



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

The past month has been fairly quiet, after the excitement of last month's white morepork discovery and the media follow up.

The trappers continue to trap, and I continue to yap.

Max Hutchings also continues to be busy with organising upgrades of our maps, and recently he attended a meeting organised by DOC for those interested in the latest technology for accurately collecting trapping data. He hopes to give the Trust an overview on how it all works and what costs may be involved.

Further to which, the Whangarei Museum & Heritage Park (whose grounds and bush I help to look after) has invested in a GoodNature self-setting possum trap. This is the current state-of-the-art for pest control, and over the next few years can only get better (and cheaper). Possums are coming over from Pukenui Forest to the Museum grounds and damaging the vegetation so the GoodNature trap will come in very useful. Another supporter of both the Museum and our Trust is Keith Thompson, Manager of Environmental Northland, and Keith has also generously sponsored another GoodNature self-setting trap. Both will now deal to possums moving around the Museum, Barge Park and Pukenui Forest areas.

Re our proposed application for the release of kiwi into Pukenui, it seems that first up I/we need to produce a dog management plan before we can go any further. Clea Gardiner has given me a possible template to follow, plus has recommended an ex DOC person who may help us put it all together.

Plans are progressing for the next A&P Show at Barge Park. This will be our third attendance, and they have proved to be very valuable in enhancing our profile with the public. We will once again be in the same tent as Landcare Trust, and we thank them again for covering our costs.

Finally, on the subject of caring for the land, I would like to commend Forest and Bird advocate, Dean Baigent-Mercer from the Far North. Dean gave an excellent interview on National Radio recently, highlighting the collapse of our native forests due to possum browse. It would seem conservationists are on our own when it comes to saving our forests...no help is on its way. If you read this and want to help, join an organisation and make a difference.

Gerry Brackenbury

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