

# Report from the Waikato Biodiversity Forum held on Monday, 30 November 2009 at Matamata

## Purpose

The purpose of this Forum was to examine issues and develop recommendations for the Kaimai Mamaku Campaign.

The Forum was an opportunity to:

- have fun and share ideas with others who undertake conservation related work
- establish ongoing partnerships for biodiversity restoration
- highlight the projects of community groups in the area
- visit the Wairere Falls track and observe issues with the ecological health of the forest
- contribute to developing recommendations for improving the ecological integrity of the Kaimai Mamaku catchments.

## Introduction to the Forum day

The Forum began at 9.30am after 52 attendees had time to settle in with a cup of tea and catch up with familiar faces and meet new people. The facilitator Helen Ritchie handed over to Butch Tuhakaraina and local tangata whenua Tom Smith and Waaka Gage who warmly welcomed us. Robin Black responded on behalf of the Forum. Butch talked about his childhood growing up in the area including floating down the streams and the Waihou River on old logs and catching eels in the river to give to hapu. He recalled scampering over the Kaimais up past the Wairere Falls to the other side where it is rugged and steep. Tom Smith spoke of the importance of taking care of the environment. He described the Maori whakapapa of the area with the people of both side of the mountain range being of the same tribe.

The following speakers then set the scene further for the day. Peter Madison from Forest and Bird detailed the state of the biodiversity in the area. The birds on the edge include rifleman,

kakariki – red and yellow crowned, blue duck, kokako, kiwi and falcon. Declining birds include whitehead, long-tailed cuckoo, kaka, tomtit, bellbird, kereru and robin. Long-tailed and short-tailed are in the area as are green gecko, forest gecko and striped skink and the Hochstetter's frog. The aim of Forest and Birds campaign in the area is to restore the area linking Whakamarama with Wairere or Te Tuhi from Waihou in the west to Tauranga Harbour in the east. Another aim of the campaign is to establish a buffer zone with enhanced biodiversity and improved soil and water conservation in the land surrounding the Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park. Potential partners in this campaign include landowners, iwi, the Department of Conservation (DOC), Environment Waikato, Environment Bay of Plenty, Landcare Research, NZ Landcare Trust, Federated Farmers, Forest and Bird and Friends of Whakamarama. Hotspots in the area include Aongatete (Restoration Trust), Mt Te Aroha Wairongomai, Otanewainuku, Opuaki and Mangorewa and there will be other sites to establish. Possible techniques for improvement include planting indigenous trees for soil conservation, setting aside forest for carbon credits, planting native timber crops, controlling pests and monitoring native species.

Willie Shaw from Wildland Consultants detailed modifications to the area such as mining grazing and logging and highlighted the significant biodiversity values such as the northern limits for silver beech, kamahi and pink pine and the southern limits for kauri forest on eastern side of North Island. The area is floristically the richest upland in Waikato with at least 467 indigenous taxa. There are good upland stream habitats containing indigenous fish. The management priorities include pest control, stock encroachment, possums, preventing further clearance, fire management and ongoing monitoring (terrestrial and aquatic). There is intensive pest management occurring in Opuaki, Otanewainuku and Aongatete.

Juie Beaufill from Environment Waikato and Erana Stevens from DOC presented information about the partnership in integrated catchment management that is taking place on the Coromandel Peninsula. The partners include Environment Waikato, DOC, Thames-Coromandel District Council and Hauraki Maori Trust Board and communities. Key work areas include controlling animal pests especially possums and feral goats, improving the health of the forest to increase the stability of the catchment and river system, reducing erosion and sedimentation and debris and preventing blockages of channels and bridges and run off in small events. The work includes hillslope and streambank planting, engineering works, planning controls, physical works, harbour and catchment planning. The agencies in the partnership focus on the areas they have a predominant interest or expertise in, such as DOC on animal pest control, Thames-Coromandel District Council





on flood protection. There are multi-agency project teams at a staff level and at the higher political level the Coromandel Liaison Subcommittee has representatives from the councils, iwi, forestry and communities. Work is carried out on both Crown and private land. The work has broadened in the last year to include the development of harbour catchment management plans that have a strategic direction and an operational focus. The team has seen the importance of aligning goals which have wider environmental gains and operational benefits, such as pest control. The two key things that have helped achieve the goals are financial resources and a common goal of improving forest health and stabilising the catchment to reduce erosion and runoff.

There have been operational benefits also such as being able to undertake pest control on land adjacent to areas where pest control has been carried out by DOC over a number of years and reinvasion of pests has been a problem from neighbouring untreated land. The challenges of a partnership approach include different organisational cultures, communications and funding. Three key components of a way forward are maintaining partnerships, secure ongoing funding and pursuing opportunities.

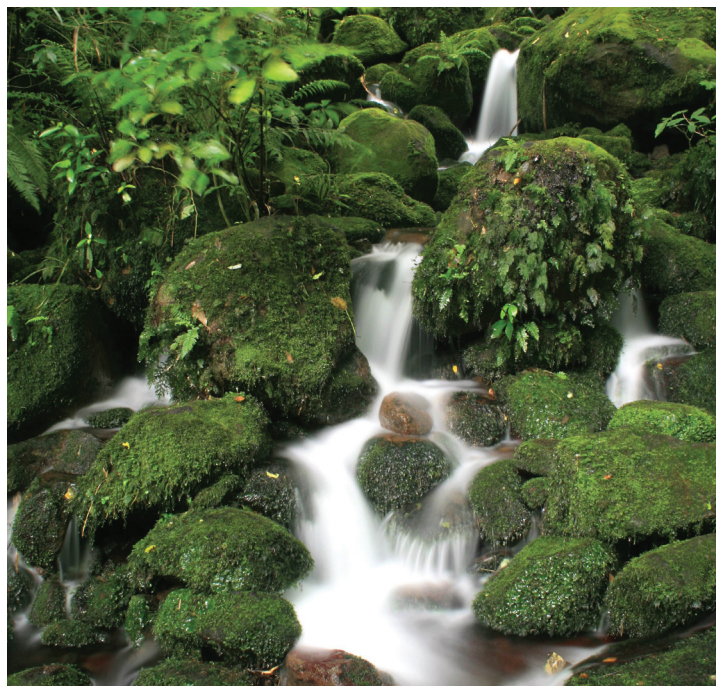
Kate Akers a regional coordinator for the NZ Landcare Trust gave a presentation on the Integrated Catchment Management project that she has been appointed to carry out in the Tauranga Harbour and Waihou River catchments. She will be working in partnership with landowners, agencies, iwi, scientists, industry in a bottom up, NOT a top down approach to promoting the flow of



quality information. The project aims to enhance understanding of Sustainable Land Management and biodiversity enhancement through a Community Catchment Steering Committee, Landcare Groups, workshops and resource materials. The project structure will involve practical action on the ground and run from 2009 – 2012. It is funded by MfE Sustainable Management Fund.

## Field trip

All attendees took part in a field trip up the Wairere Falls track in the Kaimai Mamaku Forest and observed and discussed issues which are affecting the health and integrity of the forest.



## Key outcomes/recommendations

### Successful restoration programmes

- Plan and develop a vision of sustainability with achievable aims and objectives (small steps).
- Gain reference to the project in strategic plans, such as LTCCPs.
- Build working relationships/synergies with different sectors.
- Consultation and communicate with interested parties.
- Develop protocols for monitoring and responding to results.
- Establish sources of funding with stakeholders and buy in for long term funding support.
- Draw upon lessons learnt from other restoration projects.
- Have integrated forest project and divide into geographical areas catchments (or part of) work with communities adjacent to those parts without losing sight of the entire forest and choose sites with potential.
- Develop branding/icon species for awareness.
- Integrate pest control.
- Appoint coordinator to drive project.
- Develop GPS sites and maps.
- Carry out a flora and fauna survey.
- Establish control/non control areas.
- Importance of teamwork commitment vision and leadership.
- Collaborate with others and share expertise.
- Involve neighbours/landowners adjacent to the project.
- Promote/market/publicise to community to encourage community support and involvement, such as why we are



doing it/what we hope to achieve.

- Gain agency/statutory organizations support.
- Have visible results and celebrate successes.
- Gain cooperation between business sectors.
- Have an educative role with a methodology that is effective and practical.
- Know initial limitations with ability to expand.
- Develop PIZZAZ and passion for the project.
- Gain ecological understanding of the area and know how to act.
- Recognise balance of usage vs protection.
- Develop practical work programmes to matched resources.
- Call upon charismatic people to re-motivate.
- Have a Farm Park accessible to public for education.
- Demonstrate best catchment practices.
- Plant timber flora that encourages biodiversity.
- Have a buffer zone around the area because it is not big (wide) enough to sustain all the flora and fauna without infiltration of pests.
- Give rate relief to the farmers who are involved in the project.
- Extend the kaitiaki zone already in Matamata-Piako District Council's plan to other councils.

### **Plant pest control**

- Educate, increase awareness and enforcement of rules pertaining to pest plants on margins and entrance points to the forest.
- Prioritise by serious threats for direct control.
- Remove marginal weeds, such as, privet, woolly nightshade, japanese honeysuckle blackberry wandering dew eleagnus pampas nettle.
- Remove the serious pest plants, such as, old mans beard, climbing spindleberry, prunus contorta, wild kiwifruit Mexican daisy African club moss.

### **Animal pest control**

- Develop a sustainable funding and methodology for pest control and break it down into areas.
- Trap, hunt and bait around urban areas buffer zones.
- Aerial control in inaccessible areas (unlikely to be hunted).
- Prioritise control, such as possums, rodents and mustelids, goats, deer and pigs, feral cats, cattle, exotic birds, wasps.
- Use a variety of methods for sustainable pest control as too big for volunteers only.
- Gain funding from the two regional councils.

### **Coordinating agencies and networking**

- Identify major concerns –communication.
- Identify groups/individuals involved in partnerships.
- Target each of the individual issues.
- Identify the statutory agencies as lead agency and which agencies have certain resources to offer, such as, funding vs time vs expertise.
- Streamline all different ideas and direction.
- Develop a common set of goals defined and agreed upon by everyone.
- Determine and agree on roles and responsibilities.



- Develop clear, achievable and measurable outcomes which are timebound.

### **Community involvement**

- Involve people with drive who are committed passionate leader/s.
- Have practical funded work programme (matched resources).
- Get message out of, for example, How does the project impact on ME?
- Run a Waihou River experience (summit to sea).
- Organise fieldtrips.
- Involve stakeholders (such as, iwi, Fed Farmers, NZ Dairy Assoc, councils). Work with them before going public.
- Present to groups, schools.
- Develop a strategy/plan which includes a communication plan and a funding/financial plan.
- Raise awareness of the project to the public, for example, out to the media.
- Use basic scientific information about the project.
- Identify different projects that are part of the whole and who does it.
- Identify where the community want to work.
- Develop open door access to organisations.

### **Training workshops**

- Design workshop to capture imagination.
- Involve all stakeholders and user group such as schools, hunters, bikers, walkers and 4WD.
- Involve current care groups.
- Identify and involve opponents.
- Find out what community wants/needs in the way of training.
- Identify who is doing what already in the area, such as, DOC bird id.
- Take volunteers/adjacent landowners/iwi to see other successful projects.
- Identify volunteer quality/expertise and then analysis where the gaps are and how these gaps could be filled through training.
- Send members of project to relevant gatherings, workshops and conferences for networking with other volunteers.
- Develop training programmes (funded from grants) in association with other organisations.

### **Financial spin offs/funding sources**

- Develop branding which can affect funding channels and community support.
- Credible spokespeople.
- Connect with national and regional priorities, such as, employment or funding streams.
- Identify corporate and business enterprises-green wash who can be involved.
- Do in manageable chunks, for example, different size packages.
- Keep sponsors involved and informed and acknowledged publicly.

### Biodiversity values of the area

- Mistletoe, dactylantus, bats, stag beetle, butterflies, glowworms snails, slugs giant centipedes, two groups of wetas, geckos, skinks and Hochstetters frogs, short finned eel, birds – including kiwi, kokako, kaka, kereru, whitehead, long tail cuckoo, blue duck, weak, bittern and fernbirds.
- Identify biodiversity of the area with a baseline of numbers and species, such as, blue duck at Mangarewa.
- Thompsons track is a valuable accessible track.
- Identify where rata, orchids and other palatable species occur.
- Publicise kauri die back disease and prevention of the spread.
- Engage community on known biodiversity using maps with the intention of identifying areas of restoration and identifying the specific flora and fauna to restore.
- Identify individual projects such as ‘bring back kokako’, ‘bring back centipedes’, ‘bring back rongoa’.
- Create riparian buffers and ecological corridors to the wetlands.

- Create other buffer zones, for example, extending the kaitiaki zone of Matamata-Piako District Council to other districts.
- Explore economic incentives to fund biodiversity, such as, carbon sequestration.

### Key recommendations

- Develop people network and a database to communicate to interested parties.
- Develop incentives to motivate community involvement.
- Celebrate successes.
- Develop a coordinated interagency approach.
- Have a shared vision and plans that fit with other agencies.

Actions	Who
All the outcomes and recommendations above from the workshops will assist with the Kaimai Mamaku campaign.	Forest and Bird and other agencies such as NZ Landcare Trust.

### Detailed report and the full powerpoint presentations

For a copy of all the detail of the days discussion points and the powerpoint presentations, email Moira Cursey at [m.cursey@xtra.co.nz](mailto:m.cursey@xtra.co.nz) or phone 0800BIODIV (246348).

For those of you who didn't attend the Forum day aspects of the above recommendations and outcomes will be relevant to other projects with which you are working.

