

Nga Uruora – Kāpiti Project Incorporated

17th Annual Report

2013 – 2014



Committee 2013 - 2014

Convenor

Malcolm Garnham

Secretary

Paul Callister

Treasurer

Malcolm Garnham

Auditor

To be advised

Committee

Blair Badcock, Paul Callister, Ken Fraser, Peter Rankin,
Malcolm Garnham, Peter Kentish, John Lancashire, Pete McLaughlin, Philip de Wilde, Joe
Clarkson

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Finance and Expenditure Sub-Committee

Malcolm Garnham, Paul Callister

Conservation Sub-Committee

Paul Callister, Joe Clarkson, Ken Fraser, Peter Martin, Peter McLaughlin

Appreciation for Support

Our special thanks to the following organisations for their support:

- Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Kāpiti Coast District Council
- The Paekakariki Community Board
- New Zealand Walking Access Commission
- KiwiRail
- Department of Conservation

During the past year many individuals have helped us doing field work, office work and work in many other ways. All this help is greatly appreciated. It is difficult to provide a list of all helpers, but we would like to thank the following:

- Tim Park, Jo Fagan & Mike Urlich, Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Rob Cross, Kāpiti Coast District Council for advice and support
- Lawrence Silas and Dan Green, Kāpiti Coast District Council for support of our field work
- Pukerua Bay Schools staff, parents and students
- Jenni Borren for preparing the accounts and general advice
- Michael Ayre – for auditing our accounts.
- Rob Stone, Department of Conservation.
- Craig Nicholson from the New Zealand Transport Agency

Our pest control team continued to keep rats, stoats, weasels and possums under control. We would like to than Sue Boyde, Jim Baltaxe, Paul Callister, Malcolm Garnham, Bill Mansfield, Peter Martin, and Pete McLaughlin.

Paul Callister, Vicky Griffin, Gay Hay, and Peter Martin continued to grow plants at Pukerua Bay Nursery or in home gardens.

We would like to thank the regular Tuesday working bee team particularly Peter Kentish, Ken Fraser, Paul Callister, Ian Cairns, Grant Lees, Blair Badcock, Steve Mann, Declan Evans and Michael Stace.

We are grateful to Ken Fraser for the many hours he has put in controlling cape ivy, blackberry and other weeds.

Other volunteers included Maria Lute, Ted Coats, and Pamela Meekings-Stewart. We are also grateful for the on-going support of Carol Reihana of Ngāti Haumia.

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1. Introduction to Nga Uruora- Kāpiti Project Inc.

Nga Uruora Kāpiti Project Inc. was established in 1997 by Fergus Wheeler and the Paekākāriki community to halt and reverse the decline in coastal forest on the Kāpiti – Porirua coast. Our vision is to link the conservation successes on Kāpiti and Mana Islands to the mainland coast, to create a ribbon of native forest to bring back the native birds that used to sing in our trees. Our status as a community group allows us to actively initiate conservation on both public and private land. We believe there is huge potential for community involvement in, and appreciation of, conservation.

NUKP's areas

From south to north we have worked on seven different areas:

- The escarpment from Muri Station to Paekākāriki overbridge Betty Perkins Reserve (above the Paekākāriki Hill Road)
- A.T. Clarke Reserve (forest below the hairpin on Paekākāriki Hill Road)
- Sanderson's Reserve (opposite Fisherman's Table)
- Ames Street Reserve

Our flagship project is the escarpment. It consists of all the steep ground between SH1 and the farmland at the top of the escarpment, and it stretches from the north end of Pukerua Bay to Paekākāriki overbridge. In the centre of the escarpment, Bob's Track gives access to the Ecosite which is a large area of remnant native bush. Alongside we have areas which have been planted and irrigated.

2. Convenor's Report 2014

This year has been busy for a core group who have bedded down the significant changes of the previous year and still kept an eye on the main task of getting stuff done on the escarpment.

We are increasingly focused on some core activities this is in part to lighten the administrative load of office bearers but more to enable us to focus resources on key restoration and conservation activities.

As we have previously indicated there is a lesser focus on “trees in the ground” and more on activities such as pest control and collaboration with the wider conservation movement on the Kāpiti Coast. In particular we have close relationships with Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park and Guardians of Whareroa Farm. We also have a close working relationship with the Wellington Te Araroa Trust.

Following on from the significant changes we have partially gone through a planning process to identify how to best use our resources in the medium and long term. Another change of focus is that, for the future, NUKP's role may be more of advocacy and purchaser of conservation/restoration services rather than the doer. This is being driven by both the small resource of volunteers and also the scale of the escarpment (and potentially Perkins Farm), the nature of the area and the complex ownership/management.

We would like to acknowledge the huge amount of work done by Paul Callister in planting, planning, and advocacy not to mention a lot of administrative work connected with the keeping the wheels on.

The big opportunity on the horizon is Perkins Farm which makes a logical continuation to the escarpment and the vision of returning the birdsong. To take this on will require a truly collaborative effort by all the groups involved.

Thank you to all those that have contributed over the year whether on the committee, planting, setting traps, potting up or one of the many other jobs that are needed.

Malcolm Garnham

3. Planting and nurseries

Planting

In the 2014 winter planting season, Nga Uruora put in nearly 3,000 trees. Alongside the stream at the start of the Te Araroa track, volunteers planted over 1,200 trees, flaxes and other native plants. Most of the flaxes were donated by Queen Elizabeth Park nursery.

With the assistance of Lawrence Silas and Dan Green from the Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC), tree lucerne has also been removed and an extensive area of blackberry controlled along the stream. On a perfect winter's day in June, we held a successful planting at the lookout on Te Araroa's escarpment trail. This was a combined Te Araroa Trust and Nga Uruora working bee. We are grateful to the Greater Wellington Regional Council who assisted with transporting the plants to the site. We are also grateful to Hamish Smith for allowing access through his farm to bring in plants and planters. On the day we put in over 750 plants, quite a feat given the steep terrain and rocky soils. In late June we transported over 700 plants and carpet squares across the main trunk line to the old quarry site. We are grateful to KiwiRail for managing the crossing at no charge to Nga Uruora. These plants were put in by volunteers, assisted by KCDC workers.

For a variety of reasons, this will be our last major planting on the escarpment. However, we have made much progress over the last decade. We have completed the planting of the "Maginot Line" at the north end of the escarpment. This is designed to form a barrier to weeds advancing from the Paekakariki Hill Road and other surrounding areas.

This season we also completed planting along the complete stretch of Te Araroa track from the State Highway 1 road bridge through to the quarry. As the plantings mature they will also greatly assist in control of weeds including reducing maintenance of the track. In addition, over the last two seasons we planted a significant part of the flat land in the quarry. Finally, we have planted along some key parts of the Te Araroa track beyond the quarry and this will also have some impact on weeds.

In our plantings we have endeavoured to use a diverse range of locally sourced pioneer plants. In the last couple of seasons we have added a small number of secondary species and/or some plants that are rare in our area. This includes matai, northern rata, totara, tawa, milk tree, putaputaweta and pigeonwood. The northern rata were donated by Project Crimson. While a key aim of the planting is weed control, we are also adding habitat for a wide range of native animals, in particular birds. As an alternative to planting out stock raised in nurseries, this year we began experiments in direct seeding of plants. This experimentation will continue next year.

Nurseries

In the 2013/2014 growing season, the Pukerua Bay nursery produced over 3,000 plants. Most of these plants were grown from seed but some seedlings were brought in from QE Park nursery. While most plants were destined for the escarpment, Nga Uruora donated nearly 300 plants to Whareroa Farm Reserve. We also donated 100 spare plants to KCDC to distribute to other restoration groups.

It has been decided to cease growing plants at the Pukerua Bay nursery. However, given that some seedlings were already growing, a small number of plants will be produced at the Pukerua Bay nursery over the 2014/2015 growing season. New nursery bays at Queen Elizabeth Park were completed in June. The Greater Wellington Regional Council Take Care Fund financed the building. Given our change in focus, in the medium term we will allow other restoration groups to use this space.

Our nursery production has relied on a very small group of dedicated volunteers. We are especially grateful to the support of teachers and students at Pukerua Bay School. Thanks again to the GWRC Take Care Fund which allowed us to purchase potting mix.

4. Weed control

A major infestation of climbing asparagus has developed in the bush between the Hill Road and SH1 south of the old BP service station. Outliers have been discovered even south of the depot. This year there has been no money to control this infestation, but money is earmarked for control operations starting in spring 2014.

German Ivy (GI) was sprayed in open areas from the overbridge to Car Wreck Gully in spring 2013, and GI vines were pulled out by the roots as far as possible in bushy areas. A very small patch was discovered in the lower part of the quarry. GI was also controlled in AT Clark Gully up to the hairpin, along the sides of the gully and in the open areas next to the Hill Road. Our "Maginot Line" bush south of the depot has largely succeeded in stopping the spread of GI further south. In spring 2014 there are fewer vines in the bush than previous years which is a hopeful sign. However GI was still flowering profusely in open areas especially between the overbridge and the depot. It seems that GI is still spreading south in open areas next the railway. We should continue to strengthen the "Maginot Line" in 2014-15. No control was done further south on the escarpment.

During the year Cape Ivy (CI) was sprayed several times in the quarry area, above and below the track, and alongside Car Wreck Gully. The long term intention is to eradicate it from the quarry. However regrowth is occurring in most places. CI needs to be pulled out by the roots when it grows inside native bush, and in the open it is best to spray. But CI is often buried by vigorous growth of weeds in spring, especially fennel. So fennel was cut several times with the scrub-bar to expose CI. In the coming season CI will require regular attention. No control of CI was done at the southern end of the escarpment.

No control of English Ivy was attempted during the year. The recommended method of control is to scrub-bar early in the season, then spray the tender new leaves once they are big enough. We are trialling this method on a site above the stream.

Tradescantia was sprayed in the quarry, AT Clark gully and along the sides of the Hill Road, and around the depot and the overbridge. These areas all need more attention in the coming season. It is hard to eradicate tradescantia although it may be possible in the quarry. Many thanks to KCDC for paying for weed control in AT Clark gully.

Blackberry was cut over with the scrub-bar alongside Car Wreck Gully and near the overbridge. The regrowth was then sprayed. Some regrowth is still coming through in spring 2014, so spraying will be resumed as soon as plants are big enough.

Some boxthorn bushes showing signs of life were cut and "vigilanteed" between the overbridge and the quarry. No control of periwinkle was attempted this year.

We are grateful to GWRC for supporting a sweep of the escarpment for boneseed and other woody weeds. KCDC has started controlling the huge pampas infestation at Ames Street Reserve which will help to reduce the spread of pampas.

5. Pest control

This year has seen a considerable increase in pest control over the area from Paekakariki overbridge to the Eco site. Fifty DoC 200 Traps (to target stoats, weasels and rats) were purchased with the help of Greater Wellington Regional Council. These were placed along the new Te Araroa track.

New trap runs that have been set up include:

1. The quarry area
2. From the quarry to the lookout near Smith Farm.
3. The Loop track walk.

We have four new volunteers to look after these new runs, including bait stations and traps at the Eco site. All up, we have some form of pest control at:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Carrads Farm | 6. Paekakariki Hill Rd |
| 2. Pukerua Bay | 7. Ames St Reserve |
| 3. Eco Site | 8. Sanderson Reserve |
| 4. AT Clarks Gully , | 9. From Paekakariki overbridge |
| 5. Betty Perkins Reserve | to the Te Araroa |

A DOC Community Pest Seminar was held in Paraparaumu. This was well attended by Nga Uruora and was a great help in advancing our knowledge of pest control.

We also held our own meeting to talk through ideas and strategies. Outcomes of this meeting were to:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Attract more volunteers | 3. Carry out maintenance of traps |
| 2. Extend our pest control area [this will happen as the Te Araroa Track continues] | 4. Meet with other pest groups |
| | 5. Create spreadsheets tracking pest numbers caught and bait used |

In summary, a key point to note is that there is a whole bunch of us out there catching pests so big thank you to all the volunteers who are making this happen.

6. Tuesday working bee

This year we only held one weekend working bee. This was the combined Te Araroa and Nga Uruora planting day.

Instead Nga Uruora runs working bees every Tuesday. Throughout the year a group of keen volunteers have carried out a range of activities including track maintenance, planting and weed control. The volunteers have been greatly assisted by a scheme where KCDC supports the work of a range of restoration groups along the Kapiti Coast.

7. Tracks

In recent years, Nga Uruora has built two tracks. These are Bob's Track up to the ecosite and the Kohekohe Loop Track. In the last year, the Tuesday working bee has undertaken maintenance work on both these tracks. This includes keeping weeds off the track and

undertaking repairs.

8. 'Grow Pāekakariki

Over the year members of the committee have maintained contact with Grow Paekakariki – the loose coalition of groups and individuals interested in bring much of the former Perkins Farm into public ownership. NZTA have taken ownership of the land, signed a contract with a consortium to build and operate the Transmission Gully motorway, and turned the first sods. Precisely how much of the land will be required for the motorway, what a reasonable value for the remainder would be, and what process NZTA will have to use to dispose of the unwanted areas remains unclear, but it seems possible that no disposal will occur for a few years and that NZTA's preference would be to sell all of the land in a single transaction.

KCDC remain interested but their priorities and available funds are uncertain. Other organisations such as QEII National Trust have expressed interest but have not yet assembled the necessary funds.

9. Promotion and membership

We have a recorded support base of 205 supporters who receive our newsletter. We have a loyal supporter base who also pay subscriptions and make donations which we are very grateful for. We are looking to invest this money in specific projects or items so that our supporters know where their money goes. In 2013/14 these funds were used to top up Greater Wellington funding for the purchase of 40 DoC 200 traps.

Paul Callister and Maria Lute have kept promotional activity going through:

- The Nga Uruora website and newsletter
- Facebook
- Twitter – find us at [@NgaUruora1.](#)

More recently Peter Kentish has taken over management of subscriptions.

For the future we need to seek wider engagement, for example from Pukerua Bay and surrounding areas, to regain some depth in the active supporter base. To this end we are starting to engage with the Pukerua Bay Residents Association

10. Awards

In October 2013, Nga Uruora won the Wellington Airport and Wellington Community Trust regional community award in the category Heritage and Environment. This followed on from being the Kapiti winner in this category as well as winning the overall Kapiti supreme award. The award not only recognised the many years of hard work by our volunteers but also came with a total prize of \$3,000.

We were encouraged to enter this award by the late Rosemary Barrington. Shortly before her untimely passing, Rosemary also donated a seat on our Kohekohe Loop track. In recognition of her contribution to Nga Uruora this has now become a memorial seat.

11. Financial report

At the time of preparing this report, financials have not been finalised for the 2013/2014 year. These are with the accountant but could not be completed and audited in time for the AGM. We acknowledge that there is a requirement to have audited accounts prepared and this will be completed in the next month and made available.

In the 2013/2014 financial year there were significant changes in the make-up, revenue and costs of NUKP with the contracting component being separated from NUKP and forming a

stand-alone entity (NUCC Ltd). After the transition of all commercial work to NUCC the only income to NUKP are subscriptions, donations and some grant revenue. This makes any meaningful comparison with preceding years problematic.

Going forward the financials will be simple to manage - we will discontinue the use of MYOB and deregister for GST. We are seeking someone to take on the role of Treasurer as this is currently being undertaken by the Convenor. Since ceasing to operate the contracting business, all expenditure more than \$100 has required full committee approval and all payments require two signatories (Treasurer and Secretary).

As at the 19th October 2014 the financial position of NUKP is shown below.

Current bank account balances		Comments
As at 19/10/2014		
Current	\$1,472.70	
Take Care Fund	\$ -	This account was for funding provided by GWRC specifically for plant nurseries. It was used over the year for potting mix and various nursery incidentals. There was a requirement that the GW funds are all spent by 1 July of the year they are provided for. This was the last year the fund was available.
Online Saver	\$22,953.26	
Term deposit	\$41,706.64	This is funds from the separation of NUCC from NUKP was placed on term deposit for three years.
TOTAL	\$64,659.90	