



ASB Community Trust

Te Kaitiaki Putea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau

supported by **ASB**



COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST CHARITABLE TRUST (April 2015)

Winter has finally arrived, and with it, another face of the forest...wet, cool and tracks turning to mud. However, the approach to the Forest from Amelin Drive now has a well-made walking track, bordered by a rather impressive dog-proof fence, all courtesy of the neighbouring developer, Mr Barry Reiher. In fact, I have been impressed enough by the dog-proof fence that I would like the Trust to consider approaching the WDC to do the same at the large carpark and open space at the Whau Valley Dam. People regularly take their dogs up there for a walk. Keeping dogs out of the forest needs a practical approach, as well as signage and good will.

I had a meeting recently with DOC staff, following our kiwi translocation proposal. It would seem that we have done enough for the Department to give a tentative go-ahead for us to release kiwi back into Pukenui Forest. This is the result of a lot of hard work and fundraising by all involved, so well done everyone. However, there is still more work to be done before it finally happens.

Our new trapper, Luke Robertson, is training to be a kiwi handler, along with two other volunteers. I gather on-going monitoring of kiwi after release is vital, to show that birds are well and have settled in. This goes for all species that have gone through a release process.

Conservation is an expensive exercise. The Trust has recently made a funding application to the Department of Conservation's Community Conservation Partnership Fund (CCPF). I spent last month working with a professional fundraiser, and, after a number of meetings, including Richard Shepherd of our Ahi Kaa Trustees group, we hope we have done enough to make the first cut in the funding application. Watch this space.

The Trust is a member of the Mangere Stream Catchment Group (the Mangere Stream flows out of Pukenui Forest all the to the Kaipara Harbour), and recently I hosted the Group at the Woods Road entrance and explained all the conservation work being done in the forest by our volunteers to allow taonga species like kokako and robins back to the forest. They expressed their appreciation of the work being done by the Trust. One NRC Councillor commented that we really were putting our mouths (and boots) where our hearts were. The good news is that the Mangere Stream is now much cleaner and healthier due to the work of all the landowners along the catchment.

Gerry Brackenbury

Community Relations/Advocacy (Part-time)