japanese honeysuckle from existing natives. Helen's husband Jim is kindly making wooden signs for us.



Mark, Ardy, Collette, Sarah, Judith and many others are all instrumental in different aspects of this project. Releasing plants is our biggest ongoing challenge, Canadian fleabane is still a pain, with nightshade vying for second place. They grow to large plants in what seems only a few months. Hand pulling, with much grunting, is ensuring that most of our precious native seedlings nearby get some light and can survive.

Ian and Frances Jenkins continue to come up trumps with 1000 beautiful trees for the season. Pretty much all the large kowhai trees in our plantings have all come from them since 2014. Come along and visit the site named "Jenkins".

The plant lay out days have become a well attended day in themselves. Thanks to the valuable support with helpers coming from DOC, TDC, WRC, EPRO and of course our great volunteers. Our community planting days are also well attended no matter what the weather throws at us, with new faces turning up each time. The last planting for the season was a tad over watered and access was challenging with only one way in from the fishing access - hardy locals were not bothered in the least! Neighbours Pauline and Paul ensure our planting day smoko and lunches run smoothly.

Bryan Lawrance as usual is key to this project without Bryan's machinery, expertise and passion this project would never have got off the ground. In areas where Bryan cannot get access to mulch (too many trees), we have left the dead weeds and made 'holes' in which to plant our natives. This method has been pretty successful and results in somewhat less weed growth due to less land disturbance, however it is not so friendly for volunteers working among dead blackberry on community planting days.

Nick Singers and I have been late to our spraying in preparation for our 2023 planting due to the wet summer. Getting Bryan's tractor into the site between floods has been a bit of a nightmare, but he was finally finished in early June, perfect timing for our first planting.

Warrick Simmonds and his crew have removed the last dead pines that could be felled without damaging native plants. The skyline is so much better for all their efforts. Warrick and his friends have been a key part of the project and we are very grateful for their mahi.

This year Nick spotted another two endemic grasses, *Poa anceps* (meadow grass) and *Lachnagrostis lyalli* (mountain wind grass), nice to have expert eyes on the job as they just look like

*Top: Wednesday Weeders. Below: The only 'dryish' access to our planting area.*



*Planting day smoko time!*

grass to me!! Both will have their seeds collected and spread and they will not be sprayed in the future. We also have a single vine *Passiflora tetrandra*, (native long leaf passion vine), currently highlighted with pink tape to keep it safe!

The special (but unremarkable) bog yellow cress, (*Rorippa palustris*), found in 2021 has multiplied and is looking really good - another run on the board for our biodiversity.

Who have been seen near our last 2022 planting site and there have been multiple sightings upstream, which may bode well for a local population one day. We would love to extend our trapping upstream in the future, although it is a very

difficult stretch of river to place traps due to frequent flooding.

Cyclone Gabrielle sadly took out a few old kowhai, kanuka and two large beech trees. Fortunately the damage was infinitesimal compared to that in the nearby pine forests. There have been a dozen or so possums come visiting (for a short stay) after being displaced from the pines, more possums than we have had in many years.

Thanks to all the other helpers not specifically mentioned, you know who you are and your help is valued.

*Plant growth at 'The Monument' - Left: November 2020. Centre: May 2021. Right: May 2023*



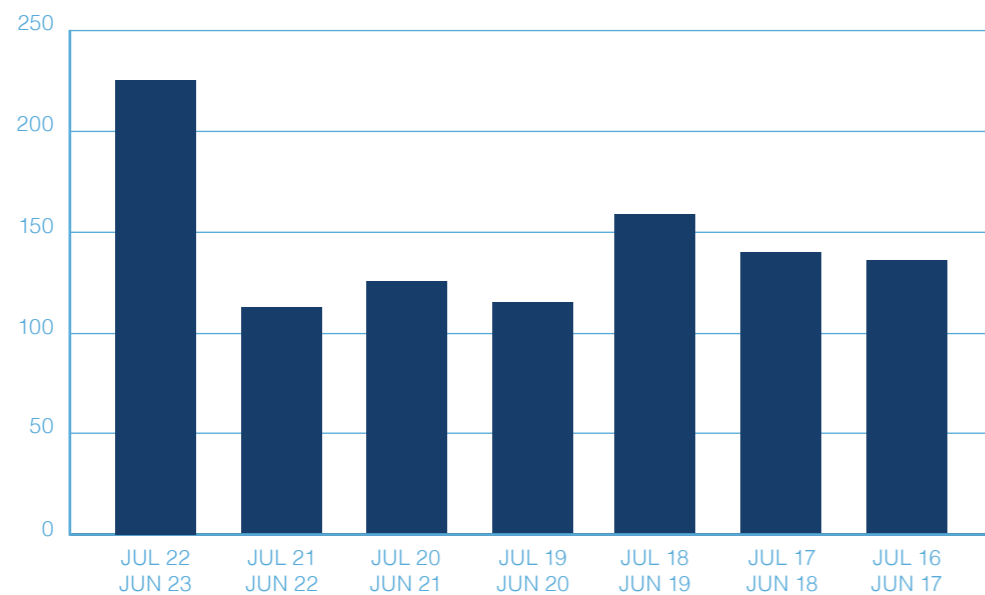
# MT PIHANGA - LAKE ROTOPOUNAMU

KIRI TE WANO - CEO

Since 2003 (20 years!) Project Tongariro, supported by the Department of Conservation and various funders such as the Pharazyn Trust and private donors, have enabled us to lead an intensive pest control and forest restoration programme at Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu, just south of Tūrangi in Tongariro National Park.

Our Biodiversity Goal is to maintain, enhance (or re-establish) vulnerable habitats and ecosystems, and their component fauna and flora; and to prevent the establishment of new threats on Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu. Our local passionate volunteers regularly check traps throughout the year and by continuing to 'Adopt a Hectare' supporters help them to keep pests at bay. This past financial year has seen our best ever support from private donors, after an understandable drop-off of donations, from the last few years. This ongoing crowdfunding campaign is integral to the protection of this mature podocarp forest.

## HECTARES ADOPTED SINCE 2016



The Total Pest Trapped tables show that we have the highest catch totals (of stoats and weasels) trapped, generally in December then declines back to lower levels in January. This indicates that our trapping network is somewhat successful at keeping numbers of pests at bay, however it just acts as maintenance and not a complete knock back of populations of pests that aerial control achieves. The critical period is when the birds are breeding, which is August to May.

At the moment, our trapping network is the only protection being undertaken, but we urgently need more. It's been nearly 5 years since the last aerial operation, and as the tables and data below show, predator numbers are rising. TB Free NZ had been running an aerial 1080 programme, which was targeted to protect neighbouring farms and forest blocks. It also afforded the Rotopounamu forest the most cost-effective protection for native flora and fauna, and extended the protection to 2990 hectares. Unfortunately in 2019, TB Free



Colette Taylor hosting international 'Beautiful Journey' students, trap checking.

NZ deemed the area free from tuberculosis, and has stopped this programme. We have been urgently advocating to DOC and local iwi to get this protection programme returned. I'm pleased to report that there is now some progress, however it is very slow.

This year just past, our network of traps were checked by volunteer trappers an impressive 4,480 times! I cannot acknowledge our team of volunteer trap checkers enough for their ongoing support. If you are

interested in becoming a Rotopounamu trap checker, please get in touch so we can share the load! This position would suit someone who is passionate about forests and their protection, has good tramping experience and is confident navigating in forest. We will sign you up and ensure you have a robust introduction and great support. We have a fortnightly roster, that you can sign yourself up to, with a week lee-way to complete your chosen trap line(s) in. This ensures flexibility and helps account for bad weather and your other commitments.



Fungus growing up a tree at Rotopounamu.

It is still our goal to protect the forest to a level where we can re-introduce (and protect) locally-extinct species such as North Island weka, and possibly brown teal and kokako. Donations to the Adopt a Hectare programme are directly assisting Project Tongariro to help maintain this ongoing restoration project so that we can continue to make Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu Forest a safe haven.

## TOTAL PESTS TRAPPED

|                 | FEB 22<br>FEB 23 | FEB 21<br>FEB 22 | FEB 20<br>FEB 21 | FEB 19<br>FEB 20 | FEB 18<br>FEB 19 | FEB 17<br>FEB 18 | FEB 16<br>FEB 17 |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>STOATS*</b>  | 35               | 40               | 56               | 58               | 15               | 50               | 17               |
| <b>WEASELS*</b> | 11               | 4                | 24               | 71               | 3                | 32               | 32               |
| <b>RATS</b>     | 1,326            | 962              | 1,359            | 971              | 571              | 844              | 556              |
| <b>CATS</b>     | 3                | 4                | 4                | 6                | 3                | 5                | N/A              |
| <b>HEDGEHOG</b> | 42               | 53               | 41               | 92               | 31               | 15               | 28               |

## TOTAL PESTS TRAPPED: CRITICAL PERIOD

|                 | AUG 22<br>MAY 23 | AUG 21<br>MAY 22 | AUG 20<br>MAY 21 | AUG 19<br>MAY 20 | AUG 18<br>MAY 19 | AUG 17<br>MAY 18 | AUG 16<br>MAY 17 |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>STOATS*</b>  | 28               | 34               | 44               | 42               | 23               | 32               | 12               |
| <b>WEASELS*</b> | 5                | 5                | 5                | 53               | 8                | 11               | 26               |
| <b>RATS</b>     | 941              | 804              | 1,128            | 668              | 508              | 495              | 424              |
| <b>CATS</b>     | 3                | 5                | 1                | 5                | 2                | 2                | 0                |
| <b>HEDGEHOG</b> | 25               | 35               | 33               | 50               | 80               | 6                | 19               |

\*indicates our main targeted predators

# MAHI AROHA SUMMER PROGRAMME

ANNA CALVERT - PROJECT TONGARIRO CONSERVATION COORDINATOR

Although it felt like summer never properly arrived this year, we were still able to deliver another successful Mahi Aroha Summer Programme. Thank you to everyone who was involved; no matter how big or small your mahi, we simply couldn't have done it without you!

This year of a total of 393 participants, about half said it was their first Mahi Aroha experience. There were 25 unique trips/events planned and 33 trips/events listed on the calendar, a large increase from last year. Unfortunately, nine events were cancelled, mainly due to poor weather and the minimum number of participants not reached for the trip to proceed.

As part of the booking process, we also offered participants the option to add a donation when booking. We are delighted that several donations were made to us and other community groups who helped support the programme.

Planning for Mahi Aroha 2024 is underway, so keep your eyes peeled for our calendar release in November.

Thank you to the trip/event participants who supplied photos. On this page - Top Left: Avian Avoidance Training. Bottom Left: Tamariki listening to Sleep Little Kiwi, Sleep during the Nocturnal Animals with Kids Greening Taupō library session. Right: Kaipō River Swing Bridge Heli-hike. Over the page - Top Left: Te Porere Redoubt. Top Right: New Years Day Litter Pick Up. Middle Left: Beautiful watercolours from the Fine Feathered Friends Nature Art session with Sue Graham. Middle Right: Exploring the lungs of Lake Taupō during the Te Matāpuna wetland walk. Bottom Left: Examining catches during Creepy Crawly Bug Catchers Workshop hosted by Enviroschools. Bottom Right: Taking in the views along Old Coach Road.



## WHO HELPS MAKE US TICK

| FUNDER                         | PROJECT  | AMOUNT | TOTAL   |
|--------------------------------|--|--------|---------|
| Alaister Bamford               | Donation towards Oruatua Restoration                             | 1,000  | 1,000   |
|                                | Grant for Greening Taupō   | 16,200 |         |
| Bay Trust                      | Grant for Kids Greening Taupō                                    | 70,400 | 172,000 |
|                                | Grant for Predator Free Taupō                                    | 17,000 |         |
|                                | Grant for Project Tongariro                                      | 68,400 |         |
| Bruce Mccullagh                | Donation towards Totara Gully                                    | 500    | 500     |
| Chapman O'Brien Dental Surgery | Sponsorship of EEC Ngā Kōrero                                    | 500    | 500     |
|                                | Sponsorship of Kids Greening Taupō                               | 35,000 |         |
|                                | Sponsorship of Greening Taupō Day 1st Prize                      | 1,000  |         |
|                                | Sponsorship of Take Action Fund for Kids Greening Taupō          | 6,500  |         |
| Contact Energy                 | Donation towards Greening Taupō Wicked Weeders                   | 500    | 44,850  |
|                                | Contribution towards Kids Greening Taupō                         | 850    |         |
|                                | Funding for Greening Taupō planting                              | 1,000  |         |
|                                | Grant for Kids Greening Taupō                                    | 4,000  |         |
| Department of Conservation     | Contribution towards Kiwi Forever                                | 2,000  | 8,000   |
|                                | Contribution towards Motuoapa Scenic Reserve Planting            | 2,000  |         |
| DPA Accountants                | Donation towards Greening Taupō Wairakei Drive                   | 500    | 500     |
| DS & BEM Callaway              | Donation towards Adopt a Hectare                                 | 1,000  | 1,000   |
| Edna Williams                  | Donation towards Adopt a Hectare                                 | 1,000  | 1,000   |
| Environment Hubs Aotearoa      | Grant for Project Tongariro                                      | 61,104 | 61,104  |
| First Credit Union             | Donation towards Kids Greening Taupō                             | 1,000  | 2,000   |
|                                | Sponsorship of Greening Taupō Wicked Weeders                     | 1,000  |         |
| Frank Katavich                 | Donation towards Project Tongariro                               | 5,000  | 5,000   |
| Gavin & Dona White             | Donation toward Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu Forest Restoration | 500    | 500     |
| Genesis Energy                 | Grant for Kiwi Forever   | 15,000 | 15,000  |
| GNS Science                    | Contribution towards Greening Taupō                              | 1,000  | 1,000   |
| Herwi Scheltus                 | Donation towards Kids Greening Taupō                             | 500    | 500     |
| Huka Lodge                     | Contribution towards Greening Taupō                              | 5,000  | 5,000   |
| Julie Norris                   | Donation towards Greening Taupō                                  | 755    | 755     |
| Kerry Borkin                   | Donation towards Greening Taupō                                  | 500    | 500     |
| Lady Shirley Geering Estate    | Donation toward Mt Pihanga - Lake Rotopounamu Forest Restoration | 5,000  | 5,000   |
| Lake Taupō Cycle Challenge     | Donation towards Greening Taupō                                  | 975    | 1,950   |
|                                | Donation towards Predator Free Taupō                             | 975    |         |
| Land Information New Zealand   | Grant for Greening Taupō Kauri Drive                             | 19,822 | 19,822  |
| Len Reynolds Trust             | Grant for Project Tongariro                                      | 35,000 | 35,000  |
| Macarthy Trust                 | Grant for Waimarino Restoration                                  | 25,000 | 25,000  |
| Mark O'Neill                   | Donation towards Oruatua Restoration                             | 4,000  | 4,000   |

| FUNDER   | PROJECT  | AMOUNT  | TOTAL   |
|--|--|---------|---------|
| Mary Lockwood                                  | Donation towards Adopt a Hectare               | 1,000   | 1,500   |
|  | Donation towards Oruatua Restoration           | 500     |         |
| Ministry of Education                          | Grant towards Kids Greening Taupō              | 77,656  | 82,656  |
|  | Grant towards Waimarino Restoration            | 5,000   |         |
| Ministry for Primary Industries                | Grant for Tauhara Maunga Wilding Conifers      | 47,464  |         |
|  | Grant for Western Lake Taupō Wilding Conifers  | 109,000 | 167,577 |
|  | Grant for Oruatua Restoration                  | 11,113  |         |
| Haimes Building Taupō Ltd                      | Contribution towards Greening Taupō            | 1,500   | 1,500   |
| Ron & Edna Greenwood Environmental Trust       | Grant for Oruatua Restoration                  | 870     | 870     |
| Saint Kentigern College                        | Donation towards Oruatua Restoration           | 1,800   | 1,800   |
|  | Donation towards Oruatua Restoration           | 1,000   |         |
| Shirley Potter                                 | Donation towards Oruatua Restoration           | 1,000   | 2,000   |
| Taumata Plantations Ltd                        | Grant for Waihaha Wilding Conifers             | 15,000  | 15,000  |
|  | Grant for Greening Taupō                       | 40,000  |         |
| Taupō District Council                         | Grant for EEC Nature Art Workshops             | 1,350   | 51,350  |
|  | Grant for Oruatua Restoration                  | 10,000  |         |
| The Honey Hive                                 | Donation towards Greening Taupō Wairakei Drive | 2,150   | 2,150   |
| The Rosemary DePetris Foundation               | Donation towards Kids Greening Taupō           | 756     | 756     |
| Total Sport                                    | Donation towards Greening Taupō                | 838     | 1,838   |
|  | Donation towards Project Tongariro             | 1,000   |         |
| Tremains Real Estate                           | Donation towards Greening Taupō Wairakei Drive | 1,000   | 1,000   |
| Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board                   | Contribution towards Greening Taupō Matariki   | 1,440   | 1,440   |
| Upflow   | Contribution towards Greening Taupō            | 3,330   | 3,330   |
| Victory Events                                 | Donation towards Project Tongariro             | 2,510   | 2,510   |
| Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust | Grant for Oruatua Restoration                  | 4,571   | 10,471  |
|  | Grant for Greening Taupō Whakaipō Bay          | 5,900   |         |
| Waikato Regional Council                       | Grant for Predator Free Taupō                  | 3,139   | 3,139   |
| Wairakei Golf + Sanctuary                      | Donation towards Greening Taupō                | 6,162   | 6,162   |

*This table of financial contributions identifies major funders via grants, community partnerships sponsorship and donations of those over \$500 (in one transaction) and does not show all contributions towards our projects that we receive throughout the year from our incredibly generous supporters.*

# KIDS GREENING TAUPŌ

RACHEL THOMPSON - KIDS GREENING TAUPŌ LEAD EDUCATION COORDINATOR

It has been another busy year for Kids Greening Taupō (KGT). We continue to engage tamariki in the restoration work of Greening Taupō and Predator Free Taupō, using this conservation work as an authentic learning context.

Our student leadership team continues to have over 100 students who lead a number of environmental projects around town.

This year we have been very lucky to receive funding for the first time from the Ministry of Education. This funding is for the next 3.5 years and is an acknowledgment of the support that we give schools to enrich their local curriculum. Along with continued funding from Bay Trust and Contact Energy, it has allowed us to employ two qualified and experienced teachers and a kairuruku reo Māori. Benoir Midwood-Murray has taken on this role in 2023, working with kura kaupapa and kohanga reo, as well as advising us on cultural matters and helping to develop our te reo Māori resources.

Our programme continues to expand and adapt to the needs of the community. This year, schools are implementing the new Aotearoa New Zealand Histories Curriculum. Our work fits nicely within this curriculum. Our coordinators have enjoyed expanding their own knowledge to be able to teach the history of biodiversity in Aotearoa. All the mahi we do - removing introduced plants, trapping introduced predators, and planting habitats for

native species - is done to restore what has been lost because of the actions of people in the past. We have created a slideshow and a kit of hands-on experiments to show the importance of wetlands.

When people understand how our unique native species evolved the way they did due to having only avian predators, they can see why introduced mammalian predators are so devastating to our biodiversity, and why predator control is needed. When they understand the impact of forest clearance and wetland removal, they can see why we need to plant native plants. With this understanding of our history, our students can see what needs to be done to create a better future. So 2023 has seen us spending time in classrooms educating tamariki and teachers about this history and inspiring them to take action to improve our local environment.

The 2023 Greening Taupō Day art competition went out to every student in Taupō alongside teaching resources that we put together. It asked students to draw what Aotearoa looked like when the first humans arrived on its shores. We were amazed with the quality of the artwork produced. It was evident that teachers and students had been learning about our biodiversity and endemic species. Planting season is now in full swing and the students are keen to help restore biodiversity in Taupō through planting native forests and setting traplines.

The 2023 student leadership teams had a whole day of activities at Spa Park to start the year.



A Maeroa student with the 'pooter' that he made to catch the beetles. You just line it up with a beetle and suck on the straw!

We undertook our first biological control project with St Patrick's School Taupō this year. With the support of Waikato Regional Council and Waikato Enviroschools, we transferred tradescantia beetles from Maeroa Intermediate in Hamilton to Brentwood Gully in Taupō. We will need to wait until summer to see if this has been successful and if the beetles survive our cold winter. The students learned a lot through this project and were very passionate about controlling the weed taking over their gully. Thank you to Benoir, our new kairuruku reo Māori, for advising us on the cultural implications of moving species from one rohe to another. It has been a good learning experience for us, and we will be using this knowledge for any future biological control projects.

Partnerships with local businesses continue to help our resource bank grow. Mitre 10 Mega Taupō generously continues to provide gloves, tools and other resources for our programme. Epro Ltd have given us two new resources for our team: Polly the taxidermied possum (caught by students in the Wairakei School gully) and Harry the taxidermied hedgehog. They both lead to great discussions at schools and events. A partnership with NZ Forest Managers has allowed for native seedling collection under pine forests to become part of our programme.

Thanks to funding from Contact Energy, The Possum Trail Run and First Credit Union, we were able to plant regularly with our local schools and kindergartens, getting thousands of native plants

Jane and Kane Stafford from Epro with Polly the taxidermied possum.



Benoir performing a karakia and welcome for the beetles with St Patrick's School students.

in the ground. Many of the plants went into school restoration projects onsite, or into neighbouring parks and gullies, but some went to special projects such as St Patrick's School and Waipahihi School's Māra Hauora (wellness gardens), which were filled with native plants traditionally used for medicine or wellbeing.

Every school/ECE centre planting was designed especially for their site with input from the tamariki. Plants were chosen especially for each one. We planted tussock and tangly shrubs for lizards' habitat, putaputawēta for puriri moths, flowering natives for our native pollinators, native berries as food for geckos and birds, ferns and podocarps in areas with canopy cover, and ground covers in







*Tauhara Primary Students with their lizard garden 'The Mokokoko Motorcamp'.*

small gardens. The range of plants that we planted in the past year was the most diverse that it has ever been. Many of the schools had students design signs for the areas. These were printed onto outdoor signage material by Quality Print, another fantastic local business that provides lots of support.

Relationships with businesses and organisations have allowed us lots of wonderful opportunities in the past year. Hundreds of our students have had kiwi tours at the Crombie Lockwood Kiwi Burrow thanks to Kiwi Contact. We have been able to collaborate with a range of experts such as Ruud Kleinpaste (The Bug Man) and Sam the Trapman through a relationship with Field-Based STEM. Local artist Sue Graham has run nature art workshops



*Sam the Trapman with a group of Hilltop School students at Opepe.*

for us and our students have taken part in NZOIA (New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association) courses. Trees for Survival are working with us for the first time this year at St Patrick's School. Taupō Intermediate gully project is well underway and, thanks to Camex engineers and local landscape architect, Herwi Scheltus, it is transforming into an amazing outdoor classroom space.

Collaboration is key to everything that KGT does and this huge support network is never as obvious as it is at Greening Taupō Day. The number of activities provided by local businesses and organisations for the thousands of people who come along has been incredible to see. We feel truly lucky to have so many supporters in the community. We would not be able to do the work we do without them.

Thank you to everyone who has supported Kids Greening Taupō in some way over the past year. You have all contributed to the ongoing success and growth of our programme. We look forward to seeing what the next year has in store for us!

*Students get to see introduced predators such as the hedgehog up close thanks to Epro's kind support.*

## GREENING TAUPŌ DAY

RACHEL THOMPSON - KIDS GREENING TAUPŌ LEAD EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Greening Taupō Day has fast become more than just an Arbor Day planting event. It has blossomed into a festival of Environmental Education for the region and a day of celebration that the whole community engages in. Every school and numerous kindergartens take on environmental projects during the week and hold a 'dress in green' fundraising day.

The Arbor Day event this year started with an unexpected downpour of rain which had the thousand people in attendance ducking for cover and our coordinators huddled under an umbrella with the mayor trying to get the microphone to work. Our plans for a big opening kōrero and planting demonstration abruptly changed. We quickly said a few words then declared the day open. Many attendees chose to brave the elements to plant, and the 3000 trees were planted in an hour. These were added to the 4500 trees planted at last year's event to become the beginnings of a native forest.

Robyn from Greening Taupō did a fantastic job of organising the planting aspect of the day. Trees that Count and funds raised at last year's event funded the trees, Mynoke generously donated vermicast, Taupō District Council (TDC) and the Department of Conservation (DOC) did the site preparation, Wicked Weeder volunteers and students from Taupō Intermediate unloaded the plants and put them, along with vermicast and fertiliser, in all of the holes ready for the day.

*Right: Students planting in the rain. Below: View of the planting site and education stalls in the background.*

Over 40 local businesses and organisations had stands onsite with activities for the children. Most of them had an environmental education message. Participants could learn about native bats from DOC, build a trap with Forest and Bird, investigate freshwater macroinvertebrates with the Tongariro Trout Centre, shoot predators using nerf guns with Contact Energy, find out about bird banding with Maungatautari Sanctuary Mountain, dissect owl pellets with Wingspan, guess the native plant species with Ngaroma Nurseries, hunt for worms like a kiwi with Save the Kiwi, learn about native bees with Huka Honey Hive, repurpose old books with





Top Left: Student connects with New Zealand native wētā. Top Right: Trev Terry on the barbecue tools cooks up 1,400 sausages. Bottom Left: Our amazing team! Bottom Right: Donovan Bixley gifts the first ever copy of his brand new book RUSTLE - Native Plants of Aotearoa to Kids Greening Taupō

Taupō library, play a recycling game with TDC, and take part in a wetland experiment or see the kauri dieback model with Waikato Regional Council. There was bug hunting, fungi on display, bush tea tasting, and obstacle courses. Children could ride bikes on the new pump track with Kids Bike Taupō or have a go with a frisbee thanks to Taupō Disc Golf. There were fire engines and police cars to check out, and face painting for kids. Local author/illustrator Donovan Bixley painted a beautiful karearea and signed books. These were just some of the fun activities offered.

The food served on the day was a massive collaborative effort. In order to be more sustainable, Epro sent an employee to hunt wild deer, resulting in 500 donated venison sausages. DOC contributed another 400 sausages and Trev Terry Marine not

only provided another 500 sausages, but also supplied the gear and staff to cook them all. Countdown Taupō donated bread, sauces and buns. Those buns were served alongside soup made by The Bistro, with rescued vegetables from Misfit Garden, whose staff were also there handing out free fruit to children. Biodegradable cups donated by Mynoke for the soup could be taken to the Mitre 10 MEGA stand and used to pot up a plant to take home.

Overall, in spite of the weather, a fantastic day was had by all involved. It is pretty special to see so many people from our community come together to make our local environment better for biodiversity and to celebrate local conservation. It is a one-of-a-kind community event that we are incredibly proud of.

## KIWI FOREVER 2023

CLODAGH COSTELLO - WAIMARINO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Kiwi Forever is a conservation and cultural marae-based programme that takes place once a year over six days. The programme has been running annually since 2006 and is a partnership between Ngāti Rangī, the Department of Conservation, Genesis Energy and now Project Tongariro.

This year, 15 rangatahi (young people) from Ruapehu, Whanganui and Taupō, alongside four pre-service teachers from the University of Waikato, spent the week at Tiorangi Marae in Karioi. The week was full of hands-on experiential learning about conservation and mātauranga Māori, a holistic worldview of nature, people and place. Keith Wood, one of the programme founders, guided the rangatahi in their learning, reflections, and development of leadership skills.

The importance of Aotearoa's unique biodiversity was highlighted through learning about the Ngāti Rangī worldview, participating in pest control work, debating renewable energy and its impacts, exploring kiwi and whio conservation issues, getting stuck into restoration work and more. An amazing range of passionate trappers have worked with the rangatahi this year. Cam Speedy, the Ruapehu Worx team, and Shirley Potter shared their contagious enthusiasm for this mahi (work) and many of the rangatahi have already begun trapping since leaving the programme!



On the final day, the students presented their learnings from the week to stakeholders, friends and whānau. It was wonderful to hear, in their own words, the knowledge they now hold. One of the most powerful anecdotes for me was hearing from a student with eco-anxiety; they shared how they now feel that they can take action for a better world.

Top Right: Rangatahi considered the impacts of the Tongariro Power Scheme with Keith Wood and Cam Speedy. Below: In the sunshine at Tiorangi Marae on the final day of Kiwi Forever 2023.



# WAIMARINO RESTORATION

CLODAGH COSTELLO - WAIMARINO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COORDINATOR

This past year has seen Project Tongariro initiate the Waimarino Restoration Project in the Southern Ruapehu rohe (area). It is based upon the same environmental education principles as our successful Kids Greening Taupō Education project. My role as Environmental Education Coordinator is taking shape through the relationships I am building with schools and the wider community. It is important that this work is authentic and meaningful to our unique rohe under Ruapehu.

I have the privilege of working with 10 learning centres and have been facilitating native bush experiences, providing in-school education sessions, and connecting schools to local restoration opportunities. The hope is that this will strengthen the innate bond our tamariki (children) have with the natural world around them.



I am actively learning in this role; tamariki and nature continuously surprise me! Recently I was out observing forest canopy layers with a group of chatty and lively intermediate school students. I wondered if they would be able to turn their attention away from their conversations, and toward the richness of life in the ngahere (forest). I asked them to spread out, choose a spot, and sit down for two minutes of silence. At the end of the two minutes, they asked to do it again. And so we did! The curiosity, engagement and focus that came after the silence blew me away. Their senses were awoken to their surroundings, and they started to share their flora and fungi discoveries with their peers, recording their observations beautifully.

This year, Emily Jones, a kaiako (teacher) at Waiouru Primary School, has undertaken a restoration project with me to celebrate the school's 75th anniversary. Each fortnight, I spend half a day with Emily and her class. So far we have explored what biodiversity means, made nature journals to record our observations, befriended trees living on the school grounds, explored the journey from seed to tree, created a collective collage to envision the planting, and become beady-eyed fungi hunters.

Recently, we were out with her year 4 class. We had been learning about introduced predators, and becoming 'pest detectives.' Students had their nature journals and magnifying glasses, and were

Left: Giving back to the Mākōtuku Track with Raetihi School. Below: Mulching at the school's Miro St restoration site with Ohakune Primary.



Top: Every specimen collected on day 2 of the Fungal Foray! Right: Fungi find! Genus *Rhizocybe*.

searching for signs of pest activity (their favourite being droppings!) We found a dead hedgehog and observed maggots and woodlice on the decomposing body. After we had emerged from the trees, buzzing with all our observations, a piercing scream rang out. A student had stood on a wasp nest, concealed under the leaf litter. And very, very, very angry German wasps rushed out and stung most of the students as they fled.

I was very concerned that this experience would have instilled a fear of the outdoors, and that the students would never want to explore again. On my next visit, we spoke about the experience, and how these wasps are pests not only to us, but also to our native birds, insects, and beech forests. Their resilience and desire for adventure won out against fear, and we were back outside exploring again!

For my professional development this year, I spent three days in Rotorua, participating in a fungal foray hosted by the Fungal Network of New Zealand (FUNNZ). On the first morning, I attended a workshop for beginners that ran through the correct way to take photos of fungi for identification, and how to collect samples. The rest of the day was spent at Dansey Road Scenic Reserve, where I felt like a child on a treasure hunt, and burst with excitement at each new find!

Day two was spent at Maungatautari Sanctuary. This was my first visit to the sanctuary and in the five hours I spent there, I travelled maybe 500m. Fungi hunting certainly slows the pace.

On day three, a colloquium\* was held at Scion. It was so interesting listening to what is happening in



the fungal world at large. What really struck me is how much we don't know about the fungi kingdom. Leaving the foray, I have new skills to take back to my students, knowledge to share about the magical and strange behaviour of our fungi, and a desire to inspire students to become discoverers of unknown species.

Reflecting on a year in this role, I am heartened by the relationships that have been built. I want to thank all the akōnga (learners) and kaiako I have worked with, our amazing community, and Project Tongariro for trusting me in this position, giving me opportunities to try things out, and supporting me to be a lifelong learner. I look forward to continuing to support and enrich environmental connection and learning in this rohe.

# SOUTHERN RUAPEHU

KAREN GRIMWADE AND ALLAN MCKENZIE

Alongside supporting Waimarino Restoration and the amazing Kiwi Forever project, helping out with Mahi Aroha walks, building links with the local community and iwi, there are other small conservation projects we work on in the Southern Ruapehu.

## RONGOKAUPO WETLAND

Biodiversity work at the Rongokaupo is ongoing. We were grateful to receive another funding boost from Horizons which will see the removal of emergent weeds along the margins and some more serious weeds discovered in the interior such as, Chilean flame weed and Himalayan honeysuckle, probably spread from nearby Old Coach Road. We have botanical identification signs ready to be installed and we will plant a few more native trees in autumn. This is a small site, but one worthy of care and alongside Atihau Corporation and Ruapehu Worx, we have achieved gradual improvements

## TŪROA ALPINE FLUSH

After much planning and consultation, boundary markers were installed around the Tūroa Alpine Flush (TAF) so boundary creep cannot happen again. Also an interpretation sign was installed at the base of the wetland prior to winter.



Top: A fence to keep cattle travelling up the road out of the Rongokaupo Wetland. Ruapehu Worx maintain a trapline around the wetland. Below: Boundary markers that define the Tūroa Alpine Flush surveyed boundaries. Designed by Herwi Scheltus they enable steel poles to be installed as and when needed. Left: The new Interpretation Sign at the Tūroa Alpine Flush.

Along with the boundary signs Project Tongariro supplies to the skifield staff, and the snow level pole now installed by DOC, we hope staff and visitors will be more aware of the flush and how special it is.

We expect the interpretation sign to suffer from the conditions it lives in; sun damage, snow groomers etc, so it will need to be replaced from time to time, but it is very gratifying to have some information about the alpine flush and the unique plants that live there in this special location. Thanks must go to Russell LeQuesne of TPP Contracting for the install of the boundary markers and Herwi Scheltus and Jenny Hayward (DOC) for their persistence with this project.



Top: Predator Free Ohakune stand at the Carrot Festival to raise our profile and attract new trappers. Project Tongariro ran a trap building workshop (thanks Robyn Ellis and Clodagh Costello) which was a huge attraction.

## PREDATOR FREE OHAKUNE

Alongside Robert Milne and other original members of Predator Free Ohakune (PFO), over the last year we have worked to boost the profile of PFO. We organised a stand at the Carrot Festival in June and gained new trapping members. We have obtained funding from Predator Free Trust NZ and Heartland Trust and thus boosted trap numbers, trapper numbers and PFO profile in the community. This is ongoing work that Project Tongariro supports.

## HISTORIC ERUA MILL SITE

In the hope of getting some restoration work done we have mapped out a plan to apply for funding to have a site survey done. Although we missed out on the DOC Community Fund this year, we are hopeful to see some progress on this site. Watch this space.

Right: PFO traps now marked with our new stencil.



# PREDATOR FREE TAUPŌ

ROBYN ELLIS - PREDATOR FREE TAUPŌ COORDINATOR

Predator Free Taupō (PFT) continues to support the local community by trapping pests including rats, stoats, and possums, along with providing trap-building workshops at markets, events and schools. PFT was at the Tūrangi town centre market for Conservation Week in September 2022, and Omori Kuratau Market for Labour Weekend the same year; we were so popular they invited us back for their Easter Market this year as well. Our stall at the Greening Taupō Day event had fantastic support from Taupō Forest and Bird and we even ventured to Ohakune to support the newly established Ohakune Predator Free Team at the Carrot Carnival in June.

Unfortunately, the Tokaanu trap-building workshop was cancelled due to poor weather, but we hope to have it rescheduled for summer. The trap-building workshops are always very popular with kids and adults, and it's great to hear from people attending these workshops that more and more people are becoming aware of Predator Free 2050 and are keen to do their bit. Taupō ITM continues to support these workshops by providing trap box timber and nails, usually free of charge.

It has also been fun this year working with Kids Greening Taupō and assisting them with their mahi. This has involved undertaking monitoring with tracking tunnels, discussing pests, and constructing trap boxes with students at schools and with student leaders at Spa Park. Great enthusiasm and eagerness to catch rats has been shown.

Tūrangi trap-building workshop.



Community trapping projects such as Opepe, Kinloch and the Waikato River Corridor have grown into independent groups that are successfully applying for funding for resources and recruiting volunteers. They are constantly expanding their trapping network and catching more pests. Opepe now has 332 traps and has caught 5600 pests; Kinloch has over 200 traps and has trapped 3500 pests. The Waikato River Corridor has 344 traps and has now trapped a whopping 7,000 pests. It is wonderful to see Kinloch now has a dedicated team supporting backyard trapping and is collating a trap library to share with the Kinloch locals. They share knowledge and information on their Facebook page. The Kinloch trap-building workshop held in the July school holidays was as popular as ever; a talented local knitter provided a collection of knitted pest animals for these workshops.

Individuals and small community groups continue to service a collection of traps throughout a network of urban gullies and reserves, alongside walkways and tracks, all helping to protect our local native biodiversity.

Monitoring continues on Mt Tauhara, with tracking tunnel monitoring being undertaken in November 2022 and March 2023. We could not do this important monitoring without the awesome support from Epro Ltd, Arco, Contact Energy, Call of the Wild and Waikato Regional Council who provide staff support and funds for the resources.

Student leaders Pipi and Lizzie help out at Greening Taupō Day.



Footprint monitoring, chew cards, and trail camera footage were collected over five days during each monitoring session. Lots of pesty activity was identified on the maunga; learning and time were required to read the prints and chew marks. The benefits of trail cameras are evident. During the November 2022 monitoring period, in addition to a collection of mice, rats hedgehogs and possum prints and chews, cat prints were picked up and captured on the trail cameras at numerous locations over the maunga, along with footage of deer and pigs. No cats were picked up during the March monitoring, but the first mustelid print was identified. Pest monitoring will continue.

Predator Free Taupō continues to be a part of discussions involving the East Taupō large-scale pest control collective. A Draft Pest Management



Pilot Plan was presented to the collective by Cam Speedy. This winter, the plan is for monitoring to occur in the Significant Natural Area (SNA) Pueto area, as well as some ground control on those lands that already have a pest control programme underway (Wairakei and Timberlands). Opepe Farm Trust and the Tauhara Land Trust have also expressed interest in this project. It is exciting to see the areas between Opepe and Tauhara are keen to be involved. Still a lot of conversations to be had, but good progress to date.

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

Possum, deer, cat and pig footage on Mt Tauhara trail cameras.



# WILDING CONIFER MANAGEMENT 2021-2023

ALANA DELICH AND NICHOLAS SINGERS  
NICHOLAS SINGERS ECOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

Wilding conifers are large introduced trees which invade natural areas. They are particularly invasive in successional forests and other open habitats such as forest margins, rocky areas, and cliffs. The most common species in the Project Area are radiata pine (*Pinus radiata*), maritime pine (*P. pinaster*) and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*). Lesser common species found and controlled include lodge-pole pine (*P. contorta*) and Bishop pine (*Pinus muricata*). These wilding conifers have spread into the successional forest communities of the Lake Taupō Reserves and Mount Tauhara from neighbouring land or shelterbelts planted on the margins of the reserves. Without control they have the capacity to dominate forest successions to the detriment of many native species. Aesthetically they spoil the appearance of natural areas.

Project Tongariro and Singers Ecological have led the removal of wilding conifers from three large sites in the Taupō District over the 2021–2022 and

2022–2023 financial years, with funding from the MPI community Partnership Projects fund which is part of the NZ wilding conifer control strategy (2015–2030), and the Lotteries Nature and Heritage fund. The three sites are Tauhara Maunga, the Western Taupō Bays, and the Northern Taupō Bays. Works from the 2020–2021 financial year, that were funded by the MPI community-led projects fund, with Waikato Regional Council (WRC) acting as the fund manager, are also included in this report, as these were the initial projects which Project Tongariro built on in the following two years.

The work has been made possible through the commitment to biodiversity restoration made by multiple partners who have endorsed the programme and put their trust in Project Tongariro to undertake the work. Our partners include Māori land trusts: Tauhara Maunga Trust, Rangatira Point Incorporated, Rangatira 8B1, Whakaipō 1D, Waihaha Māori Reservation, Whakarawa Trusts.



Photo of managed wilding conifers (northern C blocks), with significant geothermal vegetation at Tauhara Middle block in foreground.

We also acknowledge the hapū of Te Kapa o te Rangiita, Mōkai, and Ngati Tarakaiahi for their support of the project. We thank the Department of Conservation for enabling this work to occur on public conservation land, and Manulife Forest Management to include funding to treat wilding conifers on land adjacent to the Waikino and Waihaha Scenic Reserves.

This work would not have been possible without the work of our local environmental contracting firms based in Taupō and Tūrangi: ARCO Environmental Contractors Ltd., Marshall Eco Ltd., and Te Waa Logging Ltd. Wilding conifer control is physically demanding work, with large distances travelled usually on foot carrying heavy equipment. We acknowledge the tremendous commitment these contractors have put into protecting and enhancing the local environment.

Project Tongariro has financially managed \$453,500 of funding for wilding conifer management in the 2021/22 to 2022/23 financial years; and Waikato Regional Council financially managed \$408,424 of funding for wilding conifer management in the

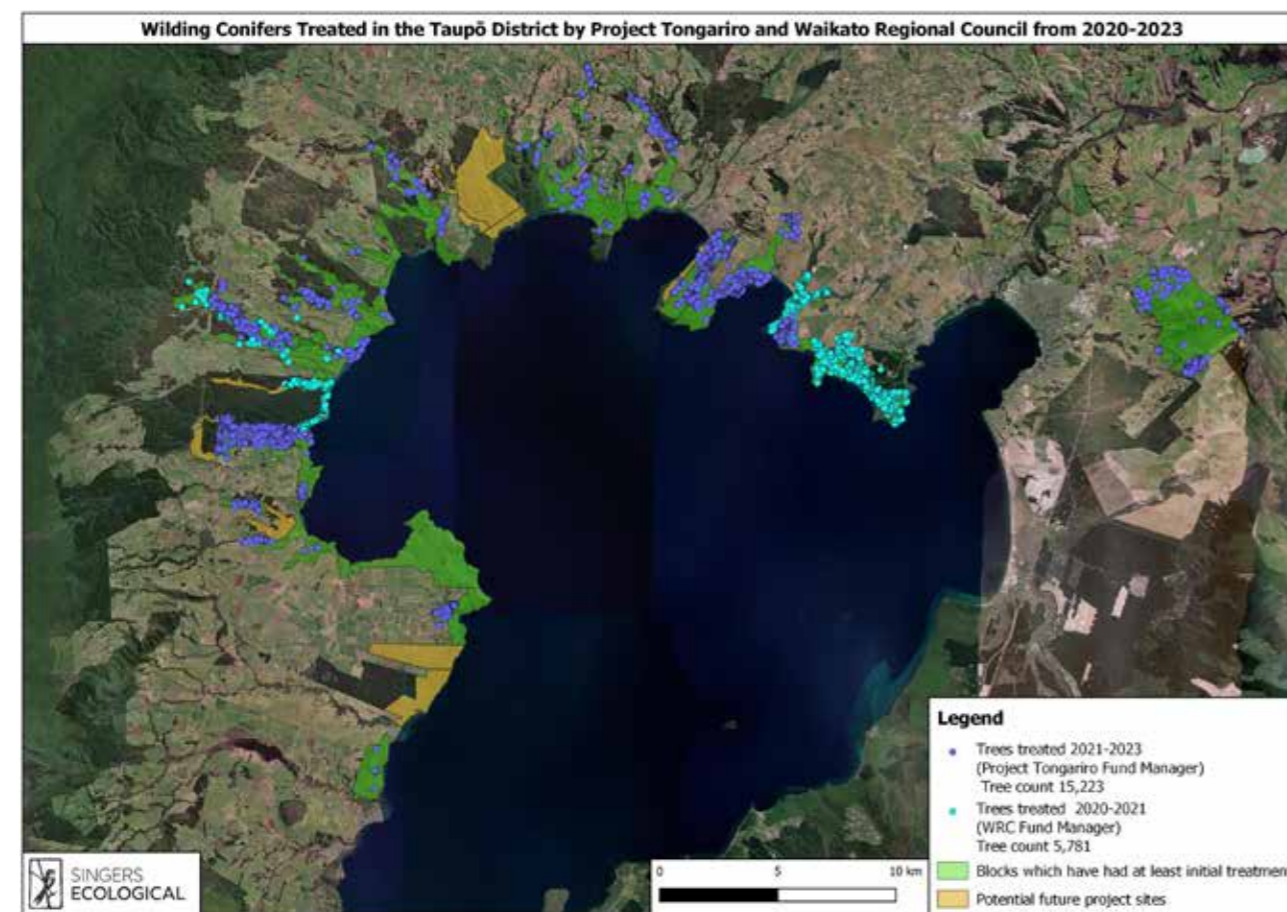
2020/21 financial year. With these funds 21,559 wilding conifers have been managed over 8,518 Ha.

This has made a considerable difference to reducing the scale of the wilding conifer infestations in these areas, meaning that natural regeneration will be able to proceed. Regeneration within these reserves is commonly dominated by dense five finger and other palatable species. This is a direct consequence of sustained animal pest control since the mid 1970's and this forest vegetation cover is crucial for maintaining healthy water with Taupō moana — the primary reason the Lake Taupō reserves were protected. The recent eradication of bovine TB by Ospri TB free in 2017 and cessation of wide-spread possum control is of equal concern. Without this pest control restarting, less benefit will accrue from the eradication of wilding conifers. Whilst this project has been focused on controlling wilding conifers we advocate for state funded animal pest control to restart. Without this there are real and immediate risks posed to these reserves, such as widespread collapse of five finger forest canopies.

This work has also helped preserve sites of important cultural heritage within these reserves, including waahi tapu sites. The scenic values of these Outstanding Natural Landscapes will also improve in the next 10 years as trees break down.

Follow-up treatment will be required to maintain these gains. Follow up works are required on Tauhara Maunga, on cliffs in the Northern and Western Taupō Bays, and to re-work the Douglas fir stand in the Waihaha Block. The estimated cost to complete the next stage in the Northern and Western Taupō Bays is approximately \$80,000; and at Tauhara Maunga is approximately \$40,000 with additional funding required for any abseil control and at Waihaha in the next 10 years.

Representatives of Project Tongariro, Mana Whenua and Singers Ecological examining the progress of the stage one Rangatira Point Wilding Conifer control, and planning for the next stage of the project, November 2021 hui.



Overview of wilding conifers controlled from 2020 to June 2023 in the Taupō District.



Top: Project Tongariro volunteers and Department of Conservation staff helping to restore the Historic Waihohonu Hut. Middle Left: Shirley Potter rescuing pumpkins from the community orchard, near the Oruatua Restoration project, after the Tauranga-Taupo river overflowed. Middle Right: Oruatua community planting day volunteers enjoying a well deserved sausage sizzle! Bottom: Our team at Greening Taupo Day 2023.

## FROM THE TREASURER

PAT TAYLOR - YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

There is a separate full Performance Report for the year ended 30 June 2023 available but it is not included in this bound Annual Report. Just the two main pages of the twenty-one pages are reproduced here. They are the Statements of Performance and Position and are summarised below.

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Statement of Financial Performance records a Surplus for the Year of \$55,069 compared with a Deficit of \$71,766 last year.

The Gross Revenue during the year was \$968,940 (2022 - \$718,227) after adjustment for Unspent Grants and Donations. The analysis of this income is on page 14 of the Performance Report.

Marshalling has been a good source of income over the years. Unfortunately, the Marshalling Income last year was showing as nil in error. The amounts were included with Donations Received and cannot be reallocated in the comparisons, as the 2022 Financial Statements are locked. I apologise to the Volunteer Marshalls who pointed this out to me at the last AGM. Your work is appreciated and the funds were received – just allocated elsewhere.

The Expenditure was \$913,871 (2022 - \$789,993) The major items here are Wages and the direct costs for Purchases of Plants, Materials & Equipment and Subcontractors. All these increased substantially this year due in part to the Envirohub and Wilding Pines Projects. The analysis of this expenditure is on pages 15 & 16 of the Performance Report.

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

The Equity or Accumulated Funds at balance date is recorded as \$128,424 (2022 - \$73,355).

The breakdown of the Assets \$508,758 (2022 - \$529,327) is on page 16 of the Performance Report.

The Liabilities \$380,334 (2022 - \$455,971) are analysed in the Performance Report on page 17 for Creditors and Employment Expenses and page 18 for the Unspent Grants of \$294,798 (2022 - \$302,289). I have not repeated this list here this year.

### SUMMARY

We are very appreciative of all the funding we receive for projects which could not be even

started without it. We rely on the contributions from the Bay Trust and the Len Reynolds Trust for our Administration Costs. There are also continuing commitments from them for future years. We have also received welcome funds from the Thomas George McCarthy Trust for the Waimarino Project. It is exciting that the Trustees see our work as so vital.

It is also pleasing to note that there were good levels of Donations to specific projects and to the organisation in general. The public appreciates the work done by Project Tongariro, they enjoy the community involvement and are willing to contribute financially as well.

Of course, these reports do not reflect the invaluable contributions of time, energy and enthusiasm by our wonderful volunteers. Many volunteers gave many, many hours of their time and we could not carry on this good work without you all. The numbers are reproduced elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Last year, we realised that the Income and Expenditure were rising significantly – almost double since 2019. We expected our Gross Revenue including GST to increase to over \$1,000,000, so we changed Accountants to Angela Giddy Accounting, and Silk Audit Chartered Accountants Ltd were appointed Auditors for this year ended 30 June 2023. Both of these understand us and operate in the central area of the North Island. Their services provide independence, transparency and certainty to the executive and to our funders for future applications.

Project Tongariro is in good hands with a dedicated and enthusiastic team applying for and receiving grants and administering the expenditure of these funds in a timely manner.



Pat Taylor  
Treasurer

# Statement of Financial Performance

## Project Tongariro For the year ended 30 June 2023



'How was it funded?' and 'What did it cost?'

|  | NOTES | 2023           | 2022            |
|--|-------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>                                   |       |                |                 |
| Donations, fundraising and other similar revenue | 1     | 225,437        | 662,520         |
| Revenue from providing goods or services         | 1     | 729,847        | 51,315          |
| Interest, dividends and other investment revenue | 1     | 13,657         | 1,848           |
| Other revenue                                    | 1     | -              | 2,544           |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                             |       | <b>968,940</b> | <b>718,227</b>  |
| <b>Expenses</b>                                  |       |                |                 |
| Costs related to providing goods or service      | 2     | 469,940        | 427,476         |
| Grants and donations made                        | 2     | 7,998          | 4,050           |
| Volunteer and employee related costs             | 2     | 420,977        | 343,660         |
| Other expenses                                   | 2     | 14,957         | 14,807          |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                            |       | <b>913,871</b> | <b>789,993</b>  |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</b>            |       | <b>55,069</b>  | <b>(71,766)</b> |

The accompanying notes form part of this Performance Report.  
The above information must be read subject to the Independent Audit Report.



# Statement of Financial Position

## Project Tongariro As at 30 June 2023



'What the entity owns?' and 'What the entity owes?'

|   | NOTES | 30 JUN 2023    | 30 JUN 2022    |
|---|-------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Assets</b>   |       |                |                |
| <b>Current Assets</b>                                   |       |                |                |
| Bank accounts and cash                                  | 3     | 329,459        | 312,069        |
| Debtors and prepayments                                 | 3     | 33,245         | 59,351         |
| Inventory   | 3     | 7,494          | 9,473          |
| Other Current Assets                                    | 3     | 2,883          | -              |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>                             |       | <b>373,081</b> | <b>380,893</b> |
| <b>Non-Current Assets</b>                               |       |                |                |
| Property, Plant and Equipment                           | 4     | 33,477         | 48,433         |
| Other non-current assets                                | 3     | 102,200        | 100,000        |
| <b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>                         |       | <b>135,677</b> | <b>148,433</b> |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                                     |       | <b>508,758</b> | <b>529,327</b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                                      |       |                |                |
| <b>Current Liabilities</b>                              |       |                |                |
| Creditors and accrued expenses                          | 5     | 34,841         | 106,672        |
| Employee costs payable                                  | 5     | 50,695         | 47,010         |
| Unused grants with conditions                           | 5     | 294,798        | 302,289        |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>                        |       | <b>380,334</b> | <b>455,971</b> |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                                |       | <b>380,334</b> | <b>455,971</b> |
| <b>Total Assets less Total Liabilities (Net Assets)</b> |       | <b>128,424</b> | <b>73,355</b>  |
| <b>Accumulated Funds</b>                                |       |                |                |
| Accumulated surpluses                                   | 6     | 128,424        | 73,355         |
| <b>Total Accumulated Funds</b>                          |       | <b>128,424</b> | <b>73,355</b>  |

The accompanying notes form part of this Performance Report.  
The above information must be read subject to the Independent Audit Report.







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Tongariro Natural History Society Incorporated (trading as Project Tongariro) is a resisted charity. Charities Commission No. CC10701.



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