



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

This week, the North Island Kiwi Hui is being held at One Tree Point and is a great opportunity for local conservationists in general, and kiwi aficionados in particular, to attend the three day conference. Day One is a field trip to either Bream Head or Marunui Conservation area, south of the Brynderwyns, to see some practical, hands-on kiwi management. I will be joining the latter group as, hopefully, next year we will be re-introducing kiwi to our own Pukenui Forest.

On Thursday and Friday, we see a number of interesting topics including the latest in pest control, dog advocacy, genetics, fundraising, kiwi crèches and the use of wild kiwi for advocacy. Something for everyone.

Further to which, the dog-proof fence at the subdivision along Three Mile Bush Road is now complete and I have put up official "No Dog" signs on the two, self-closing gates. While doing this, I thought it might be time to consider approaching the Whangarei District Council to request that the remainder of the paper road be "stopped". Watch this space.

Margaret and I have sent letters to both the Northland Regional Council, providing feed-back to their Long Term Plan, and to the Whangarei District Council, thanking them for their financial support over the past twelve months.

The Pukenui Forest Trust invested time and resources to build a strong funding application to DOC's Community Conservation Partnership Fund, and we assume that we will know the results in the not too distant future...metaphysical fingers crossed!

I visited Hurupaki School (which is close to the forest) recently and had a quick talk to the teacher, Shane Nicholas and his class. I gave them a bunch of Northern Rata seeds. They will grow them on over the next couple of years in the school shade house. Shane is keen to get his class into Pukenui Forest to learn all about it and check out our weta box. They plan to build one themselves.

The pupils and the seedlings are our future, both needing to grow and prosper for a better and more sustainable New Zealand.

Finally, Margaret and I will be getting our heads together soon to prepare our six monthly report to Foundation North (ASB Community Trust). Without them, we would not have achieved the many things that we have.

Gerry Brackenbury

Community Relations/Advocacy (Part-time)