

# 2020 2020

## BIENNIAL REPORT



Ngā Whenua Rāhui

# Te Pūrongo Whakamoe Ngā Tau 2020-2022

THE RESTING YEARS OF 2020-2022



KO TE AMORANGI KI MUA  
E KA MAHANA TE AHI TAPU O RUNGA NGĀ TIHI TAPU O  
PAE MAUNGA  
E TE TIRAMATE HOEHOE A TE WAKA WAIRUA KI TE REINGA O  
RUNGA TE WAKA O TAMARERETI  
TE HUIHUI O MATARIKI KĀPUNIPUNI WAIRUA KOUTOU E TE  
TINI, E TE MANO

E TANGI KAU KO TE MAPU, AUE HA.  
KO TE HĀPAI Ō KI MURI  
HE TAURANGA UTA HE TOKA TŪ MOANA NGĀ AMORANGI  
RANGATIRA KAITIAKI WHENUA, E NGĀ ĀPIHA PAPA ATAWHAI  
E NANAIORE NEI NGĀ MANU TAKI, MANU HĀPAI, MANU  
PŪTAIAO, MANU PUNARAU KŌRERO E TUORA AI TĀTOU E  
TŪHONOHONO AI TĀTOU HAI TAKAWAENGA Ā KAITIAKI I TE  
WHENUA Ā NUKU  
ANEI E WHAI AKE NEI KO NGĀ PŪRONGO KŌRERO Ō NGĀ  
WHENUA RĀHUI MŌ TĒNEKI HUIHUINGA WHAKAMOE TAU.

# Rārangi Take

## CONTENTS



KOMITI AMORANGI	6	CENTRAL	29
TE KAUPAPA – PURPOSE	8	NORTH	30
FROM THE AMORANGI	9	MĀTAURANGA KURA	32
OUR YEARS IN REVIEW	10	TAIAO FUND	
CIRCLES AND CYCLES	12	HONOURING OUR PAST	34
ON THE LAND		THROUGH LIFE CHANGES	
NUKUTERE	16	MŌTEATEA IS MY MAURI	36
WHENUA MĀORI	18	KAIMAHI	38
TE TAKIWĀ O WAIMARIE	20	LOOK AFTER THAT LAND	40
AGREEMENTS	22	WAY MORE THAN	42
TE WAIPOUNAMU	24	SETTING TRAPS	
SOUTH WEST	25	FINANCIAL DATA	44
SOUTH EAST	26	PROTECTED AREAS	46
RĒKOHU/WHAREKAURI	27	SIGNED SINCE 1992	
EAST COAST	28		

***our nature***  
nature has stories

***our people***  
culture is a product  
of the land

***our future***  
people disappear,  
the land remains



# Komiti Amorangi



**AMORANGI ARE MINISTERIALLY APPOINTED IWI MEMBERS WHO PROVIDE OVERSIGHT OF OUR WORK AND ADVISE THE MINISTER OF CONSERVATION ON THE USE OF THE FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY NGĀ WHENUA RĀHUI.**

**TĀ TUMU TE HEUHEU AND KEVIN PRIME ARE OUR LONGEST SERVING AMORANGI, EACH SITTING ON THE NGĀ WHENUA RĀHUI KOMITI SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1991.**



**Tā Tumu Te Heuheu**  
Ngāti Tuwharetoa  
On Est. 1991-Current  
Honorary Member



**Mavis Mullins**  
Te Āti haunui-a-Pāpārangī,  
Rangitāne, Ngāti Ranginui  
2008 - Current



**Paki Nikora**  
Ngai Tūhoe, Ngāti Kahungunu  
2014 - 2021



**Mere George**  
Ngāti Whare, Ngāti Manawa,  
Ngāi Tūhoe, Tuwharetoa, Ngāti  
Porou, Ngāti Hine  
2021 - Current



**Kevin Prime**  
Ngāti Hine  
On Est. 1991-Current  
Honorary Member



**John Paki**  
Ngāti Wai, Ngāti Whātua  
2014 - Current



**Piriniha Prentice**  
Ngāti Hineuru, Rongomaiwahine,  
Ngāti Kahungunu  
2008 - 2020



**Wiki Walker**  
Ngāti Hine, Ngā Puhi  
2022 - Current



# Te Kaupapa Purpose

**TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT REMAINING  
INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY ON PRIVATELY  
OWNED MĀORI LAND THAT REPRESENTS THE  
FULL RANGE OF INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY  
ORIGINALLY PRESENT IN THE LANDSCAPE**

## From the Amorangi

E ngā reo, e ngā mana, e ngā waka, e ngā rau rangatira mā, tēnā rā koutou katoa. Ko tēnei te whakamihi atu ki a koutou katoa kua uru mai ki te pānui i tēnei rīpoata a rua tau mō Ngā Whenua Rāhui. Nā reira, nau mai, haere mai, whakauru mai. Ka mihi rā ki ngā aituā maha kua taka atu ki tua o te ārai. Ki a koutou hoki o Ngati Kahungunu, o tē Tai Rāwhiti, o Tāmaki kua riro e the āwhā o Gabrielle, Haere atu koutou e ngā mate, haere, haere, oti atu.

Anei rā te rīpoata mō Ngā Whenua Rāhui mō ngā tau e rua kua hipa. Ko te tūmanako hoki kia kite ai koutou i ngā nekenekenga o Ngā Whenua Rāhui i nga tau e rua kua pahure, me ngā whaingā mō ngā tau e heke mai nei.

One of the major issues before us relates to the 25-year anniversary of our agreements. Most owners have indicated their willingness to continue. We hear and empathise with iwi who are seeking benefit from their lands that are tied up for 25 years. The hope is that Ngā Whenua Rāhui can assist in achieving this aspiration.

Ngā Whenua Rāhui kawenata are as relevant today as they were 25 years ago. Demand from Māori landowners for new kawenata remains strong. This highlights the success of this Fund and the need for ongoing preservation and protection of the whenua and tikanga Māori.

Although the rationale for kawenata in many cases has definitely shifted, they remain relevant for the outcome. There is greater recognition that a balance in land use is much more conducive to, for example, farming outcomes; and we know that the values of conservation can certainly be leveraged within a farming portfolio.

The conservation and protection of our indigenous biodiversity is more important now than ever before as we face a planet that is increasingly environmentally challenged. Papatūānuku needs replenishment and nourishment. This is what kawenata enables in the modern world. The challenges of environmental and climate change compliance are forcing a shift in mindset and action. Through our traditional and ancient knowledge databases, we understand the interrelatedness of all things. Our desire to care for whenua and ngahere is in our DNA.



## Ngā Whāinga Objectives

<b>Strengthen Our Core Business</b>	The position of indigenous biodiversity in Aotearoa, is improved
<b>Grow Expertise</b>	Provide a framework and the means to train people to better manage indigenous biodiversity
<b>Take Advantage of Emerging Opportunities</b>	Achieve more by working with others than by working on our own
<b>Increase Our Profile and Visibility</b>	Increase understanding of NWR and MKT Funds and our role in the protection of indigenous biodiversity

# Our Years In Review



The past two years held many challenges for Ngā Whenua Rāhui. The ongoing impact of the global pandemic, staff structure changes, review of the Fund's 25 year agreements and managing existing landowner relationships to mention a few.

However, with challenges, comes opportunity. The launch of the much awaited Sentinel-ā-Nuku training programme in August 2020 and the introduction of Te Whakaruruhau, our kaupapa Māori health safety and wellbeing system in December 2020 were two highlights. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to make a major shift in the way we worked. We had to rethink how we engaged with landowners, how to support our contractors to maintain their work and how kaimahi continued their work on the whenua.

A business improvement review we undertook in 2016 to assess the way we were organised and resourced also caused a change in the way we work took some time to implement. The recommendations for structural change were not effected until May 2021. All changes were internal so the impact on landowners and external agencies, was minimal if at all.

Following an 18 month period of the Fund being closed, we reopened it in March 2021. Between 1 March and 31 May, 33 new applications were received. This number of applications by Māori landowners wanting to put a legal protection mechanism over their whenua, was unprecedented. What stood out with these new applications was the level of collaboration between kaitiaki whenua/shareholders and other agencies such as regional councils. We expect to see this level of collaboration between conservation groups to continue and even grow. As the number of new kawenata grows each year, our use of technology also increases. ArcGIS delivers a dashboard space that shows data from across the business and acts as a visual addition to formal reports. Access to the dashboards via a weblink allows Ngā Whenua Rāhui amorangi and kaimahi to access the information in their own time and become familiar with the detail of the business.

Ngā Whenua Rāhui has long worked within an established system that does not consider health safety and wellbeing from within a Māori paradigm. After working through the design of a purpose built health, safety and wellbeing system that responds to the specific needs of Māori kaimahi, Te Whakaruruhau was introduced in December 2020. Designed to shelter and keep safe "our nature, our people, our future", Te Whakaruruhau presents a different way of looking at, and responding to health safety and wellbeing of kaimahi, landowners and Papatūānuku by incorporating hauora Māori determinants into the current system. Four categories and three protocols were added to the existing standards, all consistent with our cultural



framework, Te Tūāpapa Ahurea. As with many plans during this time, COVID-19 restrictions forced us to postpone the kaimahi training and implementation to a later time.

The Sentinel-ā-Nuku two year work based training programme was launched at Hīrangī Marae in Tūrangi. Designed to shape the next generation of kaitiaki, the programme draws on the best of Te Āo Māori and Te Āo Pākehā to better conserve and protect Papatūānuku. The programme stimulates opportunities for young Māori to begin a career in conservation work and supports Iwi to grow their capability and capacity. Twenty three pia tauira were selected from Iwi across Te Ika-ā-Māui, particularly the central North Island. The programme is co-funded by Te Papa Atawhai and the Provincial Growth Fund and in the years ahead, will become an important part of providing future managers, leaders and experts in conservation and environmental work.

We acknowledge all kaitiaki whenua for what you have accomplished these past years. Thank you for what you do to conserve and protect the whenua and indigenous biodiversity in your place, our combined efforts will make a difference.

# Circles and cycles on the land



Located at Ōmarupāroa about three hours drive from Gisborne on the East Cape of Te Tai Rāwhiti near Te Araroa, lies Wharekahika A1. Historically a strategic coastal settlement where Ngāti Porou lands and whānau merged with those of Te Whānau ā Apanui, Ōmarupāroa now falls with the Ngāti Porou rohe.

Etched into the whenua are intriguing large and small porotaka, or circle shapes. Several are marked out with rocks in neat semi-circles and most are perfectly round. These mysterious relics of the tīpuna are hidden by vegetation and virtually unknown to recent generations of Wharekahika A1 landowners. But they are becoming recognised as historic taonga along with the remains of four pā, including a huge, fortified settlement and numerous māra and kūmara pits.

A keen group of trustees and landowners are waiting to learn more from archaeologist Hans-Deiter Bader. They're hoping his work will offer information about long-ago ancestral life at Ōmarupāroa, to enhance the surviving oral history. The porotaka pose the greatest puzzle. Were they once fire beacons to aid the safe navigation of fishing boats in the coastal area below? Were they the sites of squatter huts for tending gardens and storing tools? Were they lookout points over the Pacific, keeping watch for large shoals of fish or invading enemies?

Supported by external agencies, trustees and interested landowners have started work to renew intergenerational links with the whenua. Pakeke and kaumātua share their knowledge and whakapapa stories with younger generations. Through hīkoi and wānanga, the people will be researching 'lost' information such as the names of hapū historically linked to this place; planting



native trees to help restore the depleted whenua; resume pest control efforts after a period of decline; reimagine and explore ways to generate income from the non-protected areas of the land currently grazed by cattle or left to scrub and look to replenish the trust with younger generation members as vacancies arise.

"It's all a work in progress," says Anita Waitoa, Trust Chair. "With everything we're developing to become sustainable and self-sufficient, as part of coming forward with the changing times, we want to go back to the organic preservation of the land. We want to revert everything back to its natural essence, preserving historical sites and preserving the historical knowledge to continue. To do this, we need people to be involved who have compassion for the land – visionaries with foresight and passionate legacy developers."

Wharekahika A1 has steep hillsides and rocky cliffs that drop sharply to the Pacific Ocean. Inland lie big gullies, basins and flats. Pōhutukawa, nīkau, pūriri and tī kōuka once flourished there, hosting korimako, tūi and kererū in abundance.

Much of the whenua was cleared for agriculture by a succession of pākehā farmers, until it was leased for farming in the late 1940s by Arnold (Barney) Dewes, who has ancestral links there. "Arnold was for the preservation of native trees," recalls son Ian Dewes. "In the 1980s he refused to amalgamate with neighbouring farmlands to enter long-term leases for pine plantations. He and I watched the felling of 150 year old native trees, cut down for forestry development on neighbouring land." Stock farming continued at Wharekahika A1 and over the years, stoats, possums, pigs, deer, rats and feral cats ravaged the remaining indigenous biodiversity.

Through the 2008 kawenata between Wharekahika A1 and Ngā Whenua Rāhui, a significant area of remaining bushland was fenced off and pest control began. But views differed within the trust about restoring and protecting the kawenata land. There was concern that pest control efforts would spoil opportunities for haukāinga to hunt wild pork, important kai for their marae and whānau. Some saw cutting through the land to improve vehicle access to the coast to harvest kaimoana, as damaging rather than safeguarding the whenua. "Pest control came to a standstill," Trustee Paul Dewes notes ruefully. "But we've re-negotiated with Ngā Whenua Rāhui, and we're starting up again next year, 2022. I've asked for the best, for whatever needs to be done."

While doing a stint of farming there in the 1980s, Ian stumbled across some of these historic heritage sites. As he cut back mānuka, kānuka

and blackberry scrub, stone formations kept getting in his way. Walls and other remnants of a huge old fort became visible. He realised they must belong to the once powerful Ōmarupāroa pā his father had talked about decades before. Another discovery was the porotaka. "At the end of my chainsaw I could see a rock, and another rock, and I went, 'oh, this is a circle.' So I cleaned around it and started to find something that not even my father had seen." It was a porotaka. Later while mustering on horseback, Ian looked down on the area from a ridge. "I could see more circles, more squares (probably from old gardens), more and more battle sites and parapets, all hidden under the mānuka."

Soon afterwards he left the area and spent many years away. While researching land claims for the Waitangi Tribunal and others, he took the opportunity to do archival research about





Ōmarupāroa. Over the years since finding the sites at Wharekahika A1, Ian found holding the information a burden. “I wanted to pass it on, waiting for someone to be interested.” He was soon to get his opportunity.

In early 2021, a group of trustees and landowners came together for a 3-day hīkoi and wānanga as part of renewed efforts to restore and develop the whenua, and to protect its heritage for future generations. Assisted by a grant from the Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund, the wānanga kicked off a long-term programme to collate and document stories about Wharekahika A1. Supported by Te Uru Rākau, Gisborne District Council, Ministry for Primary Industries, Heritage New Zealand and Ngā Whenua Rāhui (NWR), the wānanga successfully met its aims.

Archaeologist Hans-Deiter Bader accompanied the group, gathering and passing on information about historic sites. Hapū researcher Erica Lawson and pakeke contributed their knowledge. Videographer Victor Beach filmed sites and stories for the historical record, and Ian Dewes showed interested descendants some parts of the huge Ōmarupāroa pā site, the embedded porotaka and other historic taonga that had been located many years before under the scrub.

Greater awareness of the heritage sites at Wharekahika A1 is timely. Plans are taking shape to develop the whenua and preserve these fragile sites – especially in places outside the protected kawenata area where new commercial activities are being explored. Cattle grazing, which has provided income for the trust to pay council rates, will end this year.

With advice from Te Uru Rākau and assistance from its One Billion Trees Fund, the trust is preparing a major replanting programme. Once regarded as a nuisance, the trust is exploring cultivating mānuka to harvest brush for oil and bees for honey. East Cape mānuka oil is internationally renowned for its health-giving properties.

Much work lies ahead says Anita. “I think our children will never lose who they are, absolutely not, because they are going to be left with a rich heritage.”

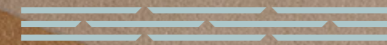






Image: Te Riaki Amoamo Whakatōhea kaumātua and historian

# Nukutere



**MANY STORIES ECHO ACROSS THE MOTU WITH A SIMILAR HISTORY. THIS STORY BEGINS WITH LAND CONFISCATION AS A RESPONSE TO THE KILLING OF CARL SYLVIUS VÖLKNER. HAPŪ OF WHAKATŌHEA WERE DISPLACED FROM THEIR ANCESTRAL LANDS FOR THIS ACT AND ALLOCATED BY HAPŪ LOTS, SECTIONS OF THE ŌPAPE NATIVE RESERVE. EACH HAPŪ WERE ALLOCATED ONE DEVELOPMENT BLOCK CLOSER TO THE COAST,**



**AND ONE INLAND BUSH BLOCK. THIS 'RESERVATION,' IS A FAR CRY FROM THE FERTILE WHENUA THAT PREVIOUSLY BROUGHT SELF SUFFICIENCY, WEALTH AND WELLBEING TO ITS PEOPLE. IT IS MOSTLY STEEP HILL COUNTRY COVERED IN NATIVE BUSH WITH SOME RIVER FLATS. ACCESS BACK THEN WAS BY WHAT WAS KNOWN AS 'THE OLD MILITARY TRACK' – THE NAME IS SELF EXPLANATORY.**

In 1984, Ōpape 23 was vested in the Whakatōhea Māori Trust Board. An additional land parcel was added in 1994, changing the block name to Ōpape 28. The Nukutere Lands Trust was later formed in 1996 and by owner selection process, trustees appointed. On the 4th of December 2010, the Minister of Conservation signed off their Ngā Whenua Rāhui Kawenata, a variation to that previously signed by the Whakatōhea Māori Trust Board.

Nukutere lands continue to hold strong spiritual and symbolic significance to the people. It was a significant source of kai and symbolises its importance as a last bastion for Whakatōhea following the confiscation of all other hapū and iwi whenua.

Since the Kawenata was signed, goat and possum control has occurred along with biodiversity monitoring in 2010, and again in 2020. The latest monitoring work identified the expansion of an established wetland, to the surprise and elation of the monitoring team. Taonga species include kiwi, weka and the threatened Hochstetters frog.

Trustees and Ngā Whenua Rāhui acknowledge that the kawenata was not monitored well by either party. Ngā Whenua Rāhui recognises the need to grow trust and establish strong and ongoing relationships with kaitiaki whenua – for the whenua!

Now the time has come to review the 25 year old kawenata, trustees and landowners must decide whether they want to enter into another 25 year term. The desired outcome for Ngā Whenua Rāhui is for a new agreement. So, the time is right for robust kanohi ki te kanohi discussion and of course cups of tea. The newly appointed trustees bring fresh eyes and ideas to what might be beneficial to the whenua and the taonga species within, and how ngā uri whakaheke are able to benefit from the rich heritage.

Recently, the trustees were able to take a birds-eye view of Nukutere on a fly-over trip. They also did a 4x4 'hīkoi' on the whenua from the southern entrance. These two trips gave them an insight into the vastness of the land from above and to see what was happening on the ground. It was clear there is much work to be done to protect this natural heritage.

On both occasions, the trustees were treated to historical kōrero from experience and learned knowledge of Te Riaki Amoamo, Ngāti Rua / Whakatōhea kaumātua and historian. Having been born, raised and worked within the boundaries of Nukutere, he was able to recall whānau, place names, recite stories and historical and present day events.

He provided a map he got from DOSLI (Department of Survey and Lands Information) in Gisborne. It clearly shows how the reserve land was allocated. In his words, "It's like an Indian reservation. It's the march of western civilisation. It should be displayed, kia mōhio ngā uri." His knowledge and traditional knowledge is priceless. This in itself serves as an opportunity for the trust to utilise the Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund to help record and share that knowledge into the future.

It is now essential to establish the foundation for a plan of management – together. Central to all the planning and work is protection of the indigenous biodiversity. There are a number of kaupapa to discuss to get to this point – the why, who, where, when, what and how questions, the short term and long term goals, the expected outcomes, sustainability and people.

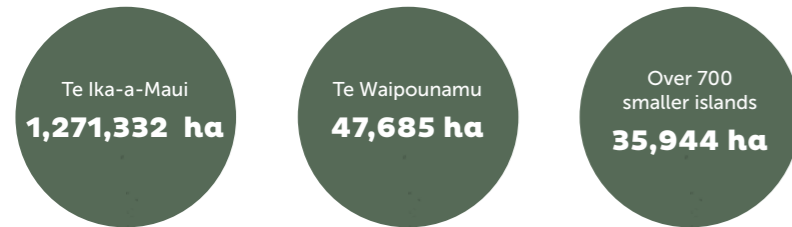
And then there is the question whether to continue the kawenata for another 25 years. Yes, or no?



# Whenua Māori

Where once tangata whenua had influence over 100% of the whenua across Aotearoa NZ, they now only retain approx. 5% of that whenua, 13.5% of which is protected under a Ngā Whenua Rāhui agreement. The majority of Māori owned land is in Te Ika-a-Māui (North Island), with only small tracts of land held in collective ownership in Te Waipounamu (South Island) and over 700 smaller islands.

## Māori Land

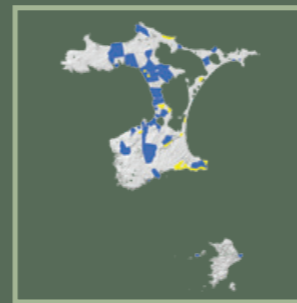


The Threatened Environment Classification is a source of broad, national-scale background information about land in Aotearoa NZ. Specifically, the Classification indicates, how much native (indigenous) cover remains within land environments; how much land is legally protected (for the purpose of protecting natural heritage) and; how past loss of indigenous cover and natural heritage protection are distributed across the landscape.

Te Waipounamu

Te Ika-a-Māui

Rēkohu/  
Wharekauri



● NWR Protected Areas  
● Māori Land

Data sources:  
 • Māori Managed Land – Ministry of Justice and Ministry for Primary Industries (on behalf of the Māori Land Court, Wellington, New Zealand)  
 • Ngā Whenua Rāhui Protected Areas © Ngā Whenua Rāhui, 2023  
 • NZ Terrain Relief (Topo250) © Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand

The Classification combines this information into six categories of land environments. ‘Threatened environments’ (categories 1–5) are those in which much (more than 70%) of the former indigenous cover has been cleared and/or only a small proportion (less than 20%) of land is legally protected for natural heritage purposes. The sixth category includes environments in which indigenous cover has been less reduced (more than 30% remains) and relatively greater proportion of the land area (more than 20%) is protected for the purpose of maintaining its natural heritage.

Land with large areas of intact indigenous forest is typical of Māori land across the country. This is due partly because of the customary relationship Māori have with the land but largely because of the land development history of Aotearoa NZ. Historically, the more fertile and productive Māori land was the first to be taken for settlement leaving Māori with the less productive and mountainous areas. Ironically, these areas now represent a reasonable proportion of the remaining indigenous forest in Aotearoa NZ.

Nil Land Cover (89,037 hectares) is typically land that has not been classified such as Rēkohu (Chatham Islands) and land under water, for example Taupō-nui-a-Tia.

Protecting land with intact indigenous biodiversity is not redundant to the goal of stopping the decline of our natural and cultural heritage. These areas remain vulnerable to increasing pressure on landowners to make their land more commercially viable.

## Threatened Environment Categories

Category	Category name and criteria	Area hectares	Percentage
1	<10% indigenous cover left	138,943	10.25%
2	10–20% indigenous cover left	118,944	8.78%
3	20–30% indigenous cover left	231,357	17.07%
4	>30% left and <10% protected	138,377	10.21%
5	>30% left and 10–20% protected	118,508	8.75%
6	>30% left and >20% protected	519,796	38.36%
	Nil Land Cover	89,036	6.57%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,354,961</b>	<b>100.00%</b>





Image: From left: Waimarie whānau – Toma Adams, Evon Moir, Tony Adams, Sharon Ware with Te Puni Kōkiri staff Brynn Pitman-Peek, Sam Johnson and Hone Matete

# Te Takiwā o Waimarie

**KO WHATITIRI TE MAUNGA PŪMAU TE AO I TE PŌ  
KO WAIPAO TE AWA RERENGA HAU O TE WAIATA  
KO TE URIROROI, TE PARAWHAU, TE MAHUREHURE TE TANGATA, NGĀPUHI E  
MAUNGĀRONGO KI TE WHENUA; WAIMARIE MARAE**

## BACKGROUND

Waimarie elders hold true to traditions of their tūpuna, protecting the whenua and puna wai that emerge from the sacred mountain of Whatitiri. They believe that if the whenua and puna wai are nurtured, people are nurtured to prosper and reach their potential for the betterment of the whenua and people.

Waimarie village is a rural property in Porotī, administered by Waimarie ō Whatitiri Marae Trust. The village has whānau housing, Waimarie Nurseries, and Houhoupounamu urupā and land lots leased out for grazing. Architectural plans have been drawn up mapping the proposed development of a nursery extension, papakāinga, a multi-purpose community centre, and a whare tūpuna.

The property is situated on the Waipao Stream which provides spring water to the Whangārei District Council for public supply and the Maungatāpere Water Company, supplying local irrigation needs. Beginning as the Kauritutahi Stream to the west of Maungatāpere, the stream flows into the Wairua River which runs west to the northern Wairoa River and into the Kaipara Harbour.

Initiated by Waimarie elders when they retired a 1.5 kilometre by 30 metre riparian strip on the Waipao Stream, the Waimarie Nurseries was established in 2006 with support from Ngā



Left: Tamariki from Kokopu School. Right: Waimarie Nurseries

Whenua Rāhui and several other supporting agencies. Local farmers, stakeholders and the community were invited to assist landowners with funding applications to fence waterways on their properties. Within a few years the entire 9 kilometre stretch of Waipao Stream was fenced and planted with native plants from the Waimarie Nurseries. The nursery still provides riparian plants for local waterways and other Ngā Whenua Rāhui projects.

Freshwater education was a kaupapa delivered for over 10 years by the nursery. It was focused toward local schools and communities. The intent was to grow knowledge and commitment toward increasing sustainable land management in the catchment. Better land management practices were introduced utilising Māori knowledge, with a largely European community being introduced to tikanga Māori. The programme includes pōwhiri, local place names and meanings, local hapū stories, water quality monitoring, seed sourcing and propagation of native plants through to planting.

The Kaipara Moana Remediation programme is an important opportunity for Waimarie. The nursery is in a prime location to supply plants to the upper reaches of the Kaipara Harbour catchment. They are gearing up for this opportunity and negotiating with the Kaipara Moana Remediation roopu to complete a business case with the Ministry for Business and Innovation.

Future plans also include the papakāinga development, designed to house whānau who will contribute to the nursery and building developments. Waimarie intends to resume the education programme for schools, coupled with an adult training programme for nursery production, fencing, planting and water quality monitoring. These developments support local employment, improved understanding of protecting te taiao, and provides positive social outcomes for the people and wider community.

# Agreements



During the period 2020-2022, Ngā Whenua Rāhui signed 7 agreements with a total area of 381 hectares. This brings the total number of agreements to 289.

Three of those agreements are in Central region; three are in North region and; one agreement is in Te Waipounamu. Two of those new agreements are neighbouring existing agreements.

The following table shows the Threatened Environments Classifications intersected with Ngā Whenua Rāhui protected areas, to date and for the 2020-2022 reporting period.

## Threatened Environments Categories

Category	Category name and criteria	Overall		2020-2022	
		Area hectares	Percentage	Area hectares	Percentage
1	<10% indigenous cover left	2,241	1.22%	80	21.00%
2	10-20% indigenous cover left	2,676	1.46%	166	43.50%
3	20-30% indigenous cover left	17,056	9.31%	63	16.57%
4	>30% left and <10% protected	12,950	7.07%	64	16.86%
5	>30% left and 10-20% protected	10,469	5.72%	6	1.58%
6	>30% left and >20% protected	135,728	74.09%	2	0.48%
	Nil Land Cover	2,066	1.13%	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>183,187</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Agreement numbers by protection clause/region

	South Island	South West	South East	Rēkohu/Wharekauri	East Coast	Central	North	Total
<b>KAWENATA</b>								
Section 27A Conservation Act 1987	-	3	-	1	-	3	1	8
Section 77A Reserves Act 1977	5	70	17	3	37	58	30	220
<b>CONSERVATION COVENANT</b>								
Section 77 Reserves Act 1977	-	3	5	8	2	3	3	24
<b>MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT</b>								
Section 29 Conservation Act	1	7	2	-	10	8	7	35
<b>LAND PURCHASE</b>								
Section 19 Reserves Act 1977	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Section 22 Reserves Act 1977	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>289</b>

## Agreement hectares by protection clause/region

	South Island	South West	South East	Rēkohu/Wharekauri	East Coast	Central	North	Total
<b>KAWENATA</b>								
Section 27A Conservation Act 1987	-	97	-	10	-	11,921	33	12,062
Section 77A Reserves Act 1977	218	77,303	17,850	239	14,309	46,672	9,137	165,729
<b>CONSERVATION COVENANT</b>								
Section 77 Reserves Act 1977	-	225	124	451	23	33	826	1,682
<b>MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT</b>								
Section 29 Conservation Act	73	100	11	-	868	2,250	267	3,568
<b>LAND PURCHASE</b>								
Section 19 Reserves Act 1977	-	-	-	-	-	-	112	112
Section 22 Reserves Act 1977	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>77,726</b>	<b>17,985</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>15,200</b>	<b>60,876</b>	<b>10,374</b>	<b>183,187</b>



# Te Waipounamu

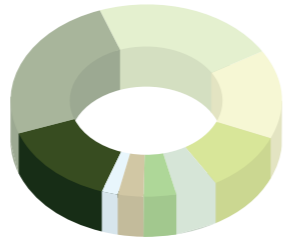


## Agreement Type



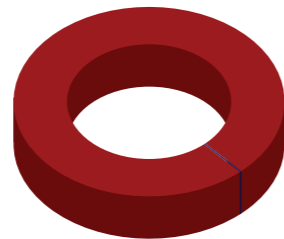
Kawenata	7
Management Agreement	1
Conservation Covenant	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

## Landcover Breakdown



Indigenous Forest	25%
High Producing Exotic Grassland	22%
Tall Tussock Grassland	15%
Low Producing Grassland	10%
Exotic Forest	4%
Gravel or Rock	2%
Mānuka and/or Kānuka	3%
Lake or Pond	2%
Other	14%

## Land Breakdown



Total Māori Land	64,694 Ha
NWR Protected Area	325 Ha

## Threatened Environment Classification Breakdown



1 <10% indigenous cover left	19%
2 10–20% indigenous cover left	7%
3 20–30% indigenous cover left	6%
4 >30% left and <10% protected	7%
5 >30% left and 10–20% protected	5%
6 >30% left and >20% protected	56%

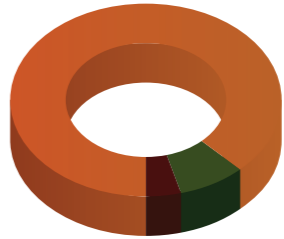
The regional maps feature a Land Environments of New Zealand (LENZ) basemap © Landcare Research NZ. This is an environmental classification intended to underpin a range of conservation and resource management issues. For more information visit: <https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/tools-and-resources/mapping/lenz/>

Ngā Whenua Rāhui Protected Areas © Ngā Whenua Rāhui, 2023.  
NZ Terrain Relief (Topo250) © Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand

# South West

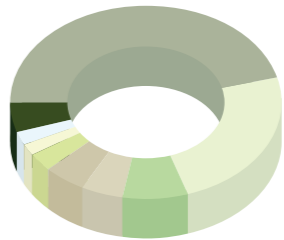


## Agreement Type



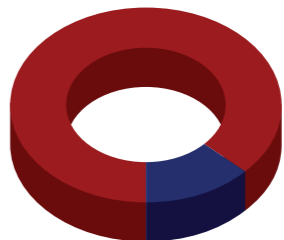
Kawenata	73
Management Agreement	7
Conservation Covenant	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>

## Landcover Breakdown



Indigenous Forest	46%
High Producing Exotic Grasslands	24%
Exotic Forest	8%
Broadleaved Indigenous Hardwoods	5%
Mānuka and/or Kānuka	5%
Low Producing Grasslands	3%
Tall Tussock Grassland	2%
Lake or Pond	2%
Other	5%

## Land Breakdown



Total Māori Land	508,405 Ha
NWR Protected Area	77,726 Ha

## Threatened Environment Classification Breakdown



1 <10% indigenous cover left	28%
2 10–20% indigenous cover left	4%
3 20–30% indigenous cover left	27%
4 >30% left and <10% protected	1%
5 >30% left and 10–20% protected	2%
6 >30% left and >20% protected	38%

## Agreements with Operations



## Pests Eradicated

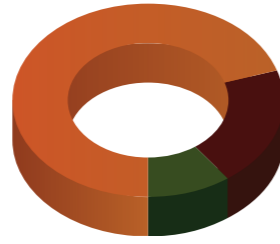




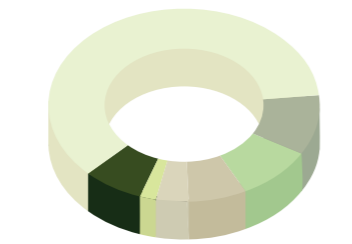
# South East



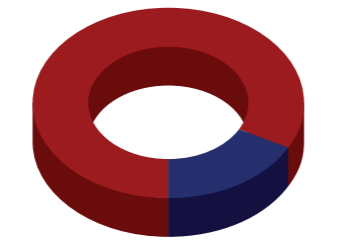
## Agreement Type



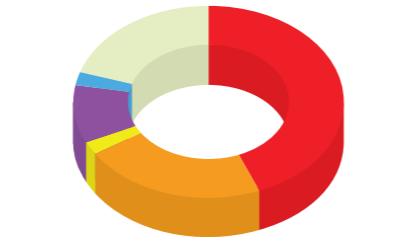
## Landcover Breakdown



## Land Breakdown



## Threatened Environment Classification Breakdown



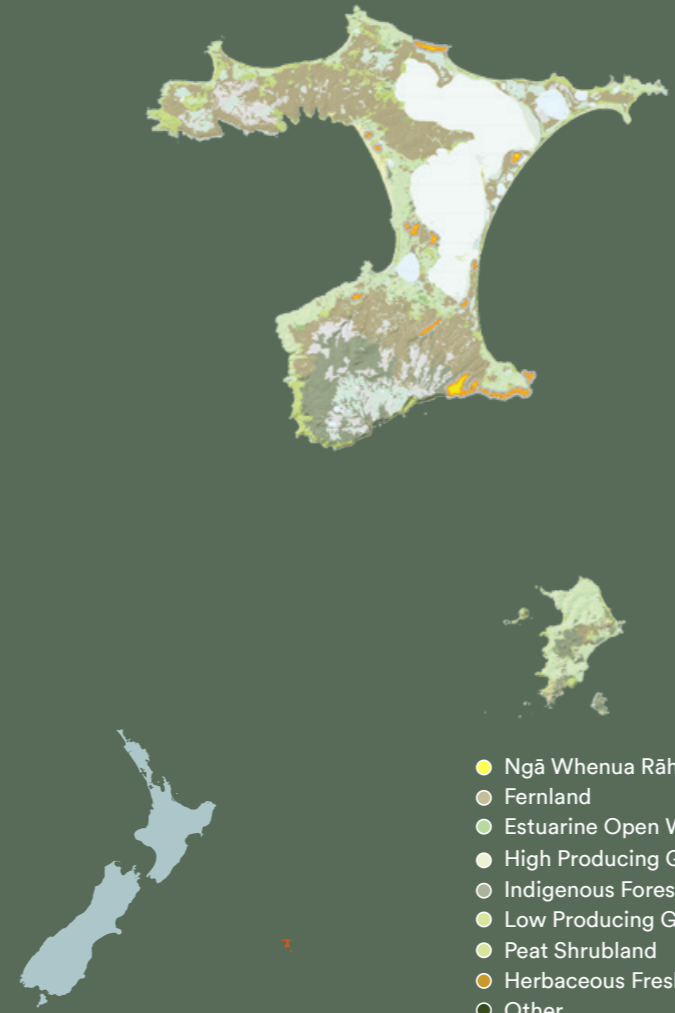
## Agreements with Operations



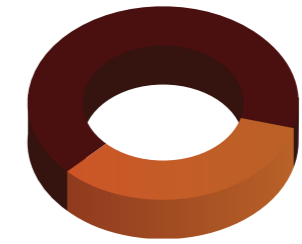
## Pests Eradicated



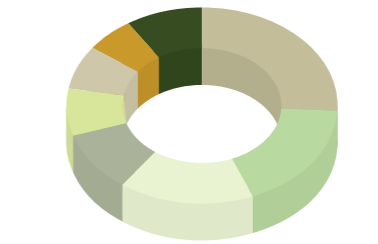
# Rēkohu/ Wharekauri



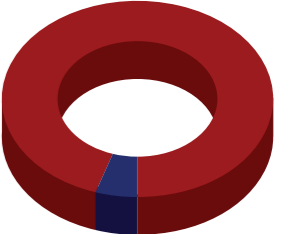
## Agreement Type



## Landcover Breakdown

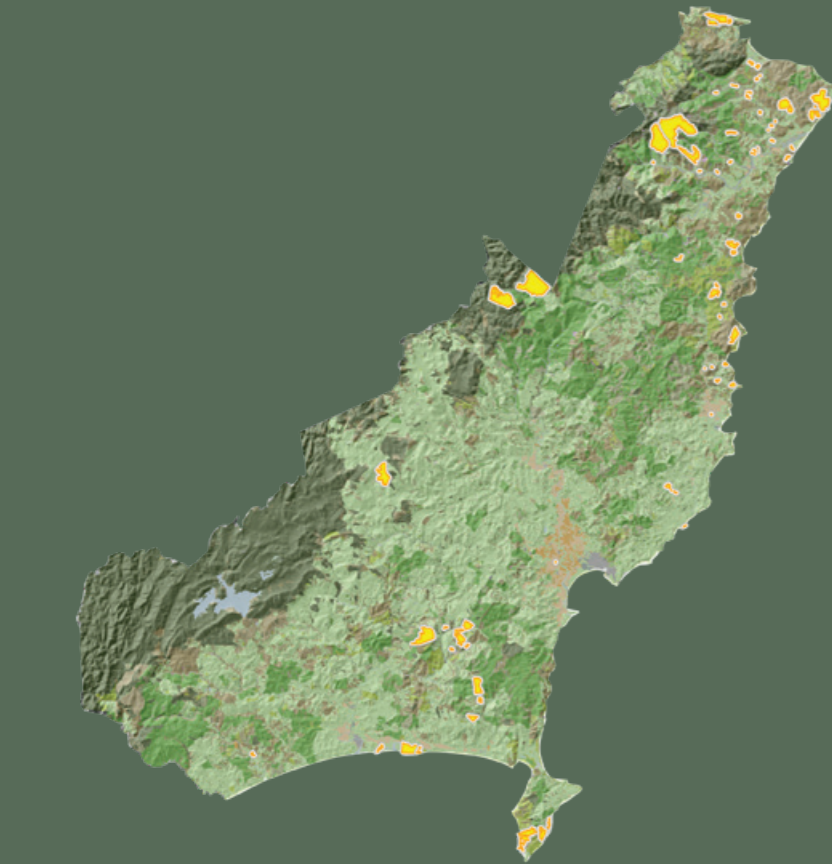


## Land Breakdown





# East Coast



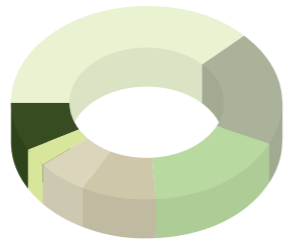
- Ngā Whenua Rāhui Agreements
- Indigenous Forest
- High Producing Exotic Grasslands
- Exotic Forest
- Broadleaved Indigenous Hardwoods
- Mānuka and/or Kānuka
- Low Producing Grasslands
- Other

## Agreement Type



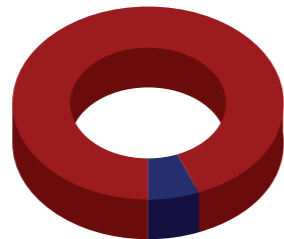
● Kawenata	73
● Management Agreement	7
● Conservation Covenant	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>

## Landcover Breakdown



● Indigenous Forest	19%
● High Producing Exotic Grasslands	38%
● Exotic Forest	17%
● Broadleaved Indigenous Hardwoods	6%
● Mānuka and/or Kānuka	9%
● Low Producing Grasslands	3%
● Other	8%

## Land Breakdown



● Total Māori Land	246,658 Ha
● NWR Protected Area	15,200 Ha

## Threatened Environment Classification Breakdown



● 1 <10% indigenous cover left	8%
● 2 10–20% indigenous cover left	38%
● 3 20–30% indigenous cover left	7%
● 4 >30% left and <10% protected	8%
● 5 >30% left and 10–20% protected	17%
● 6 >30% left and >20% protected	22%

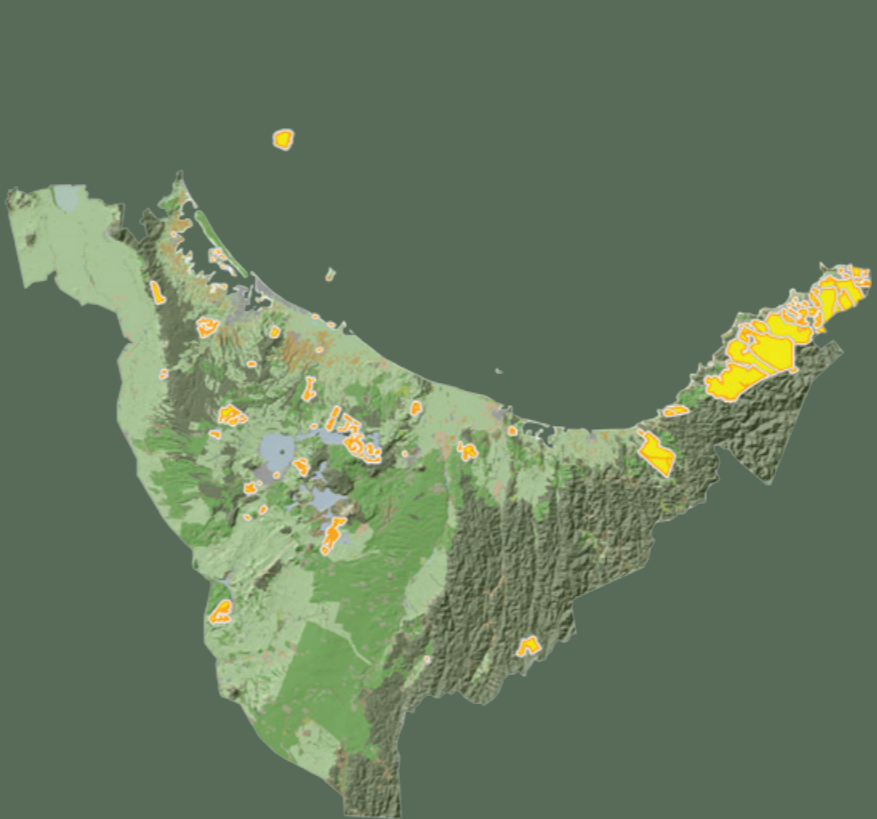
## Agreements with Operations



## Pests Eradicated

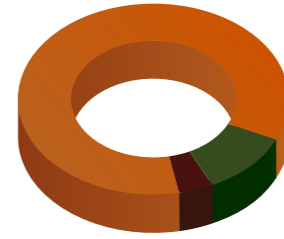


# Central



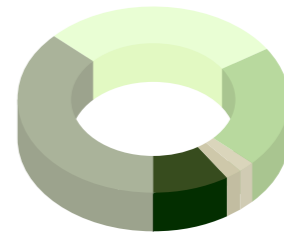
- Ngā Whenua Rāhui Agreements
- Indigenous Forest
- High Producing Exotic Grasslands
- Exotic Forest
- Broadleaved Indigenous Hardwoods
- Mānuka and/or Kānuka
- Other

## Agreement Type



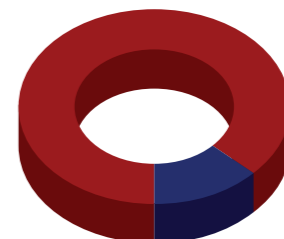
● Kawenata	61
● Management Agreement	8
● Conservation Covenant	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>

## Landcover Breakdown



● Indigenous Forest	37%
● High Producing Exotic Grasslands	29%
● Exotic Forest	21%
● Broadleaved Indigenous Hardwoods	2%
● Mānuka and/or Kānuka	2%
● Other	9%

## Land Breakdown



● Total Māori Land	508,405 Ha
● NWR Protected Area	77,726 Ha

## Threatened Environment Classification Breakdown



● 1 <10% indigenous cover left	26%
● 2 10–20% indigenous cover left	4%
● 3 20–30% indigenous cover left	12%
● 4 >30% left and <10% protected	1%
● 5 >30% left and 10–20% protected	18%
● 6 >30% left and >20% protected	39%

## Agreements with Operations



## Pests Eradicated





# North



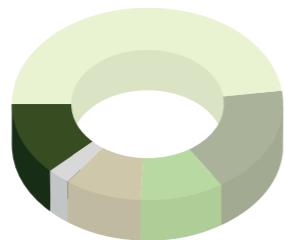
- Ngā Whenua Rāhui Agreements
- Indigenous Forest
- High Producing Exotic Grasslands
- Exotic Forest
- Built-up Area
- Mānuka and/or Kānuka
- Other

## Agreement Type



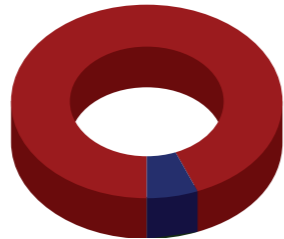
- Kawenata 31
- Management Agreement 7
- Conservation Covenant 3
- Land Purchase 1
- Total 42**

## Landcover Breakdown



- Indigenous Forest 18%
- High Producing Exotic Grasslands 48%
- Exotic Forest 10%
- Built-up Area 3%
- Mānuka and/or Kānuka 9%
- Other 12%

## Land Breakdown



- Total Māori Land 166,367 Ha
- NWR Protected Area 10,374 Ha

## Threatened Environment Classification Breakdown



- 1 <10% indigenous cover left 22%
- 2 10–20% indigenous cover left 12%
- 3 20–30% indigenous cover left 21%
- 4 >30% left and <10% protected 16%
- 5 >30% left and 10–20% protected 6%
- 6 >30% left and >20% protected 23%

## Agreements with Operations





# Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund



We support whānau, hapū, iwi to preserve their traditional Māori knowledge and practice so that their tikanga, stories and history associated with Papatūānuku and te taiao, are not forgotten.

2020 - 2021		
<b>11</b> Applications Received	<b>8</b> Applications Funded	<b>3</b> Closed - Did not Complete
<b>37</b> Active Projects	<b>14</b> Projects Completed	
2021 - 2022		
<b>11</b> Applications Received	<b>5</b> Applications Funded	<b>1</b> Closed - Did not Complete
<b>33</b> Active Projects	<b>4</b> Projects Completed	

## Total money approved by region

Region	2020-2021	2021-2022
● North	\$13,242.50	\$13,242.50
● Central	\$185,879.07	\$185,879.07
● East Coast	\$9,111.25	\$9,111.25
● South East	\$99,134.89	\$99,134.89
● South West	\$35,548.70	\$35,548.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$576,943.44</b>	<b>\$342,916.41</b>

## Project Outputs - All Years



## Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund

In operation since 2000, the Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund maintains its kaupapa to support tangata whenua to preserve their traditional knowledge in indigenous biodiversity management, tikanga, history, stories, and practise. Traditional knowledge and practise living in people, and people maintaining a Māori way of knowing and retaining knowledge is of primary importance. We are pleased to have supported some inspiring and diverse projects.

Challenges have been the norm for both the fund and project applicants. During the height of the pandemic, many projects struggled to maintain their pre COVID-19 timeframes. Isolation and illness caused delays in plans, and projects lost momentum. We've managed to work through these issues and most projects are back on track.

Interest in the fund remained steady with enquiries from across the motu with Waiariki and Te Tai Hauāuru being particular hot spots. We distributed \$919,859.85 to support 13 whānau and hapū groups. Although this is a low number of applications (we suspect COVID-19 restrictions had a lot to do with this) many of those projects are large and run over multiple years.

Working closely with applicants before applying to the fund ensures they are fully informed and supported, with the goal being a successful application. Learning from our mistakes and improving the way we work as we go, sharpening our policy and processes and how we engage with successful project contacts remains our focus. It is important to us that we maintain good communication and strong relationships.

We're excited to step into the next year with more clarity and focus. We look forward to supporting whānau, hapū and iwi to preserve their traditional knowledge and practise, and relationship with the taiao.

Successful Applicant	Project	Grant Amount	Year
Te Arawa Lakes Trust	Series of wānanga on the cultural and historical relationship between Te Arawa and the kōaro	\$109,652.48	2020-2021
Pita Tapihana Whānau Trust	Series of wānanga to connect descendants of Pita Tapihana to their whenua and wider whānau in Waiteti	\$16,323.04	2020-2021
Wharerangi Marae Trust	Revive Māori arts and storytelling relevant to the whenua, waterways, moana and their tipuna	\$99,134.89	2020-2021
Pikirangi Marae Trust	Ngāti Uenukukōpako and the Marae Trust hosted the 2021 Kahui Taiao Tūroa annual hui, bringing together Māori conservation practitioners from around Aotearoa	\$59,903.55	2020-2021
Patuharakeke Te Iwi Trust Board	Three day rangatahi wānanga engaging with te taiao and tikanga Māori	\$5,900.00	2020-2021
Wharekahika A1 Trust	Wānanga and education about their whenua with particular focus on pā sites and other historical sites	\$9,111.25	2020-2021
Maraetai No.11 Incorporation	Wānanga to discuss future of whenua, waterways and moana	\$7,342.50	2020-2021
Te Atawhai o Te Āo	Integrate traditional and contemporary conservation practices related to the ngaore within the Ngāti Ruaka, Ngāti Hine and Ngāti Rangi hapū	\$35,548.70	2020-2021
Mangeroa Gully Restoration	Series of wānanga as part of larger project to restore Mangeroa Gully, to reconnect beneficiaries to their whenua and create learning resources for rangatahi and whānau	\$167,699.50	2021-2022
He Kura Taiao Ki Patuharakeke	Marae based wānanga over three years in taiao kaitiaki workshops, kēmu tawhito, hīkoi to wāhi tapu and ako kōrero, learning of waiata and pakiwaitara	\$21,407.25	2021-2022
Te Waingōngoro	Training kaitiaki in cultural monitoring assessment of the awa and a series of wānanga bringing whānau and tohunga together to transfer traditional Māori knowledge associated with the awa	\$171,230.43	2021-2022
Whakarapu Ngā Kōrero Tuku Iho	Three year project to preserve and transmit traditional Māori knowledge, tikanga and kawa associated with mahinga kai at traditional sites	\$109,581.91	2021-2022
Kua Amio Ki Tōna Timatanga	Preventing the loss of connection and traditional Māori knowledge related to their whenua – includes research, pakeke/kaumātua interviews, site visits and intergenerational transfer of Mātauranga Māori	\$107,024.35	2021-2022
<b>Total funds disbursed</b>		<b>\$919,859.85</b>	



# Honouring our past through life changes



Left to right: Davina Thompson, Anahera Emile, Rereata Makiha, Jade Kameta, Che Maxwell, Tiffany Te Moni

**“MARAMATAKA IS THE SCIENCE, THE PRACTICE BEHIND WHY OUR TĪPUNA WERE SO GOOD AT FISHING, GOOD AT NAVIGATION, GOOD AT KAI PRODUCTION,”**

explained Mapihi Raharuhi of Te Arawa Whānau Ora Trust.

The trust is a collective of providers working together for whānau centred outcomes. Through their mahi, they saw the opportunity to revitalise the practice of maramataka, by using the model and its concepts to support positive lifestyle changes and improved wellbeing of whānau within their rohe. That was the foundation of their application to the Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund.

“We hadn’t scoped out what Maramataka could do for us, for our people. To be honest, we thought it was a system that we could just pull down and use! In our rigid thinking, we thought it was just an ‘on kai’ kaupapa,” explained Mapihi. “We don’t even remember how it came to be the vehicle – no one can. It just landed.”

The trust had become familiar with the difficulties whānau were facing daily. Whatever the reasons for the struggles, it didn’t matter. What mattered, was how to bring whānau back to wellness. With the concept of maramataka at the forefront, they gathered their resources to develop Ngā Pātaka Kōrero o Te Arawa.

They consulted local koeke with local knowledge, found suitably skilled people to help, and worked with an existing Te Arawa maramataka developed by Irirangi Tiakiawa and Toby Rikihana. Having a Te Arawa centric approach was critical. It was important for all involved, to understand that maramataka was not being tested. These ideas and concepts had already been proven and used over centuries by their tūpuna.

Initial thinking was ‘get a calendar, give it out, maramataka done!’ “Applying maramataka principles into a wellbeing programme or a service doesn’t work! It is a lifestyle change,” Mapihi confirmed.

Having input from renown maramataka expert Rereata Makiha, was pivotal in developing the resources. He emphasised understanding the connection of all things – the day, the month, the taiao and then using those energies to guide the mahi. Through their science, inter-relationships and connection with their environment, tūpuna developed a profound relationship with the taiao. Because of that, Mapihi says, “They were good at life! For every lwi or rohe, it was different but the same - different times, different winds, different signs, different stories, yet leading to the same outcomes. When you observe over time, you grow understanding and when you practice over time, you become better at navigating to wellbeing.”

Jade Kameta, Healthy Families Rotorua, was on the ‘waka’ from the start. Working as part of the Te Arawa collective of health providers, it was only natural to work with this kaupapa.

Jade spoke on their approach. “In a contemporary environment, sometimes we don’t have the opportunity to see what’s happening. So Healthy Families tested some ideas starting with how to improve productivity in the work place using the energy in the maramataka environment to guide their mahi. Kaimahi recognised days where productivity was good - there were better days to hold hui and make clear decisions; there were days where energy levels were optimal and so the outcomes were optimal.

We think health, education and justice has been ‘siload’. For Māori, these things are naturally woven into daily conversations at home. Everything we do, say, see and touch has a connection and therefore an effect on those around us. It’s not unlike maramataka. At the time of Rākaunui – its not just a full moon, it directs when to plant, when to fish, individual energy levels and behaviours, and also what’s happening in the wider community.

The mahi is about prototyping and testing out how to achieve a better outcome in chronic illnesses related to smoking, physical activity, mental wellness, nutrition and alcohol. These are not the easiest of health issues. If you have a look at maramataka, you wouldn’t think its a health tool, but it is! So we’ve looked at it quite differently; we’re not delivering a programme, an event or a campaign.

Ngā Pātaka Kōrero o Te Arawa is a group of young practitioners established to continue testing ideas around maramataka. Te Arawa elders and rangatahi sit together, with those who just want to know that little bit more. It is a collective of guidance and thinking. The thought leadership sits in Ngā Pātaka – the kōrero is about maramataka, but there is so much more that happens in that space too. Its almost like whare maire of before. Not everyone goes in there, but those who are keen and have a little bit of something to share, they are sitting in there and testing that thinking all the time. This is what I expect would have happened in those times.”

Ngā Pātaka Kōrero o Te Arawa is a house of learning. While the value of the grant helped bring the partnership together and develop tools, the real value lies in the revival of traditional knowledge and practice, the ongoing learning, and improved whānau outcomes.







# Mōteatea is my Mauri

## ON AN OILY RAG WITH AROHA

**From the humble beginnings of Hinga Whiu's Kāwhia garage – Te Tau ā Hukarere emerged. The loss of 'ngā kōrero tuku iho' the purpose - the karanga went out, Ngāti Hikairo gathered and the first wānanga was held.**

That was some 20 years ago; Back then, kaumātua - koroheke and rūuhi were many. Frank Kingi Thorne had just returned home. He quietly followed his elders, moving in the shadows – listening and gathering their kōrero and waiata. An iwi historian and researcher, Frank, alongside his cousin Hinga Whiu, have since walked those stories, now sharing them back to their uri.

Hinga recalls, “We had young children and we were wanting to pass the learnings on. Not just to the next generations, but to our own reanga, with our own cousins. Our vision was to move collectively, together as one.”

“At the beginning, everything was done ‘on an oily rag’, on aroha, with no financial ‘backing’. We ran hui and wānanga free of cost, wherever, whenever, however. But that limited our access to spaces and places we could utilise and go. For example, Pirongia maunga; staying at places like the lodge; getting to places like Te Awamutu, to our other marae, awa, urupā and the ngahere – couldn't be realised without pūtea.

It hasn't just been about reciting or writing the kōrero. Understanding the context of those stories is essential to appreciating the past and planning for the future. As Frank says, “No point in knowing place names if you don't have all the kōrero that makes it relevant. The wānanga content; locations and sites of significance, the whakapapa and the hononga - everything makes sense and works naturally. Having our kaumātua in the puihi was

awesome, and now, more so because they have since passed on. Those whīkoi triggered past experiences which we were able to capture. Like the stories about procurring the last kererū while it was still legal (spoken with a gentle smile); and the waiata that came with that.”

“Te Tau-a-Hukarere - the name of our wānanga comes from that! 150 years ago when the last of our bird preserving expeditions occurred. To be able to have the descendants of those elders among us at these wānanga has been awesome. It empowers our rangatahi now, who otherwise wouldn't be too worried about birds.”

The interest and level of engagement from Rangatahi was better than anticipated. Frank mentions, “We always had our kids lined up, but sometimes you feel like you're just dragging kids along and telling them that they have to come. From their participation, we have identified

potential wānanga facilitators – a new generation of uri who can actually take this on and follow through. Before our wānanga, we were quite uncertain of the future.”

Hinga recalls, “Our tamariki started when they were 3-4 years old and now they are in their early 20's. From a māmā and facilitator perspective, our tamariki have grown within the kaupapa and now they're coming forth - confident of who they are, their history. Its a huge benefit. This is what Te Tau ā Te Hukarere is.”

The last wānanga was at Pirongia lodge. Four years before that, Hinga and Frank climbed Pirongia, a trial whīkoi. They had to be certain that it was achievable for all. Hinga thinks back, “We were on our maunga and one evening we sat around the fire and we actually heard kiwi come out - we were witness to this on our maunga!”

The journey has presented different tohu often showing them the way, moving forward, while walking in ancestors' footsteps. They are witness to the purpose and outcomes.

Frank reiterates, “Hinga, Lloyd (Hinga's husband) and I have been involved, at different times with a project in Pirongia with our kōkako and reintroducing different manu. Now the next whakatupuranga understand that there's a continuous reality and the waiata become part of it. Waiata is the key focus of our wānanga – but not as wānanga about waiata. The waiata are just a tool to capture all these other things. And if you only focus on

one aspect of kaitiakitanga or one aspect of tikanga, you get lost in all that and you forget about it and everything else falls away – then you just become an expert in whaikōrero – when you got no kaikaranga and you got no waiata, you don't know where to sit on the pae, you just know how to do a good kōrero and that's it.”

The Kaiwe Branch of the Māori Women's Welfare League and the Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund have supported these wānanga - enabled the collation of stories and waiata into an iwi resource; provided the opportunities to walk in the footsteps of the elders, walking their talk and bringing mauri to their kōrero; alongside them, the next generations.

**“WE WĀNANGA SO THAT WE CAN BE IN TUNE WITH AND COMMUNICATE WITH THE TAIAO, SO THAT WE CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND, CELEBRATE, CONSERVE, PROTECT AND REVITALISE OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. OUR WĀNANGA, AND OUR EFFORTS MAKE SENSE, AND ARE REWARDING WHEN WE HEAR THE TAIAO RESPONDING AND COMMUNICATING DIRECTLY WITH US. THAT IS KAITIAKITANGA! THAT IS TE TAU Ā TE HUKARERE!”**  
**FRANK KINGI THORNE**

**“THE ESSENCE OF MAURI IS THE REVITALISATION OF TAONGA TUKU IHO THAT OUR ANCESTORS HAVE GIFTED TO US – MŌTEATEA IS MY MAURI.”**  
**TE MIHINGA TUTERANGIWHIU**









# You look after that land!

**Richard Taiaroa has been controlling pests on protected areas of the Maraekōwhai Whitianga whenua for about four years. The experienced bush ranger of Te Āti Haunui a Pāpārangī was first told by his uncle more than two decades ago, “you can look after that land”.**

At a formal ceremony in 1998, the Crown returned the Maraekōwhai Historic Reserve to the Maraekōwhai Whenua Trust. Located in the upper reaches of the Whanganui River south of Taumarunui, the land holds great cultural and spiritual value to the people. Two sacred niu poles, Hauhau ceremonial poles, are situated there. The first pole, erected during the 1860s land wars, was embedded with the spirit of war as a symbol for Māori to unite against the Crown. The second pole erected many years later when the colonial ‘land grab’ had slowed down, symbolises peace.

At the same 1998 event, it was announced that 3,400 hectares of indigenous forest in the Maraekōwhai land blocks would be protected by Ngā Whenua Rāhui (NWR) kawenata. Five kawenata were signed by four ahu whenua trusts over the next decade. The protected areas lie within the natural boundaries of three rivers, the Whanganui, Tangarākau and Heao. The trusts administer a total of 10,546 hectares on behalf of thousands of shareholders from various hapū.

Mike Mohi, pioneer NWR staff member, came to check the suitability of the Maraekōwhai whenua for protection. He flew over the land by helicopter to survey the blocks. Being familiar with the land boundaries, Richard and his young son Jason escorted Mike. They were given this task by the late Tā Te Atawhai Archie Taiaroa, who soon afterwards asked Richard to care for the kawenata land. Tā Archie (Te Āti Haunui a

Pāpārangī, Ngāti Tuwharetoa, Ngāti Maniapoto) “Had a big influence on our lives,” reflects Richard. “His thing was about the water and the trees – you look after them, and they’ll look after you. Sadly, we haven’t. But every little bit we’re doing now is helping.”

The importance of looking after the whenua was instilled in Richard during childhood with his mother’s Ngāti Kahungunu whānau in Hastings. “The grandfather that brought me up said that if you want anything in life, you work for it. From the age of 10, I worked picking berries, mowing lawns and doing milk runs. That’s where I got my work ethic from, and I continued it later with our Taiaroa Anderson whānau.”

As a teenager, Richard returned to Taumarunui to live with his father, Te Rumana Lofty Taiaroa who was a keen bushman and pig hunter.

He passed these traits on to Richard and his mokopuna. Richard served many years as a power board linesman and then cleared bush tracks for the Department of Conservation. This led to more than two decades as a DOC employee, working outdoors in many places. He especially enjoyed monitoring whio on the Whanganui River tributaries, Manganui-o-Te-Ao and Retaruke.

“In that period, my uncle always said to me, ‘you need to be looking after that land’. What he said to me stuck in my mind.” The opportunity came in 2018 when Richard took up a NWR contract to control pests at Maraekōwhai. Introduced predators have long ravaged indigenous biodiversity on these lands. Taonga species here include miro, hīnau, kererū, kiwi and tuna and the trusts have aspirations of reintroducing kōkako, tītī and kākā. Richard has the task of eradicating possums, rats, stoats and ferrets – hedgehogs, rabbits and feral cats also find their way into his traps. Deer and pigs, which also cause significant damage to trees and the forest floor, are hunted separately as kai for marae and whānau.

Richard works on the land in stints of four to 12 days, depending on the weather. He stays on site at one of several huts and works alone most of the time. Across the five kawenata blocks he services a total of 400 DOC250 traps and 130 of the A24 type. He also tends 2700 bait stations, with help from two goat cullers contracted by NWR to work on the blocks, his son Ray Taiaroa and nephew Johnny Anderson. Richard’s 10-hour

working day begins at daylight, “usually, the night before I have all my gear prepped. So, if I’m going round checking the traps, I get all the new bait ready and whatever tools I need. From the hut site I use a motorbike or walk, and I do around 60 traps per day, rebaiting and removing any pests in them. Though with the A24 self-setting traps, dead animals just drop back onto the ground and other pests soon clear them away. The DOC250s are a bigger trap, and they catch just about anything – we’re having huge success with rats, stoats and cats.”

Working under the direction of four separate trusts doesn’t faze Richard. “Some of them like different methods when it comes to using poison, but their tikanga is much the same – it’s looking after the land.” Bad weather can be a challenge, but Richard isn’t one for sitting it out in a hut. “I just keep working,” he says. “You always have another plan for the weather. You can’t put poison out in the rain, so I do trap maintenance or stuff like that until the weather clears up.” Walking long distances over the ridges, day after day, can be tough at times. “I’m starting to feel it a bit in the legs, I’ve got arthritis in my knees. I contacted Pa McGowan (Rob McGowan, a rongoā specialist), and he told me which plant may help, how to use it and when to pick it. This has helped immensely.”

Richard loves noticing improvements to the bush and wildlife, as results of pest control. “I just see the differences in the short time I’ve been here, in the trees, and in the regenerating forest

floor –the bush cover and little plants like karamū, manono, pikopiko, tree ferns and mosses. And there’s a lot of change with the birds, toutouwai, pīwakawaka and tūi. I get a thrill when I’m working and stop to do a trap, and a bird comes up close to me and pokes in the dirt. I’m thinking, ‘are they thanking me for what I’m doing?’. It’s neat.” Recently he’s been preparing tracks for bait stations and traps in an area that has been recommended for reintroducing kōkako and kākā now that the forest is regenerating through pest control.

**Richard’s whānau have a strong commitment to the wellbeing of Papatūānuku. Two of his sons contracts to NWR based in Taumarunui: Raymond, the goat culler at Maraekōwhai, and Jason who manages environmental projects. Jason was the young boy who took part in the helicopter survey of Maraekōwhai lands that led to the five kawenata. He then went on to study environmental management and planning at Lincoln University.**

**It makes a difference to Richard to work on his ancestral whenua. “I believe the old people kept that land for a reason, for the next generation. It gives me satisfaction to know that there’s something for our mokopuna and tamariki to go to.”**



# Way more than setting traps



**George Hooper, pest operations contractor of Te Tairāwhiti, just loves his mahi. “There’s not one day I regret going to work,” he says. “I just get into the zone and enjoy where I am every day.” Most days he’s climbing ridges to clear and set traps for pests that destroy the local indigenous forests and wildlife – namely, rats, possums and stoats. He’s on a mission to get rid of them so indigenous biodiversity can thrive and the native bird chorus can be heard throughout the bush once again. A long-term challenge, for sure, but after two years on the job he remains enthusiastic.**

What motivates George is working in the familiar Ngāti Porou territory. Contracted to Ngā Whenua Rāhui, he works on covenanted land on two sheep and beef farms in the Tikitiki-Rangitukia area near Ruatoria. Te Hāhā station has two kawenata blocks totalling 785.4 hectares, while the adjoining Te Kautuku kawenata block has 217 hectares.

George’s whakapapa to Te Whānau a Kahu hapū of the Te Araroa area, is through his father. “We’re linked to the land where I’m working, just outside the boundary,” he says. “I have pig hunted around this place all my life, I started about 10 years old. I know every hill between here and Ruatōria, and I got to a lot of different places breaking in horses with my uncles. There’s a wairua you get for this whole area, and now I’m trying to get rid of a problem to bring our bush back. It’s kind of hard to explain, it just feels good on the inside.” So the mahi to him is way more than setting traps.

Working in conservation was George’s dream as a schoolboy, but after a stint at local logging and silviculture, he ended up a sawmill worker in Napier for 10 years.

“I just missed this whole lifestyle, the freedom of this place. You know who you are back here, you’re not just a number. It hurt every year

not to come home. I saw nothing in town but cars, trucks and people struggling. It was a dream to come back and do pest control. I didn’t want to leave it too late and miss the boat, then regret not coming back to try.”

After finally making it home a couple of years ago George found himself “in the right place, at the right time”, doing pest control work as a Ngā Whenua Rāhui contractor. A year later, he had his own contract. For that opportunity, he’s extremely grateful to Ngā Whenua Rāhui. “They came to me and asked if I could work. After saying ‘Yeah, yeah, I can work’, I was contracted for a job, which I completed well and four months ahead of time.”

Working alone, George plays a key role in restoring the kawenata areas of Hāhā and Te Kautuku. Introduced pests have wreaked havoc on taonga species there. Precious manu like kererū dropped significantly in numbers, although they’re starting to return. “You’re trying to save the plants by taking out the pests, including hedgehogs. I’ve been getting quite a few of them in the stoat boxes, as well as bush rats that might be a foot long.”

George lives at Wharekāhika/Hicks Bay with his family. He travels into the kawenata blocks by motorbike, unless compromised by rain when a horse is best suited to the rugged country. Luckily for him, a bulldozer track cuts through the middle of one kawenata area, providing easy access to several ridges. Climbing up and down through the bush on foot, he methodically inspects his traplines. He sets and re-baits Sentinel traps for possums, checks bait stations for rats and mice

and, once a month, resets the DOC200 stoat boxes. For monitoring purposes, George records every trapped animal with his GPS technology and keeps notes for himself. The animals’ remains are removed and covered with leaves, to rot down into the earth. Then it’s back to the bike, or the horse, and up and down more ridges.

Landowners give George good feedback about his possum catch, he says: “They like seeing action and they’re getting action”. At one time, he’d been chalking up maybe 100 possums from the 382 Sentinel traps laid at Hāhā, and 50 possums from the smaller number of Te Kautuku traps. Lately he’s noticed possum catches are dropping, suggesting his control mahi is bringing results. Good results are seen also with the stoat control programme started in September 2020. Across Te Kautuku and Hāhā, there are 332 stoat traps in place and he says the catch that they yield is rewarding.

The real reward comes when the ngahere has revived so much that native birds can be brought in from elsewhere and released there - so the forest rings with bird song. George, now aged 40, says with determination: “You know, I might get to 50 years old, 60 years old, but I’m going to see the results, I’m going to push for results.”

George plans his work carefully, drawing on his knowledge of the whenua and the favourite places inhabited by pests. “I know how to cut across through the bush to exactly where every trap is, without having follow the tracks around,” he says. “I know which trap lines to work on at the start of the week when I feel fit. I bang those out and towards the end of the week I know the

quieter lines are there. If I feel a bit tired, I’ve got lines that I know I don’t have to push for, I know they’ll pay. I know where to stop and have lunch, maybe down by a creek.”

He is also familiar with some wāhi tapu sites in and around the kawenata blocks and has worked with farm management to protect them. “I know a few stories from growing up here. There’s a famous place where all the young fullas got taken to be trained to be warriors, and a couple of pa sites I know of. I’ve heard a lot of people talk about spooky places on the land, a couple of creeks where they say this and that, and sometimes you do feel a little bit of a cold thing. But I just talk to the tipuna, ‘I’m here to do my mahi, I’m not here to touch and upset anybody’ and it all goes away.”

Working alone in the bush, sleeping in shearers’ quarters, spending stretches of four nights or so away from home is not a problem for George. He prefers to work by himself, he says, and is well prepared for any emergencies that may arise. “The hardest part is leaving my kids and leaving my partner behind to do all the work at home.”

The job is not all solitude. George considers it respectful to visit key landowners of the kawenata areas, to make sure they know who he is, where he’s from, and when he’s about to work on their whenua. “If you ring them up,” he says, “you’re just another voice on the phone, they think you’re a yuppy. Kanohi ki te kanohi, that’s what our people like. I have a cup of tea with the landowners – not all in a hui, not all in a group, but one at a time.”

“If I had the opportunity do this when I was a kid, before I left for town, I wouldn’t have gone. I know the young ones here that don’t want to leave and I say to them, look down this path if you want to.”

His dream is to take on a larger contract to train and employ local youth in pest control, and he hopes Ngā Whenua Rāhui will increase employment opportunities in the area. “This is Māori land, and it would be good to see more of our young fullas getting jobs, eliminating pests on these hills.

**“I LOVE WORKING FOR NGĀ WHENUA RĀHUI – THEY TREAT YOU LIKE A MATE, NOT A SLAVE. I THINK THEY’RE REAL GOOD FOR THE (EAST) COAST.”**





# Financial data



Our financial commitment for 2020/21 financial year was \$8,820,000 and \$6,066,000 for 2021/22. These figures do not include the Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund commitment of \$919,860.

Having suspended new agreement applications in 2019 to clear a backlog of operational work, ongoing delays caused by COVID-19 prevented us from substantially reducing unspent operational dollars. Consequently, we will carry a significant amount of unspent monies into the 2022/23 financial year. We have a relatively small unit to do operational work across Aotearoa

NZ and an inability to fill staff vacancies adds further pressure to complete work.

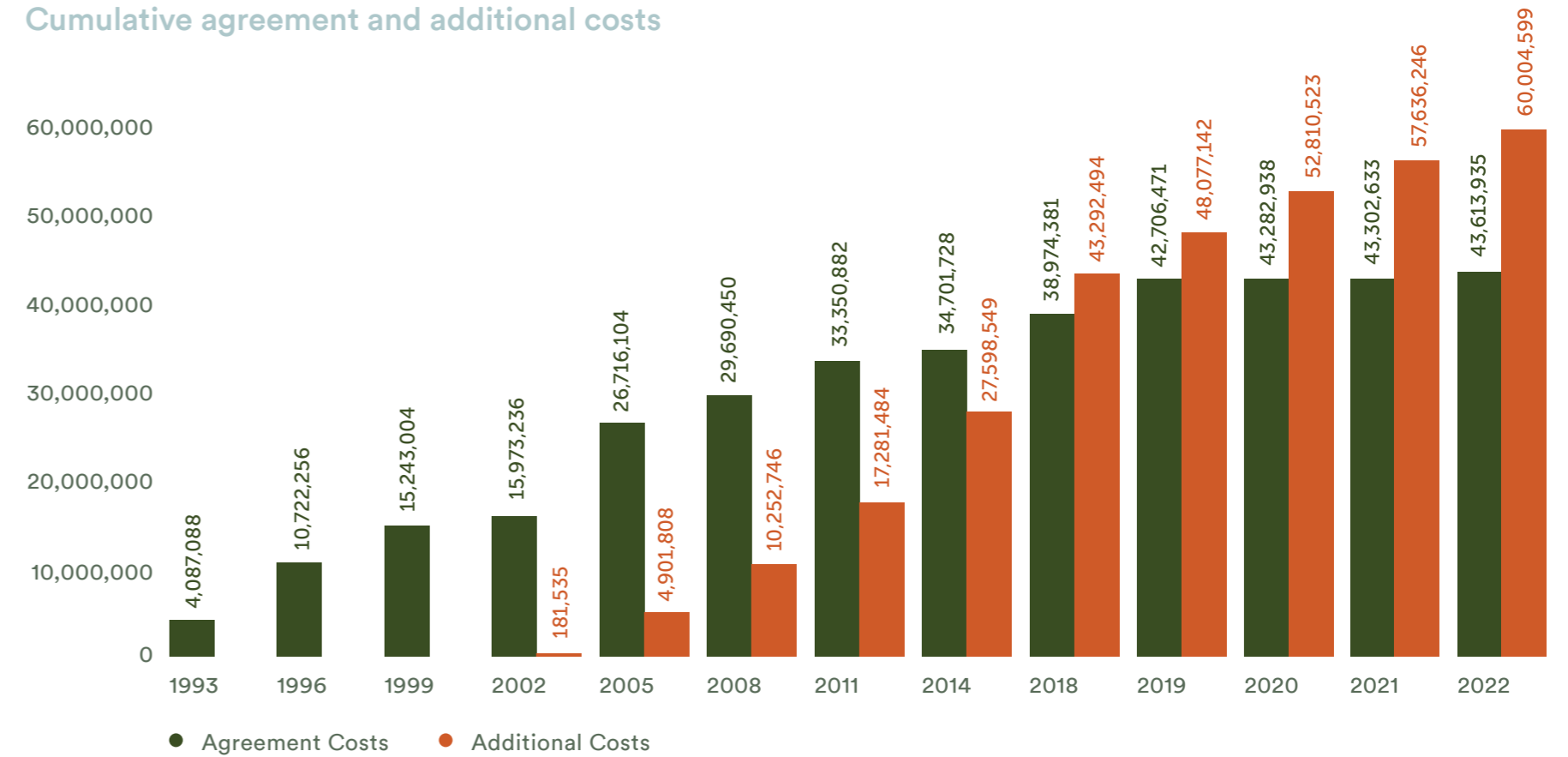
Landowner participation and engagement in the operational work for both existing agreements and initial works for new agreements, has increased. Our commitment to grow landowner capability to do the work will continue; we know this investment brings significant benefits to the land and the local people.

We are into the sixth year of reviewing our 25-year agreements. Whilst we can calculate financial costs per agreement reviewed based on

historic information, we cannot accurately forecast the financial implications to the NWR Fund.

Many kawenata trusts engaged to date have indicated a willingness to continue the agreement for another 25 years. Therefore, we know that for the majority of kawenata reviews, the common cost will be fencing repairs (for smaller areas 2 – 500 hectares) followed by a 1-5 year multi pest management plan for the significantly larger areas (1000+ hectares). This gives us a better understanding of expected costs to form the basis of financial planning and predictions for future years.

Cumulative agreement and additional costs





# Protected Areas signed since 1992

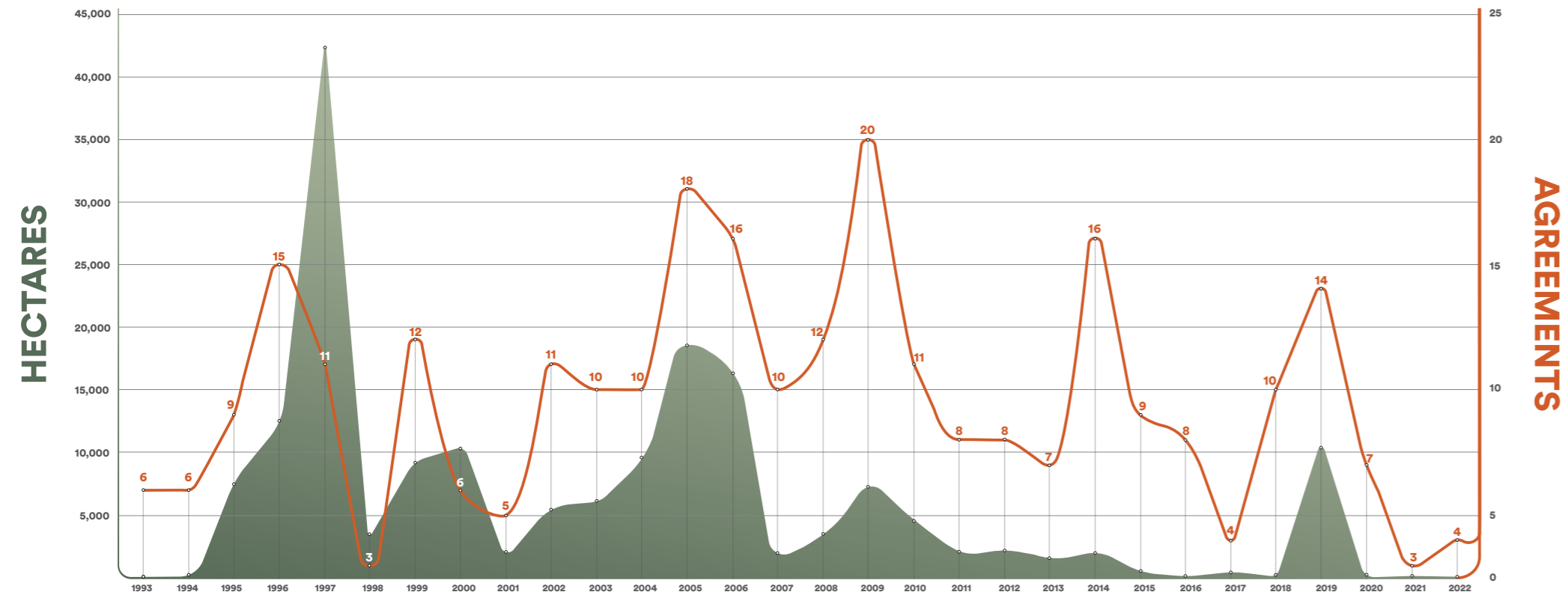


Image: Richard Tālaroa and Hōri Bardsdell on Maraekōwhai, February 2020





# Ngā Whenua Rāhui



[www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/nga-whenua-rahui/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/nga-whenua-rahui/)

