

# **Nga Uruora – Kāpiti Project Incorporated 19th Annual Report 2015 – 2016**



## **Committee 2015 - 2016**

### **Convenor**

Malcolm Garnham

### **Secretary**

Andy McKay

### **Treasurer**

Ian Cairns/Steve Mann

### **Auditor**

Michael Ayre

### **Committee**

Ken Fraser, Malcolm Garnham, Peter Kentish, Pete McLaughlin, Andy MacKay and Ian Cairns (Ian resigned during the year and Steve Mann joined the committee and took over the Treasurer role)

## 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. The 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.

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 the 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.

## Convenor's Report 2016

2015 – 2016 was another year of change as the new Te Araroa track became integrated into our Nga Uruora patch. We had a presence at the opening of the track in St Peters Hall, Paekākāriki, on 9 April 2016, and an opportunity to acknowledge and cement relationships with wider conservation groups on the Kāpiti Coast. Since opening, the Te Araroa Trust<sup>1</sup> estimates some 15,000 people have walked the track, and thus potentially seen the signage on the track that explains Nga Uruora's conservation work at the Paekakariki end.

As a committee we have continued to operate in as efficient a manner as possible by focusing on core activities to lighten the administrative load of office bearers. This has enabled us to focus resources on key restoration and conservation activities, namely to:

- focus less on “trees in the ground” and more on pest control
- advance collaboration with the wider conservation movement on the Coast
- continue a three year programme of contracted weed control, recognising that this is a key activity that cannot readily be undertaken by volunteers.

During the year Ian Cairns resigned from the committee and the role of Treasurer. Ian has been in this role for two years and has been a valued member of the committee over this time.

The last AGM passed a resolution on the long term future of NUKP, giving the incoming committee a mandate to look at opportunities for greater cooperation with, and administrative support from, other like-minded organisations. We have progressed discussions with the chairs of Friends of the Park and Whareroa Guardians and developed a concept for an entity with the working title of “Biodiversity Kāpiti”. This is currently under discussion with the many interest groups and may, in the fullness of time, evolve to something workable.

### Appreciation for support

During the past year many organisations and individuals have helped us with field work, office work and many other activities that make Nga Uruora work. All this help is greatly appreciated. It is difficult to provide a list of everyone, but we would like to thank the following:

- Rob Cross, Kāpiti Coast District Council for advice and support

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Wilderness magazine August 2016 – Above the Madding Crowd, Peter Laurenson.

- The team at Greater Wellington Regional Council for advice and support
- Lawrence Silas, Dan Green and Stefan Hope from Kāpiti Coast District Council for supporting our field work
- The team behind the Kāpiti Biodiversity project - in particular Glenda Robb, the project team leaders and Paul Callister who has managed the largest component - the pest control project
- Queen Elizabeth II National Trust for their support and engagement over the year

Our pest control team continued to keep rats, stoats, weasels and possums under control. We would like to thank Tony and Helen Griffiths, Sue Boyd, Jim Baltaxe, Paul Callister and Pete McLaughlin.

Paul Callister, Vicky Griffin and Gay Hay continued to grow plants at Pukerua Bay Nursery, Queen Elizabeth Park nursery or in their home gardens.

We would like to thank the regular Tuesday working bee team including Peter Kentish, Ken Fraser, Paul Callister, Ian Cairns, Steve Mann and Michael Stace and we are grateful to Ken Fraser for the many hours he has put into controlling cape ivy, blackberry and other weeds.

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.

## Planting and nurseries

### Planting

Now that the Pukerua Bay end of the Te Araroa trail has been opened it gives Ngā Uruora an opportunity to begin weed control and planting in this area. A small community planting was carried on Pamela Meeking-Stewart's farm. There is a serious amount of gorse and cape ivy beside the trail and this needs to be controlled before planting can begin. Work will start this year on preparing the plantings sites and we will be ready for community planting days in the next planting season (Winter 2017). We are grateful for the help given by Rebecca Cray in preparing a planting plan.

### Weed control

Nga Uruora has a major commitment to controlling weeds and this has been our main use of funds during the 2015 financial year. To help make our work more efficient and effective, we agreed to spend \$5,000 annually for three years on weed plant control on the escarpment. During the year this work included climbing asparagus, English ivy, pampas and boneseed control and has been undertaken by Nga Uruora Contracting Ltd<sup>2</sup> (NUCC) under a contract, reviewed annually. In addition Nga Uruora agreed to spend \$5000 on weeding and planting at the Pukerua Bay end of the escarpment. Other activities were controlling Cape Ivy at the quarry and assisting with the school clean up.

### Pest control

Pest control activities are now largely under the management of the Biodiversity project and the guidance of Paul Callister and Pete McLaughlin and includes collaboration with Queen Elizabeth Park and Whareroa Farm. Recent activities have included:

- Testing the Trap.nz app for recording pest kills
- Trialing Goodnature traps.

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<sup>2</sup> An unrelated business founded by members of Nga Uruora Kapiti Project Inc.

- Use of field cameras placed in various areas of Paekakariki Escarpment to record photos and videos in a time lapse form for surveillance of trap and bait stations.
- Organising and attending various works shops e.g. a pest workshop about the use of brodifacoum; results of Ecogecko's lizard surveys and planning a lizard protection trial on the escarpment
- Tracking Tunnel Monitoring at three sites - Paekakariki North Escarpment, the Eco Site north of Pukerua Bay and Whareroa.
- Conducting a remote trap sensing trial
- Planning for a trial of wasp control method this coming summer

### Working bees

Working bees are held every Tuesday, coordinated by Peter Kentish. Throughout the year a small group of keen volunteers carried out a range of activities including track maintenance, planting and weed control. Our work has been greatly supported by a scheme where the KCDC provides staff to assist us. Specifically we:

- continued to release plantings undertaken over the last couple of winters.
- maintained the Kohekohe Loop Track.
- watered plantings thanks to our large water tanks onsite.

### Perkins Farm/Middle Run

There have been ongoing discussions and debates on options for Perkins Farm with the idea of bringing it into the conservation/restoration estate. There is considerable support in principle but a proposal that will engage all parties has yet to be developed.

### Ministry for the Environment Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project

This is a significant project for the region and provides strong support for key areas such as pest control. It will provide a platform for the future development of biodiversity and conservation programmes on the Kāpiti Coast. The project is now heading into the final of three years funding and will need to focus on having a cohesive and fundable plan and building on the great work done by the current teams.

### Promotion and membership

Our recent membership and subscription drive netted just over \$1,000 – some of which is from new members and some from long-standing supporters. We hope to increase membership with the opening of the Te Araroa trail and a spike in interest from locals at the Pukerua Bay end of the track in becoming involved in planting activities.

### Kapiti Accord

Considerable discussion and effort put into this initiative and whether or not an accord evolves remains to be seen. It will provide a forum, with KCDC support, for wider engagement between all with an interest in restoration across the region.

### Financial report

The 2015-16 accounts are provided and will go to the usual auditor, once we obtain the necessary paperwork. We note that there is no requirement for audit by the Charities Commission but an audit is a requirement under Nga Uruora's rules.

NUKP is in a stable position with equity of \$63,888.19 at the close of the 2016 financial year. This is down from \$65,927.22 at end of the previous financial year. NUKP spent \$1938.50 more than income for the year (refer to Treasurers report for full details).