Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee
AGENDA

Notice of Meeting:

A meeting of the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee will be held on:

Date:	**Tuesday 18 February 2025**
Time:	**4:00 pm**
Venue:	**Lyttelton Community Boardroom, 25 Canterbury Street, Lyttelton**

Membership

Chairperson	Gina Waibl - Community Representative
Deputy Chairperson	Trudi Bishop - Community Representative
Members	Andrea Davis - Community Representative
	George Howden - Community Representative
	Ben Manson - Community Representative
	Tyrone Fields - Councillor Christchurch City Council
	Paul Dietsche - Councillor Environment Canterbury
	Amber Moke - Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke/Rapaki
	Rik Tainui - Te Rūnanga o Ōnuku
	Jaleesa Panirau - Te Rūnanga o Wairewa
	Vacancy - Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata
	Tori Peden - Advisory Member

12 February 2025

Principal Advisor (CCC)
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Zone Facilitator (ECan)
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Register of Interests: Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee 2023

Representative's Name and Interests	
Gina Waibl, Community Representative	• Owner of a forestry block with a number of springs (67ha) and a small flock of sheep • Predator Free Port Hills Steering Committee • Resident of Lyttelton Harbour
Andrea Davis	• Member of the Sumner Community Residents' Association - Environment • Trustee of the Huxster Mountain Bike Trust • Owner/operator Andrea Davis Landscapes, specialising in green roofs • Students at Lincoln – Masters Planning
Councillor Paul Dietsche ECan	• Founder/Chair Te Puna - Auaha Lyttelton community shed project • Co-founder and volunteer Lyttelton Library of Tools and Things
Ben Manson	Farm owner of 400 hectares in Little River Property leased for farming • Akaroa "Onuku" - G Hamilton 300 hectares • Akaroa "Onuku Heights" - J Gibbs 250 hectares • Christchurch, McLeans Island - ECan Fulton Hogan 470 hectares Interests and committees • Banks Peninsula Collie Club • Cricket coach for Banks Peninsula girls team • NZ sheep dog trial course inspector • Member of Little River show committee
Amber Moke	• Resident of Whakaraupō Lyttelton Harbour • Representative for Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke - Christchurch West Melton Water Zone Committee & • Representative for Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke - Te Ūaka Lyttelton Museum Steering Committee • Contractor for University of Canterbury Engineering - Māori Project Co-ordinator for Clean Water Technologies • Member of Endeavour Waste Management Project for Wairewa Marae • Freelance Graphic Designer / Creative • Student at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa
Rik Tainui	• Chairperson of Ōnuku Marae • Ngāi Tahu Board member • Trustee; Akaroa Health Centre, Positive Direction Trust, Maahanui Kurataio • Banks Peninsula Predator Free Governance Group • Ōnuku Representative @ Tuia • Ōnuku Representative for Te Paiherenga
Councillor Tyrone Fields, Christchurch City Council	• Registered Social Worker, Social Workers Registration Board • Member, Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers • Member, Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee • Trustee, Canterbury Museum Trust Board • Member, New Zealand Labour Party • Member, Lyttelton Community Association • Trustee, Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum Trust • Trustee, Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust • Member, Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour Governance Group

	• Deputy Chair, Lyttelton Port Welfare Committee • Board Member, Summit Road Society • Committee Member, Akaroa War Memorial Society • Member, Pest Free Banks Peninsula Project Oversight Group

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Karakia Tīmatanga

Whakataka te hau ki te uru	*English translation*
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga	Cease the winds from the west
Kia mākinakina ki uta	Cease the winds from the south
Kia mātaratara ki tai	Let the breeze blow over the land
E hī ake ana te atakura	Let the breeze blow over the ocean
He tio, he huka, he hau hunga	Let the red-tipped dawn come with a sharpened air.
Tihei mauri ora!	A touch of frost, a promise of a glorious day.

1. Apologies

Apologies will be recorded at the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of the need to be vigilant and to stand aside from decision-making when a conflict arises between their role as an elected representative and any private or other external interest they might have.

3. Updates from Banks Peninsula Zone Committee Members

An opportunity for members to highlight events/meetings/issues relevant to the Zone Committee.

4. Confirmation of Previous Minutes Te Whakaāe o te hui o mua

That the minutes of the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 26 November 2024 be confirmed (refer page 6).

5. Deputations by Appointment Ngā Huinga Whakaritenga

Deputations will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

6. Identification of Urgent Items from Committee Members Te Tautohu i ngā Take Nonoi nā ngā Mema Komiti

Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee
OPEN MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 26 November 2024
Time: 4:08 pm
Venue: Committee Room 2, Level 2, Civic Offices, 53 Hereford Street

Present

Chairperson	Gina Waibl - Community Representative
Deputy Chairperson	Trudi Bishop - Community Representative
Members	Andrea Davis - Community Representative
	Ben Manson - Community Representative via Audio/Visual
	Tyrone Fields - Councillor Christchurch City Council
	Paul Dietsche - Councillor Environment Canterbury via Audio/Visual
	Amber Moke - Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke/Rapaki via Audio/Visual
	Jaleesa Panirau – Te Rūnanga o Wairewa via Audio/Visual

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www.ecan.govt.nz/news-and-notices/minutes/Pages/Default.aspx

Karakia Tīmatanga

The agenda was dealt with in the following order.

1. Apologies Ngā Whakapāha

Committee Resolved BPZC/2024/00012

That the apologies from Rik Tainui and George Howden for absence be accepted.

Gina Waibl/Andrea Davis **Carried**

2. Declarations of Interest Ngā Whakapuaki Aronga

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

3. Updates from Banks Peninsula Zone Committee Members

There were no updates from Zone Committee members.

4. Confirmation of Previous Minutes Te Whakaāe o te hui o mua

Committee Resolved BPZC/2024/00013

That the minutes of the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 17 September 2024 be confirmed.

Gina Waibl/Tyrone Fields **Carried**

5. Deputations by Appointment Ngā Huinga Whakaritenga

There were no deputations by appointment.

6. Identification of Urgent Items by Committee Members Te Tautohu i ngā Take Nonoi nā ngā Mema Komiti

There were no urgent items identified by Zone Committee members.

7. Recommendations for allocation of CWMS Action Plan Budget in Banks Peninsula Zone

Committee Comment

- Members held a round table discussion to reach a consensus on the Zone Committee's recommended funding amounts. Members reviewed each application and its alignment with the funding criteria.
- Members took into consideration the staff recommended funding amount, the applications alignment with the funding criteria, previous funding granted to repeat applications and

the applications alignment with other funds available from Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury and other organisations.

Officer Recommendations

That the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee:

1. Receives the information in the Recommendations for allocation of CWMS Action Plan Budget in Banks Peninsula Zone Report.
2. Recommends that Environment Canterbury approves the expenditure for the following projects to the following entities:
    a. $6,720 to Conservation Volunteers NZ for 'Whaka-ora Pest Project'
    b. $3,500 to Environment Canterbury 'Banks Peninsula pekapeka (longtail bat) survey project 2024-2025'
    c. $12,568 to EOS Ecology for 'Nature Agents – Ngā kaitaunaki taiao'
    d. $4,000 to AGLS Faculty Lincoln University for the PhD Project – 'The potential to use sediment from Wairewa to establish taonga species on Kaitōrete spit and adjacent lands (PhD Project)'
    e. $5,712 to Living Springs for 'Living Springs Enviro-2025'
    f. $10,000 to Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust for 'BPCT Operational Costs'
    g. $2,500 to Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust for 'BPCT Farm Biodiversity Programme'

Committee Resolved BPZC/2024/00014

That the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee:

1. Receives the information in the Recommendations for allocation of CWMS Action Plan Budget in Banks Peninsula Zone Report.
2. Recommends that Environment Canterbury approves the expenditure for the following projects to the following entities:
    a. $5,200 to Conservation Volunteers NZ for 'Whaka-ora Pest Project'
    b. $6,500 to Environment Canterbury 'Banks Peninsula pekapeka (longtail bat) survey project 2024-2025'
    c. $5000 to EOS Ecology for 'Nature Agents – Ngā kaitaunaki taiao'
    d. $4,800 to AGLS Faculty Lincoln University for the PhD Project – 'The potential to use sediment from Wairewa to establish taonga species on Kaitōrete spit and adjacent lands (PhD Project)'
    e. $11,000 to Living Springs for 'Living Springs Enviro-2025'
    f. $10,000 to Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust for 'BPCT Operational Costs'
    g. $2,500 to Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust for 'BPCT Farm Biodiversity Programme'

Trudi Bishop/Andrea Davis **Carried**

8. Committee Updates

Committee Resolved BPZC/2024/00015

Officer Recommendations accepted without change

That the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee:

1. Receives the information in the Committee Updates Report.

Jaleesa Panirau/Gina Waibl **Carried**

Karakia Whakamutunga

Meeting concluded at 5:04pm .

TO BE CONFIRMED

GINA WAIBL
CHAIRPERSON

7. 2025 Election of Chair and Deputy Chair, and Committee Meeting Dates

Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/260369

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō : Jaimee Grant, Zone Facilitator, Environment Canterbury

1. Purpose of Report Te Pūtake Pūrongo

1.1 The purpose of this report is to elect the Chair and Deputy Chair for 2025, as set out in the Term of Reference (Attachment A). As well as review and amend, if needed, the meeting dates and times.

2. Officer Recommendations Ngā Tūtohu

That the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee:

1. Receives the information in the 2025 Election of Chair and Deputy Chair, and Committee Meeting Dates Report.
2. Elect Member X as Chair of the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee.
3. Elect Member X as the Deputy Chair of the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee.
4. Hold Meetings and Workshops of the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee by the following schedule:
    a. Tuesday 18 March 2025, 4 – 6:45pm, Workshop.
    b. Tuesday 29 April 2025, 4 – 6:45pm, Workshop.
    c. Tuesday 20 May 2025, 4 – 6:45pm, Meeting.

3. Report Te Pūrongo

The Zone Committee

3.1 The Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee is established under the auspices of the Local Government Act 2002 in accordance with the Canterbury Water Management Strategy 2009 (CWMS).

3.2 The Committee is a joint committee of Christchurch City Council, and Environment Canterbury.

3.3 The purpose of the Committee is to uphold the mana of the freshwater bodies within their zone by facilitating enduring land and water management solutions that give effect to the Canterbury Water Management Strategy vision, principles, and targets in their zone.

3.4 Committee functions include:

3.4.1 Facilitating community engagement and collaboration.

3.4.2 Facilitating the provision of advice through to councils and others contributing to freshwater management.

3.4.3 Enhancing delivery capability and coalition of the willing – working with stakeholders across all sectors to extend the resources available to implement the CWMS.

3.4.4 Progress annual reporting to the CWMS partners on progress towards delivery of the zone-specific priorities and CWMS target areas identified in the Committee's Action Plan.

3.4.5 The purpose and functions of the Committee are fulfilled by preparing a Zone Committee Action Plan to cover a three-year period that focuses on 3 to 5 priorities.

3.4.6 The Committee does not have the authority to commit any council to any path or expenditure and its recommendations do not compromise the Council's freedom to deliberate and make decisions.

3.4.7 The Committee does not have the authority to submit on proposed Resource Management or Local Government Plans.

Operating Philosophy

3.5 The Committee will always operate in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and Standing Orders of Territorial Authorities.

3.6 The Committee will observe the following principles:

3.6.1 Be culturally sensitive observing Ngāi Tahu tikanga.

3.6.2 Apply a Ki Uta Ki Tai (from the mountains to the sea) holistic approach that also enables cultural elements including mahinga kai philosophies held by mana whenua to be encompassed.

3.6.3 Consider and balance the interests of all water interests in the region in debate and decision making.

3.6.4 Work in a collaborative solution-focused approach using best endeavours to reach solutions that take account of interests of all sectors of the community.

3.6.5 Contribute knowledge and perspectives but not promote the views or positions of any interest or stakeholder group.

3.6.6 Promote a philosophy of integrated water management to achieve multiple objectives of the range of interests in water.

3.6.7 Seek consensus in decision-making. If neither unanimous agreement can be reached nor a significant majority view formed, in the first instance seek assistance from an external facilitator to further Committee discussions and deliberations. Where the Committee encounters fundamental disagreements, despite having sought assistance and exhausted all avenues to resolve matters, recommend that respective Councils disband them and appoint a new Committee.

4. Elections

4.1 Each year, the Committee shall appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair from the membership by simple majority. There is no limit on how long a person can be in either of these positions.

4.2 The current Chair is Gina Waibl and the Deputy Chair is Trudi Bishop.

Process to Elect Chair and Deputy Chair

4.3 A local authority or a committee (if the local authority has so directed) must determine by resolution that a person be elected or appointed by using one of the following systems of voting:

4.3.1 System A; or,

4.3.2 System B.

4.4 System A:

4.4.1 requires that a person is elected or appointed if he or she receives the votes of a majority of the members of the local authority or committee present and voting; and

4.4.2 has the following characteristics:

4.4.3 there is a first round of voting for all candidates; and

4.4.4 if no candidate is successful in the round there is a second round of voting from which the candidate with the fewest votes in the first round is excluded; and

4.4.5 if no candidate is successful in the second round there is a third, and if necessary subsequent round of voting from which, each time, the candidate with the fewest votes in the previous round is excluded; and

4.4.6 in any round of voting, if 2 or more candidates tie for the lowest number of votes, the person excluded from the next round is resolved by lot.

4.5 System B:

4.5.1 requires that a person is elected or appointed if he or she receives more votes than any other candidate; and

4.5.2 has the following characteristics:

4.5.3 there is only 1 round of voting; and

4.5.4 if 2 or more candidates tie for the most votes, the tie is resolved by lot.

5. Meeting Times and Dates

CWMS Zone Committees Review

5.1 The Canterbury Mayoral Forum launched a review of Zone Committees in 2023 to consider how best to include local leadership in freshwater decision making.

5.2 Following this review, a report was presented to the Canterbury Mayoral Forum (CMF) on 29 November 2024. After considering these findings, the CMF acknowledged the significant contribution Zone Committee members have made to freshwater outcomes throughout Canterbury, and collectively agreed that:

5.2.1 In principle, zone committees, as a consistent structure across Waitaha Canterbury, are in some places no longer the preferred option to support effective local freshwater leadership.

5.2.2 Further work is needed to refine what an improved model might look like, with another report planned to go to the Mayoral Forum in May 2025 seeking agreement to a proposed model.

5.2.3 In the first half of 2025, Environment Canterbury will lead this work with Councils and Papatipu Rūnanga, and to assist with how to transition from zone committee to any new model (see 'Next Steps' below).

Next Steps

5.3 In the interim period, through to June 2025, key areas where ongoing Zone Committee input will be valuable include:

5.3.1 Supporting work to complete the 2025 CWMS Targets report; and

5.3.2 Development of a handover document - Assisting in identifying local priorities for new leadership groups to consider, based on ZIPs, ZIPAs and plans that have guided Committee efforts to date.

5.3.3 If there is other work or actions that committees would like to do, including interim changes, then we welcome hearing about these.

5.4 The Terms of Reference state that the Committee will formally meet at least four times per annum and will hold workshops and host additional community engagement opportunities as required throughout the year. However, the transition to a new model needs to be considered when setting the calendar up to June 2025.

Potential Zone Committee meeting/workshop dates to June 2025

5.5 The following dates are based on last year's previous cycle of holding meetings/workshops/briefings on the second Monday of each month, subject to change where required:

5.5.1 18 March (workshop)

5.5.2 29 April (workshop)

5.5.3 20 May (meeting)

5.6 The Committee can have input on the location of meetings to encourage greater engagement on issues in particular areas.

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference	Page
A	Terms of Reference	25/260370	15

Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee

Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) Terms of Reference (revised 2020)

AREA

The area of the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone is shown on the attached map.

The Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone includes the takiwā of Te Rūnanga o Wairewa, Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke, Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata and Te Rūnanga o Ōnuku; and the administrative areas of Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury.

BACKGROUND

The committee is an expression of the partnership between Christchurch Council, Environment Canterbury (the Regional Council), Te Rūnanga o Wairewa, Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke, Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata, Te Rūnanga o Ōnuku; and local communities to implement the Canterbury Water Management Strategy.

The committee is established under the auspices of the Local Government Act 2002 in accordance with the Canterbury Water Management Strategy 2009.

The committee is a joint committee of Christchurch City Council (the Territorial Authority) and Environment Canterbury (the Regional Council).

Relevant Territorial Authority Standing Orders apply to the operation of the committee. This includes requirement to make a declaration of conflict of interest, keeping a register of interests and guidance on attendance and absences at meetings.

The committee will work as a committee and as individual members in accordance with Canterbury Water Management Strategy Zone Committee Code of Conduct.

PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

The Committee's purpose is to uphold the mana of the freshwater bodies within their zone by facilitating enduring land and water management solutions that give effect to the Canterbury Water Management Strategy vision, principles and targets in their zone.

The committee functions include:

a. **Facilitating community engagement and collaboration** – continuing an active programme of engaging with communities on freshwater management matters; and

b. **Facilitating the provision of advice** through to councils (relevant Territorial Authorities and Environment Canterbury) and others (e.g. private sector) contributing to freshwater management; and

c. **Enhancing delivery capability and coalition of the willing** – working with stakeholders across all sectors to extend the resources available to implement the CWMS, including connecting others to additional resources and seeking opportunities to promote, support, leverage and expand catchment-based initiatives that deliver the CWMS; and

d. **Progress Reporting** – annual progress reporting to CWMS partners on progress towards delivery of the zone-specific priorities and CWMS target areas identified in the Zone Committee Action Plan.

ZONE COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN AND PROGRESS REPORT

1. Ensure the purpose and functions of the committee are fulfilled by preparing a Zone Committee Action Plan that:
    a. Covers a three-year period
    b. Focuses on three – five priorities
    c. States objectives that the zone committee is seeking to achieve
    d. States the actions that the zone committee will take to achieve the objective
    e. States SMART measures to track actions and outcomes.
2. Review and amend the Zone Committee Action Plan at the beginning of every year to ensure the zone committee is still in agreement with the priority areas and the actions are still those the zone committee believes will achieve their objectives.
3. Prepare a Progress Report annually that:
    a. Highlights the actions of the zone committee and the progress it has made toward its objectives.
    b. Identifies the challenges and opportunities the zone committee see in the coming year.
    c. Present the report to CWMS partners.
4. In developing the Zone Committee Action Plan, the committee must work within and be aligned to the:
    a. Zone Committee Terms of Reference.
    b. Canterbury Water Management Strategy and Targets.
5. In developing the Zone Committee Action Plan, the committee will also be guided by:
    a. Committee's Zone Implementation Programme and Zone Implementation Programme Addendum.
    b. Iwi management plans that cover the zone.
    c. Community engagement and feedback.
    d. The triennial 'letter of shared priorities' providing joint direction on priorities for the zone committee from the relevant Territorial Authorities, Environment Canterbury and Rūnanga.

LIMITATIONS OF POWER

The Committee does not have the authority to commit any Council to any path or expenditure and its recommendations do not compromise the Council's freedom to deliberate and make decisions.

The Committee does not have the authority to submit on proposed Resource Management or Local Government Plans.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The committee will comprise:

1. One elected member appointed by Christchurch City Council.
2. One elected member appointed by Environment Canterbury.
3. One nominated representative from Te Rūnanga o Wairewa, Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke, Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata and Te Rūnanga o Ōnuku, with provision for an alternate Rūnanga member to attend zone committee meetings where desired.
4. Between 4-7 community members with provision that this number may be exceeded if Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury agree. Community members are to be appointed in accordance with the process below.

5. One youth representative may be added to committee (in addition to the 4-7 community members) on recommendation of the zone committee on a case-by-case basis.
6. Where a youth representative is recommended, expressions of interest will be drawn from Environment Canterbury's Youth Rōpū, Christchurch City Youth Councils and Te Rūnanga o Wairewa, Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke, Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata and Te Rūnanga o Ōnuku; and confirmed by Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury.
7. Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury will appoint their own representatives on the Committee. Te Rūnanga o Wairewa, Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke, Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata and Te Rūnanga o Ōnuku will appoint their representatives and notify Christchurch Council and Environment Canterbury.
8. Proxies or alternates are not permitted except for Rūnanga representatives and the Christchurch City Council's representative if/when the nominated representative is unavailable.
9. Any Committee may co-opt such other expert or advisory members as it deems necessary to ensure it's able to achieve it purpose. Any such co-option will be on a non-voting basis.

SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Community representatives are appointed by a panel of CWMS partners – a councillor from each council and a Rūnanga representative from each Rūnanga whose takiwā is within the zone. The panel will be chaired by an Independent Chair.

To be eligible for appointment to a Committee the candidate must live in or be able to demonstrate a significant relationship with the zone.

The process involves:

1. A public call for expressions of interest.
2. Application
3. Interview and/or workshop

Assessment will be based on the:

- Ability of an applicant to:
  - Work in a collaborative, consensus seeking manner
  - Work with local Rūnanga
  - Establish effective partnerships
  - Understand the complexity of freshwater management issues
  - Focus on solutions and actions, considering future generations
  - Understand the CWMS, the vision, principles, and ways of working
  - Demonstrate:
    - Commitment to community
    - Existing community networks
    - Previous experience in a leadership role
    - Experience working with community processes and/or groups
    - Initiate and inspire local action
- The Committee's:
  - Geographic spread of members across the zone
  - Balance of backgrounds, experience and interests

The selection process above will be primarily focused on appointment of community members to zone committee and may also serve to identify potential future appointees should a community member vacancy arise.

QUORUM

The quorum at a meeting consists of:

- Half of the members if the number of members (including vacancies) is even; or
- A majority of members if the number of members (including vacancies) is odd.

CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

Each year, the committee shall appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair from the membership by simple majority. There is no limit on how long a person can be in either of these positions.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Members of Committees are appointed for a term of three years, which may be extended on a case-by-case basis if Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury agree.

Youth members will initially be appointed for a term of one year, with the option to extend their term up to three years subject to availability.

Each Committee requires confirmation of membership by Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury.

Committee membership refresh will not occur within four months of Local Government elections.

There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a member may serve.

FINANCIAL DELEGATIONS

None.

OPERATING PHILOSOPHY

The Committee will always operate in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and Standing Orders of Territorial Authorities.

The Committee will observe the following principles:

1. Be culturally sensitive observing Ngāi Tahu tikanga.
2. Apply a Ki Uta Ki Tai (from the mountains to the sea) holistic approach that also enables cultural elements including mahinga kai philosophies held by mana whenua to be encompassed.
3. Consider and balance the interests of all water interests in the region in debate and decision making.
4. Work in a collaborative solution-focused approach using best endeavours to reach solutions that take account of interests of all sectors of the community.
5. Contribute knowledge and perspectives but not promote the views or positions of any interest or stakeholder group.
6. Promote a philosophy of integrated water management to achieve multiple objectives of the range of interests in water.
7. Seek consensus in decision-making. If neither unanimous agreement can be reached nor a significant majority view formed, in the first instance seek assistance from an external facilitator to further Committee discussions and deliberations. Where the Committee encounters fundamental disagreements, despite having sought assistance and exhausted all avenues to resolve matters, recommend that respective Councils disband them and appoint a new Committee.

MEETING AND REMUNERATION GUIDELINES

1. The Committee will formally meet at least four times per annum and will hold workshops and host additional community engagement opportunities as required throughout the year. At times, the workload will be substantially higher.
2. Remuneration for members will be paid in the form of an honorarium currently set at the following levels:
   a. Appointed members $ 4,000 pa
   b. Deputy Chair $ 5,000 pa
   c. Chair $ 6,000 pa
3. An expert or adviser who has been co-opted on to the committee is eligible for an honorarium at the same rate as an appointed member.
4. Staff or elected members of Territorial Authorities or Environment Canterbury are not eligible for remuneration.
5. Mileage will be reimbursed.

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

The committee shall be supported by staff from the Territorial Authority and Environment Canterbury, primarily through the Committee Secretary and the Zone Facilitator and senior staff member from relevant Territorial Authority and Zone Manager/Lead from Environment Canterbury.

8. Recommendation for Variation to Grant Agreement - Okuti River Project

Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/262423

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō : Jaimee Grant, Zone Facilitator, Environment Canterbury

1. Purpose of Report Te Pūtake Pūrongo

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee with information on a proposed variation of a grant agreement for a project recommended for funding by the Committee during FY 2021/22.

2. Officer Recommendations Ngā Tūtohu

That the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee:

1. Receives the information in the Recommendation for Variation to Grant Agreement - Okuti River Project Report.
2. Confirms its support for a recommendation to vary the Ōkuti River Project Grant Agreement (C22C/77455) between Environment Canterbury and Little River Wairewa Community Trust by allocating $3,000 of the Ōkuti River Project to the Okana Fencing Project.

3. Report Te Pūrongo

Okuti River Project

3.1 In 2022, the Banks Peninsula Water Zone Committee recommended, and Environment Canterbury approved, $5,000 of Zone Committee Action Plan Budget (ZCAP) funding go toward the Ōkuti River Project - enhancement of wetland margins for birds.

3.2 The funds were to go towards projects and activities to protect and enhance the wetland margins of the Okuti River and engage the community including: native invertebrate and fish identification; a community event; costs of getting a resource consent from Environment Canterbury for the digger work required for the wetland restoration.

3.3 The project is mostly finished and we are just using the remaining funds for maintenance of the most recent plantings (planted in 2022), ongoing willow sucker control and a bit of pest control to support the plantings and biodiversity in general.

3.4 $3,000 of the ZCAP funding had been set aside for swales/bird habitat creation but will not cover the cost of the required consents.

Okana Fencing Project – Funding Required

3.5 The Little River Pony Club have a long-term lease of the Christchurch City Council's Morice Reserve in Cooptown. They contacted the Okuti River Project Lead regarding riparian planting alongside the adjoining Okana River that they want to do.

3.6 A 100m fence needs to be installed along the Okana River to prevent stock access, enabling riparian planting and reducing sedimentation into Te Roto o Wairewa (Lake Forsyth). $6,000

has been quoted for the and half the costs have been secured and the remaining $3,000 still to be obtained.

Grant Variation Request

3.7 Grant agreements between Environment Canterbury and grant recipients can be varied provided both parties agree to it. For substantial variations, the Committee's recommendation on the variation is sought prior to Environment Canterbury making any decision.

3.8 A request to vary the Okuti River Project to reallocate $3,000 to the Okana Fencing Project was received from the Okuti River Project Lead.

3.9 The project lead was asked to complete an ZCAP Application Form to ensure both the Committee and Environment Canterbury have the full details to consider a variation. A copy of the application was sent to the Committee prior to this meeting for their consideration.

3.10 The funds are for a community planting project on the Okana River in Wairewa and will be used to help fund 100 m of fencing. The fence is required to prevent stock access into the Okana River and enable riparian planting to reduce sedimentation into Te roto o Wairewa/Lake Forsyth.

3.11 The project aligns with the following actions in the ZCAP:

3.11.1 Engaging with the community and partner with other organisations to encourage future proofing/resilience about:
3.11.2 soil conservation, erosion and sediment control (by preventing stock accessing the river);
3.11.3 water quality and quantity (raise awareness about water quality in private drinking supplies and monitoring water quality trends with the Wairewa Mahinga Kai Catchment Group);
3.11.4 and mahinga kai (Supports mahinga kai from Te roto o Wairewa and the Okana River (with an emphasis on tuna and kanakana; and increased riparian management to protect aquatic ecosystems).

3.12 The Little River Pony Club are putting $3,000 towards the fencing costs and 'in kind' mahi will be provided from volunteers at the Pony Club to clear exotic vegetation from the line for the fence.

3.13 The funds will be managed by the Little River Wairewa Community Trust and Little River Pony Club if a variation is agreed to.

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

There are no attachments to this report.

9. Committee Updates

Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/266661

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō : Jaimee Grant, Zone Facilitator, Environment Canterbury

1. Purpose of Report Te Pūtake Pūrongo

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee with information on topics relevant to the Committee.

2. Officer Recommendations Ngā Tūtohu

That the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee:

1. Receives the information in the Committee Updates Report.

3. Report Te Pūrongo

The following updates are provided for the Committee's information:

Progress Update on Review of CWMS Zone Committees

3.1 The Canterbury Mayoral Forum launched a review of Zone Committees in 2023 to consider how best to include local leadership in freshwater decision making.

3.2 Following this review, a report was presented to the Canterbury Mayoral Forum (CMF) on 29 November 2024. After considering these findings, the CMF acknowledged the significant contribution Zone Committee members have made to freshwater outcomes throughout Canterbury, and collectively agreed that:

3.2.1 In principle, zone committees, as a consistent structure across Waitaha Canterbury, are in some places no longer the preferred option to support effective local freshwater leadership.

3.2.2 Further work is needed to refine what an improved model might look like, with another report planned to go to the Mayoral Forum in May 2025 seeking agreement to a proposed model.

3.2.3 In the first half of 2025, Environment Canterbury will lead this work with Councils and Papatipu Rūnanga, and to assist with how to transition from zone committee to any new model.

3.3 A copy of the paper that went to the CMF is included as Attachment A.

Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust 2024 Annual Report

3.4 The Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust (BPCT) have released their 2024 Annual Report highlighting the achievements and work they do in partnership with conservation organisations, communities and landowners across the peninsula.

3.5 BPCT has received Zone Committee Action Plan funding for operational costs over the past three years. As part of the grant agreement, BPCT is required to submit a progress or annual

report outlining how the funds have been utilised. This report suffices that requirement, and a copy is provided as Attachment B.

Christchurch City Council Draft Annual Plan 2025/26

3.6 The draft Annual Plan will be considered by the Christchurch City Council at their 26 February meeting. The Council will be asked to approve the draft Annual Plan for public consultation.

Draft Adaptation Plan for Whakaraupō Lyttelton Harbour and Koukourarata Port Levy

3.7 The Coastal Hazards Adaptation Plan for Whakaraupō Lyttelton Harbour and Koukourarata Port Levy went to the Council on 31 January 2025. See https://christchurch.infocouncil.biz/Open/2025/01/CNCL_20250131_AGN_10410_AT_WEB.htm for the report, which includes the draft plan and the analysis of submissions. At the meeting Councillors heard introductory remarks from staff and oral submissions. Councillors asked questions for staff to consider and respond to, and the meeting was adjourned to allow time for staff to respond to the questions raised. The meeting will continue on 4 March.

3.8 The minutes of the meeting were unavailable at the time this agenda was assembled however, the recording of the meeting in its entirety is on the Council is available here: https://councillive.ccc.govt.nz/meeting/31-01-25-coastal-hazards-adaptation-planning/

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference	Page
A	CMF CWMS Zone Committee Review 2024	25/266662	25
B	BPCT - Annual Report 2024	25/266663	33

Canterbury Mayoral Forum

Date: 29 November 2024

Presented by: Craig Pauling, Environment Canterbury

CWMS Zone Committee Review 2024 – Reporting and Next Steps

Purpose

1. To report on the outcome of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy Zone Committee Review 2024 (the 'Review') and seek endorsement from the Canterbury Mayoral Forum on proposed next steps.

Recommendations

That the Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. **acknowledges that the Review has been completed, with the full technical report provided to territorial authorities, Papatipu Rūnanga, and zone committees**
2. **agrees that zone committees as a consistent structure across Canterbury are no longer fit for purpose**
3. **agrees that a proposed model of local freshwater leadership groups with core membership of territorial authorities, mana whenua, and regional council be investigated in early 2025**
4. **endorses work to be undertaken to refine the operation of this core model and to report back to the Mayoral Forum in May 2025, seeking agreement to the proposed model**
5. **agrees that this work should be undertaken collaboratively by staff from territorial authorities, Environment Canterbury, and Rūnanga**
6. **agrees that this work continues to be supported by a working group of Mayors, Rūnanga representatives, and the Environment Canterbury Chair.**

Key points

2. A working group of nominated Canterbury Mayors and mana whenua representatives workshopped (i) principles, functions, and bottom lines for local freshwater leadership and engagement, and (ii) models to achieve these principles and functions.

3. It was agreed that while the underlying vision and principles of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) remain sound, zone committees as a consistent regional structure are no longer fit for purpose and should be replaced.

4. A replacement model was identified that centres on connecting territorial authorities, mana whenua and regional council at a leadership level, with connections to local communities critical but best tailored at the local level.

5. Further work is required to refine the operation of this replacement model. This work should be undertaken collaboratively by staff from territorial authorities, Environment Canterbury, and Rūnanga.

Background

6. On 30 August 2024, the Canterbury Mayoral Forum (CMF) nominated four mayors to work with Environment Canterbury's Chair to workshop what local freshwater leadership the CMF will support into the future. The four nominees were Mayors Mackle, Bowen, Black, and Mauger. Mayor Munro later joined the working group.

7. Also on 30 August, Te Rōpū Tuia agreed to nominate mana whenua representatives to participate. The two representatives were Rik Tainui (Chairperson, Ōnuku) and Dardanelle McLean-Smith (Chairperson, Te Rūnanga o Waihao). Environment Canterbury's Ngāi Tahu Councillors, Crs Cranwell and Korako, joined the working group.

8. This working group met for two-hour workshops on 21 October and 4 November 2024 in hybrid in-person and online settings.

9. This report concludes the Review, with recommendations for next steps presented below for endorsement by the CMF. A full technical report will be shared with territorial authorities, Papatipu Rūnanga, and zone committees once finalised.

Workshop outcomes

10. Workshop content was based on the Review's empirical findings (see Attachment 1) and aimed at testing (i) principles, functions, and bottom lines for local freshwater leadership and engagement, and (ii) models to achieve these principles and functions.

11. There was a shared view that while the CWMS vision and principles remain sound, and provide a good basis for future work, the zone committees as a consistent structure across Canterbury are no longer fit for purpose.

12. While some committees work well and opportunities should be created to keep the momentum and membership of these committees, the majority of committees have not been well placed or supported to move from planning-centric work to an implementation work programme.

13. Through the workshops a preferred base model was identified as well as questions that require further investigation before this new model can be operationalised.

Key features of proposed local leadership model

14. A base model was identified that centres on connecting territorial authorities, mana whenua and regional council at a leadership level and at place, with connections to local communities critical along with the need to reflect a maturing partnership with

mana whenua. Connections to Central Government and industry alongside, and as part of, local communities may also be important for future success.

15. The working group recognised that the relationship of these three partners should be meaningful and have clear purpose – it ought to extend beyond loose connections and involve direction setting, and possibly support funding decisions to achieve outcomes. Members of the working group framed this well – it is about these local leadership groups confirming a master plan of local priorities and then utilise their resources, mana, and networks to support delivery towards these priorities.

16. The scope of the leadership groups was also discussed by the working group, and it was agreed that the fundamentals of the CWMS and guiding plans (e.g. Zone Implementation Programmes) remain crucial for identifying freshwater management priorities and focus efforts. Leadership groups may, however, wish to extend the scope of local priorities to other overlapping cross-boundary issues, such as land use, biosecurity, biodiversity and natural hazards.

17. The working group acknowledged that an approach is needed that achieves a degree of regional consistency from a membership and function perspective, with enough flexibility to enable locally suitable solutions, which will include determining at place the mechanisms for local community engagement, setting of priorities, and degree of investment support.

18. The group also noted that future options should be effective and efficient without duplicating existing structures or recreating known challenges to achieving outcomes. Successful examples of partnership approaches across Canterbury may serve as points of reference (e.g. Waitarakao Washdyke Lagoon Catchment Strategy and Whakaraupō Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour).

19. The success of future options will depend on clear responsibilities and accountability, with the support of councils and Rūnanga being critical.

Key questions to be considered

20. Some key design questions need to be worked through in early 2025 before final advice can be provided to the CMF. For example, should these groups operate according to existing CWMS zone boundaries, district boundaries, or be based on proposed freshwater management units?

21. Options for how these groups are mandated also need to be determined. Zone committees are joint committees of territorial authorities and Environment Canterbury, whereas other mechanisms, such as Whaka-Ora, are underpinned by a voluntary partnership reflected with a Collaborative Agreement.

22. These questions, along with operational details (e.g., options for wider membership, meeting formats and frequency, and administrative support), need to be investigated further.

Proposed next steps

23. Further work is required to resolve the questions outlined above and refine the proposed model. Under the auspices of the CMF, this work should be undertaken collaboratively by staff from territorial authorities, Environment Canterbury, and Rūnanga.

24. It is proposed that this work continues to be supported by a working group of Mayors, Rūnanga representatives, and Environment Canterbury Chair. The working group that met on 21 October and 4 November has been highly effective, and there will be ongoing value to support refinement of the proposed model.

25. Final endorsement from the CMF will be sought at its May 2025 meeting, in order to have new groups operational in the 2025/26 financial year.

26. This timing would enable further discussions in individual councils (noting changes to the zone committee approach will require decisions by each council given these are joint committees) and for the new structures to commence in the 2025/26 financial year. It is intended that new groups would operate within existing CWMS Zone Committee funding envelops.

27. It is intended that the CWMS zone committees continue their work in their current form until new groups are established.

28. A progress update will be provided at the CMF's February 2025 meeting, with a finalised model presented at the May 2025 meeting.

Cost, compliance and communication

Financial implications

29. In refining the proposed model, staff are working towards new groups being funded within existing CWMS Zone Committee budgets.

Risk assessment and legal compliance

30. Given the collaborative approach taken for this Review, key parties have received regular updates and participated in determining the outcomes of the Review. Therefore, no major risks or legal implications are foreseen.

Significance and engagement

31. This work affects the relationship and future collaboration between key CWMS parties, including territorial authorities, Environment Canterbury, Ngāi Tahu, the Canterbury community, and organisations with interests in water.

32. Further collaborative engagements between territorial authorities, mana whenua, and regional council are required at a leadership and staff level to refine the operation of the proposed leadership group model. Zone committee members will be engaged throughout early to mid-2025 as part of the transition to a new model by July 2025.

Communication

33. Progress updates on proposed next steps will be communicated through upcoming quarterly meetings of the CMF and Chief Executive Forum, as well as other avenues on an as-needed basis (e.g. Canterbury Policy Forum). Zone committee members will continue to receive regular updates.

Next steps

34. A progress update will be provided to the CMF in February 2025, with a final model to be presented in May.

Attachments

- Summary of the CWMS Zone Committee Review 2024

Attachment 1: Summary CWMS Zone Committee Review 2024

Background

The CWMS Zone Committee Review 2024 (the 'Review') aimed to address key questions about the future of local freshwater leadership to determine necessary functions, structures, and resources needed to support local leadership into the future. Led by Environment Canterbury under the Canterbury Mayoral Forum, the Review engaged a range of stakeholders between March – June 2024, including zone committee members, Canterbury Mayors, Rūnanga representatives, and Environment Canterbury Councillors. Several qualitative methods were employed to gather feedback, such as workshops, interviews, and surveys. Key insights from these engagements are summarised below.

Views on the current function of Zone Committees

Participants stressed that **Zone Committees have been an integral part of collaborative freshwater management** in Canterbury over the last decade, including substantial involvement in several plan changes, the development of zone implementation programmes and addendums, as well as by enabling a range of local community-led initiatives (e.g. catchment groups).

Additionally, many participants reflected on the less tangible, or associated, **benefits of zone committees**, including:

- being a **unique shared forum** for diverse community voices, local and regional councils, and mana whenua
- providing a **formalised structure for constructive discussion, functional disagreement, and effective collaboration** to establish shared targets, with the **support from facilitators and local and regional council staff**
- offering opportunities for **shared learning** about local freshwater issues, **capability building** (including for emerging community leaders), and in some cases **inter-cultural learning**
- **influencing local environmental efforts** through setting priorities, allocating and coordinating funding, connecting community members, and liaising with local and regional councils.

However, it was widely acknowledged that the **context for zone committees has changed in recent years,** partly due to:

- a **shift from the 'strategic phase' of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy** (e.g., planning) towards a stronger implementation focus
- more **directive national legislation** limiting (sub)regional flexibility (e.g., National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020)
- the **increased activity of catchment groups and collectives**, supported by national funding (e.g. Jobs For Nature), which leads to overlaps in function.

Many participants consequently expressed **a range of concerns about zone committees in their current form and function**, including:

- feeling a **loss of purpose and (political) mana** with councils, **frustration over limited progress with implementation** and their **inability to influence** this (e.g. insufficient

funding), their **role reduced to allocate funding**, and **significant uncertainty over their future**

- several participants acknowledging that, for various reasons, **some zone committees are disconnected** from councils, local community activities, and/or mana whenua (e.g., limited links to operational activities or lacking involvement in emerging issues)
- an acknowledgement that **support from territorial authorities and regional council has declined** in recent years
- some participants questioning zone committees' **efficacy and 'value for money'** in achieve desired environmental outcomes.

Considerations for the future of Zone Committees and local leadership

Participants outlined **broad considerations over the future of local freshwater leadership and the role of zone committees**. These considerations include:

- widely shared views that **collaborative approaches remain crucial**, including between councils, mana whenua and local communities
- a need to **maintain the holistic and systematic focus** of the CWMS and Zone Committees, with core principles (e.g. balance of views) and guiding plans (e.g. ZIPs) still relevant
- the importance of **maintaining strategic oversight** of on-the-ground activities, including but not limited to catchment groups, and of **addressing gaps** where applicable
- a need to **sustain lasting connection and coordination** among groups and individuals involved in local freshwater management, with a concern that **losing zone committees could disrupt relationships** formed over many years
- a need for mechanisms to **maintain diverse community influence on strategic direction and plans,** with a lot of current activities being led by rural communities (e.g. catchment groups) with **limited participation from urban, non-farming communities and mana whenua**
- having mechanisms to **achieve local community engagement**, including encouraging local participation and ownership to **achieve outcomes** and **create accountability** where required
- a need for **safe forums that bring together diverse local community voices, council staff and mana whenua** in a collaborative and inclusive manner
- a potential gap resulting from the **loss of Zone Committees' independent voice and their role as trusted mediators** between councils and local communities
- a need for **shared learning spaces** that help to **build capability and capacity**.

Following these requirements for, and benefits of, local freshwater leadership, views **diverged on whether Zone Committees (or similar groups) are required** in the future, ranging from participants advocating for their disestablishment while others prefer them to be refreshed and strengthened. There is, however, shared agreement that **certainty over their future role is required**, including adequate commitment from Environment Canterbury, territorial authorities, Rūnanga and other key parties.

Participants outlined **diverse recommendations for achieving effective future local freshwater leadership and engagement**, with or without Zone Committees. Relevant recommendations included:

- Several **principles that apply regardless of future options**:
  - diversity and balance of views should be supported, potentially beyond freshwater
  - clear purpose, adequate support, and targeted outcomes are required
  - acknowledgement that 'strategic' and 'implementation' functions may differ
- A **range of potential structures suggested,** noting those **should be effective and efficient**:
  - mechanisms for community connection and engagement, possibly formalised as sub-regional Water & Land Forums or Groups
  - umbrella groups that enable community and catchment groups, such Catchment Leaders Forums, noting that those groups may perform different roles to zone committees
  - advisory groups or community boards to support Councils
  - a Governance and Planning Forum or Committees with strategic oversight and potentially a broader focus than freshwater, e.g. including climate change and biodiversity
- Strong sense that **flexible solutions are need across the region** without one-size-fits-all solutions, while noting that support from **facilitation and liaison staff remains important**
- Acknowledgement of **membership as an important success factor**, with a need to maintain connections to local community and diverse views on suitable composition and size
- Range of suggestion for **more effective working and funding procedures** (e.g. fewer formal meetings and simplified funding allocation), but a desire to **keep existing CWMS funding**
- Widely shared view that for any successful future option **adequate support from territorial authorities and Environment Canterbury will be crucial**, including collaboration and coordination between them as well as effective support to enable local leadership.

Summary

The Review confirmed that Zone Committees in Canterbury have played a crucial role in collaborative freshwater management over the past decade, contributing to plan changes, zone implementation programmes, and community-led initiatives. They have fostered dialogue between diverse stakeholders, including local councils, mana whenua, and community members, while influencing local environmental efforts.

The Review confirmed that the evolving context of freshwater management, including national legislation and the rise of catchment groups, has led to concerns about the Committees' current effectiveness and relevance. The Review also highlighted that meaningful connection with community remains vital in shaping strong positive outcomes for water management.

In considering future leadership options, the Review has incorporated a wide range of views on the challenges faced by Zone Committees and outlines considerations for how to maintain effective local freshwater management and community engagement moving forward.

BANKS PENINSULA CONSERVATION TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Tree ferns in steep Wairewa gully.
Photo credit: Marie Neal

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Please note: Our Financial Statement will be produced and distributed as a standalone document.

The Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust was established in 2001 and is a non-profit organisation, a charitable trust under the Charitable Trusts Act, and is registered with the Charities Commission.

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CONTENTS

BANKS PENINSULA CONSERVATION TRUST TRUSTEES & STAFF

Penny Carnaby (Chair) is an enthusiastic Banks Peninsula resident with a home in Lyttelton, and a shared place at Otanerito. With her partner, Tina Troup, she has been supporting conservation projects on the Peninsula for over 30 years. In her professional life Penny was National Librarian and CEO of the National Library of NZ, Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa. She was also the University Librarian at Macquarie University in Sydney and Professor of Digital Knowledge Systems and University Librarian at Lincoln University. Penny retired from her role as BPCT Chair on 31 March 2024.

Jack Gibbs (Deputy Chair) lives within the area of the Wildside Project beyond Akaroa with his wife Charlotte. Twenty percent of their 240ha property is a dedicated reserve.

David Miller lives in Decanter Bay, where he has owned his farm since 2001. He was one of the earliest covenantors with the Trust. David has a background in clinical psychology and public health. He has worked in these fields in many regions for the United Nations and as the Ombudsman for the World Health Organisation and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, in Geneva.

Annabel Craw owns and operates Ridgecliff, a 420 ha hill country sheep and beef property in Chorlton, with her husband Hamish and three children. Alongside the farming business they operate Accrington Farmhouse, a heritage accommodation property. Prior to farming Annabel worked in agricultural consultancy and facilitation as well as marketing and advertising.

Edward Aitken lives in Pigeon Bay with wife Penny on a 1100 ha sheep and beef breeding property. Farm stay accommodation is available and Edward is a director and shareholder of marine farming companies in the area. Edward has had many years' involvement with Federated Farmers in the District Plan process, out of which BPCT evolved.

Philip Helps lives in Port Levy with his wife, Jane. Together they have farmed their Port Levy property for more than 40 years. Other interests include active involvement in a marine farming partnership. Philip's family has had a continuous association with the land as farmers on Banks Peninsula dating back to the late 1830s. Philip is an active member within the Banks Peninsula branch of Federated Farmers.

Ingrid Kerr is a chartered accountant working as a consulting CFO to companies across Christchurch. She lives on Mt. Pleasant and enjoys a family holiday home in French Farm.

Kate Whyte lives with her family in Lyttelton. She has significant experience managing ecological restoration projects on the Peninsula. Kate has been actively involved in the Trust's work since its inception and is committed to ensuring it remains a community-led organisation.

Paul Bingham Paul's career has spanned roles in a range of companies including advertising, technology, tourism and transportation. Paul is Chairman of Black Cat Cruises, Shuttlerock, First Table and Entrada Travel. He has also served on the boards of Air New Zealand, Ngai Tahu Tourism and Christchurch NZ.

Roger Sutton lives in Christchurch but spends a lot of time in Little Akaloa, which has been a very special place for his family for over twenty years. Roger has over 30 years' experience working in the energy industry, as CEO of Orion and EA Networks, and in governance roles with EECA. He also led the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, formed after the Canterbury Earthquakes.

Roger is passionate about conservation and protecting our native wildlife. He has a particular interest in sustainability and how we can do more to adapt to meet the challenges of our changing climate.

Hugh Eaton and his wife Jane live on their farm 'Stencliffe' at Pigeon Bay. Hugh has worked as a farmer, farm consultant and rural valuer for many years based in Mid Canterbury before moving to the Peninsula where they have family links back to the nineteenth century. Stencliffe Farm is a 220ha hill country sheep farm with two covenants linking the DoC reserves on Mt Sinclair to the valley floor. Hugh has a particular interest in evolving a farm system reconciling pastoral farming with conservation. He is also a trustee of the N.C. Rural Support Trust.

Ashley Warnes

Laura Molles moved to New Zealand from California with her kiwi partner in 2000. Laura is an ecologist focused on the behaviour and conservation of native birds. She has had the privilege of working with many of New Zealand's iconic species including kōkako, kākāpō, kororā, and roroa. Laura has been involved in the Banks Peninsula Tūī Reintroduction project since 2006, and was part of the team of ecologists providing advice on the development of BPCT's Ecological Vision. A former Senior Lecturer at Lincoln University, and Natural Environment Advisor at the Christchurch City Council, Laura currently works for Digilab where she is collaborating on the development of AI-powered, non-invasive acoustic monitoring tools.

Maree Burnett – General Manager
Lisa Chrisstoffels – Administrator
Marie Neal – Covenants Officer
Sophie Hartnell – Volunteer Coordinator and Te Kākahu Kahukura Restoration Coordinator
Lydia Laulala – Partnerships Manager (resigned April 2024)
Josh Foster – Farm Biodiversity Programme Ecologist
James Wright – Farm Biodiversity Programme Coordinator/GIS & information management
Sarah Hill – Accounts contractor
Nikki Hawkey – Communications contractor
Pip Tee – Caretaker
Sarah Wilson – Pest Free Banks Peninsula (PFBP) Project Leader
Tim Sjoberg – PFBP Elimination Programme Senior Team Leader
Sarah Bisley – PFBP GIS and Information Management
Oliver Rutland-Sims – PFBP Operations Coordinator Extended Wildside
John Williamson – PFBP Operations Coordinator Kaitorete
Hollie Hollander – PFBP Landowner Liaison
Alice Webster – Wildside Coordinator
William Fisher – PFBP Field Team Member
Fiona Waghorn – PFBP Field Team Member
Jason Millichamp – PFBP Dog Handler
Kurt Barlow – PFBP Field Team Member
Jayden Lum – PFBP Field Team Member
Karin Bos – PFBP Dog Handler
Blake Thomson – PFBP Leading Hand
Joe Hickey – PFBP Field Team Member
Lawrence Smith – Towards Pest Free Waitaha Activator
Te Rongopai Carroll – PFBP Field Team Member
Taimoana Bristowe – PFBP Field Team Member (started August 2024)
Chris Barker – PFBP Field Team Member (started April 2024)
Willard Gibson – PFBP Field Team Member (resigned February 2024)
Hannah Kiely – PFBP Field Team Member (resigned March 2024)
Alex Albright – PFBP Field Team Member (resigned January 2024)
Eden Liddle-Dalzell – PFBP casual staff
Guy McKinnon – PFBP casual staff
Graham Corbishley – PFBP Feral Ungulate contractor
Conservation dogs: Scmack; Bob; Terry; Nighdee.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust is powered by the people of Canterbury. As I reflect on the past financial year, I want to acknowledge the people who have supported our continued success - our network of supporters, partners, sponsors and funders, our staff and volunteers, and those who provide guidance and governance for the work we do.

For the past three years, Penny Carnaby has been at the helm of BPCT, guiding its strategic direction in her role as Board Chair. Penny retired from this role earlier this year, and I want to acknowledge her significant contribution to the Trust and to the community.

Penny's passion for knowledge is evident in her career - she enjoyed a long career in the public service, as both the New Zealand National Librarian and Chief Executive of the National Library. She was also the University Librarian and Professor of Digital Knowledge Systems at Lincoln University.

Her ability to engage and inspire has been of enormous benefit to BPCT. Penny has gained the attention, support and respect of decision makers at both local, regional and national government levels, and it is no coincidence that in these difficult financial times, BPCT's funding from agencies has actually risen significantly under her tenure.

Penny is a joy to work with. She is the epitome of soft power in action - demonstrating remarkable collegial warmth, but with a core of sustainable native hardwood. Thank you, Penny, for all you have done, and continue to do, for the Trust and its standing in the world.

Joining Penny in retirement is founding trustee, Kate Whyte. Kate has been deeply involved in the Trust from its very beginning, and we have benefitted greatly from her experience as an ecologist and ecological restoration specialist. Kate's fingerprints are all over BPCT's expanded and revised 2050 Ecological Vision and she has been enduring 'Trustee Emeritus' status as she completes some significant work for the Trust. Kate will remain associated with the Trust, and we will remain grateful for her integrity, honesty and sheer good fellowship over the years.

Our vision: Eight becomes 10: The 2050 Ecological Vision for Te Pātaka oRākaihautū /Banks Peninsula was revised earlier this year, to include two new interrelated ecological goals.

Our two new goals - to eliminate or control 'transformer' ecological weeds (Goal 9) and to improve native habitat corridors between the Peninsula, urban Christchurch and the rest of Canterbury (Goal 10) - connect with our 'original eight'. As you read the stories in this report, you'll get a sense of that interconnectedness - that whilst one story may sit under a particular goal, it will connect to others.

As retiring Chair, Penny Carnaby, so eloquently stated:

"The 2050 Ecological Vision for Banks Peninsula invites us to dream big, and to work tirelessly for a future where our actions today foster the thriving biodiversity of tomorrow. It is a call to unite in creating a better future."

The development of the 2050 Ecological Vision was a very substantial piece of work, driven by Prof. David Norton and with input from a number of scientists specialising in biodiversity conservation and management.

Home Sweet (new) Home. In late 2023, BPCT moved into new premises, located on the outskirts of Tai Tapu village. We will be forever grateful for the generosity of Kate Whyte and Bruce McCallum, who have been relentless supporters of the Trust over many years, culminating in the purchase of a property in Tai Tapu, which now serves as BPCT's HQ.

Having a dedicated, fit-for-purpose space – and one that can actually 'fit' everyone in! - has been transformative for both our work and team culture.

Celebrating 100! Our conservation covenants programme supports Banks Peninsula landowners to protect and maintain important indigenous biodiversity, landscape, and cultural values on their property.

We were so proud to celebrate reaching our 100th covenant earlier this year alongside property owners, sponsors, staff both past and present, and local community members. It was fitting that this achievement was on Annelies and Kees Pekelharing's property, as they are long time Trust supporters and part of the fantastic Western Valley Multi covenants group. A huge thank you to all our covenantors who have given a priceless gift for future generations.

I also want to recognise the collective effort that goes into covenanting – the extensive community engagement, advice, support and services delivered by the BPCT team to landowners, and in turn the support received from partners, funders and sponsors in making delivery of all aspects of the covenanting process possible.

Every covenant is part of a remarkable evolution, quietly weaving a mosaic across the Peninsula. To the end of March 2024, 105 covenants were completed covering just under1651ha across the Banks Ecological Region, with a further eight being actively progressed.

New expressions of interest are continually streaming in – it's so wonderful to have such a motivated community to work with.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Our elimination programme is the G.O.A.T!
Thanks to our partnership with Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury and the Department of Conservation, and with on-the-ground support from hunters and local landowners, we achieved eradication of feral goats from the 'true peninsula' this year.

Our combined efforts culminated in the project becoming a finalist in the 2024 MPI Biosecurity awards.

We are leading the way
Many of our programmes are being acknowledged as 'leading the way.' Politicians, councils, DOC, and many other groups and communities reference our programmes and are adopting our approach to help biodiversity thrive in other parts of New Zealand. We have taken concepts and ideas and turned them into reality – like eliminating hedgehogs on part of Kaitorete, getting rid of feral goats off the peninsula and successfully honing-in on feral pig populations.

Our field teams have learned lessons along the way, they've pivoted and changed their approach when they've needed to, they've worked tirelessly to gain the trust of land owners and communities, and as a result of all of this, we've brought to life our vision of "community led, and agency supported" programmes.

Another step closer to sustainable land management
I began my reflection by farewelling key Trust members; I will conclude by welcoming some new team members.

Earlier this year, we received funding from MPI to launch our Farm Biodiversity Programme.

The programme is designed to empower farmers to manage and enhance biodiversity in ways that also contribute to their farm productivity and profitability. We are delighted to welcome our new Farm Biodiversity staff, Josh Foster and James Wright, who will establish the programme, provide a strategic direction and no doubt, become part of future farming on the peninsula.

Taking the Peninsula to parliament
As the 2023 national election loomed, BPCT convened a 'meet the candidates' event. The event was well attended and served as a positive exchange of information, ideas and lively discussion. My thanks to Dr Vanessa Weenink (National), Dr Tracey McLelland (Labour) and Lan Pham (The Greens) for their willingness to engage; and subsequent follow up and further engagement with Laura Trask (ACT).

It speaks volumes that the Trust's work was referenced by our local MPs in their opening addresses to parliament earlier this year.

If you're reading this report, then it's likely you are a supporter of the Trust – and for that, I thank you. What started out some 23 years ago as an idea in the heads of a handful of farmers, has grown into an organisation whose influence and impact reaches well beyond the Peninsula. Our work is loved by our community and is becoming increasingly nationally recognised.

I also want to acknowledge our corporate sponsors, partners and donor community. We exist - and in fact we thrive - thanks to your combined generosity and support. The Trust particularly wants to acknowledge the ongoing support we receive from our principal corporate partner, Lyttelton Port Company. We remain ever so grateful for your active commitment to, and engagement with, BPCT. We also extend gratitude for the investment our city, district and regional councils are making to our work. Like us, they understand the value biodiversity brings to communities – underpinning our economy, and our recreational, social and cultural wellbeing.

The combined power of all of our partnerships – has seen a movement across the Peninsula, over the hills into Christchurch and beyond, of people relentless in their pursuit of recreating a biodiverse future.

A final farewell:
This brief review of our past year would be incomplete if we didn't remember those we lost along the way. Kay Holder, senior manager of Parks at Christchurch City Council, passed away in June.
She was remembered in a magnificently dignified celebration involving colleagues, family and friends – around 800 of them! May she rest in peace on the land she loved.

David Miller on his Decanter Bay farm. Photo supplied.

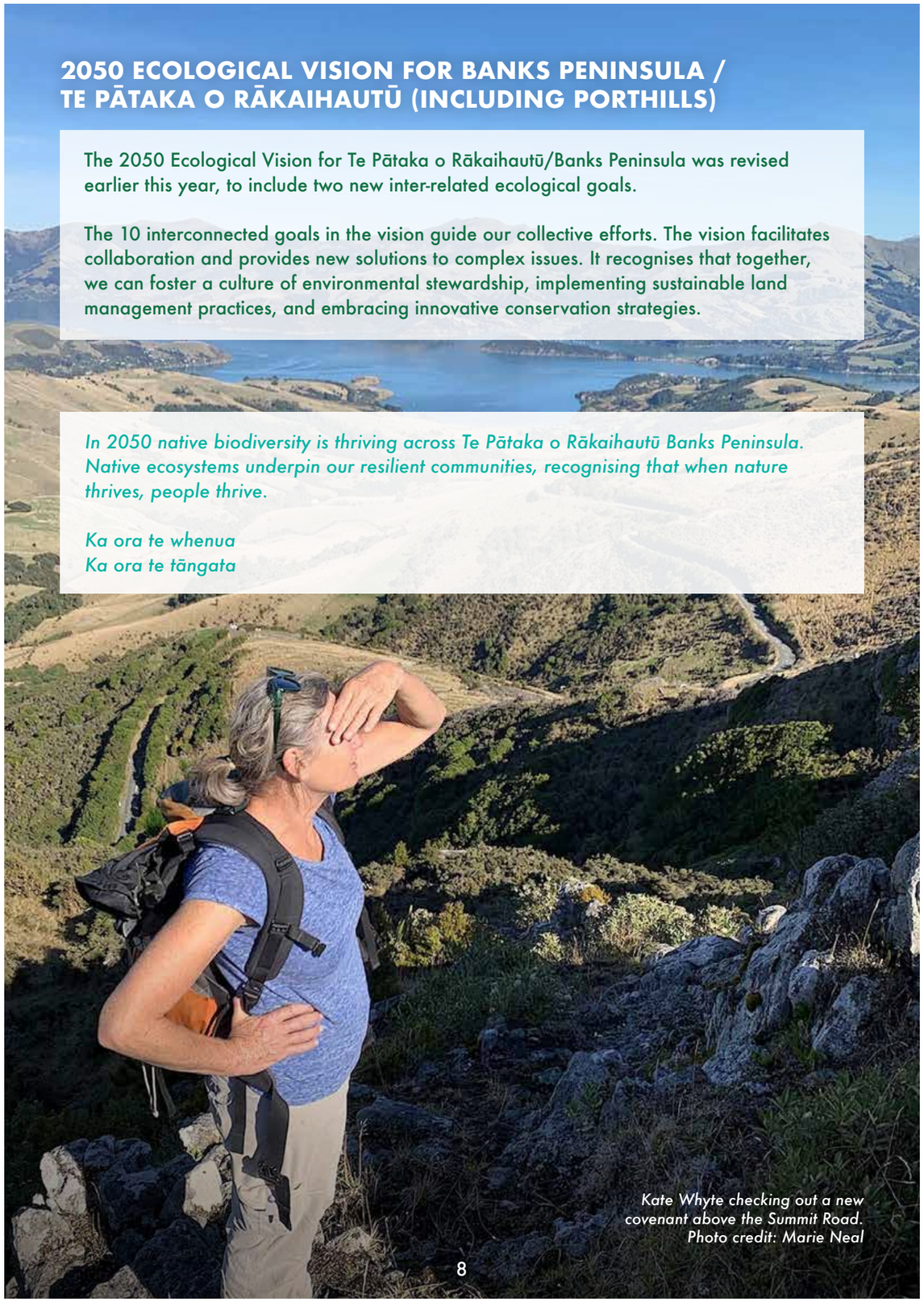
2050 ECOLOGICAL VISION FOR BANKS PENINSULA / TE PĀTAKA O RĀKAIHAUTŪ (INCLUDING PORTHILLS)

The 2050 Ecological Vision for Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū/Banks Peninsula was revised earlier this year, to include two new inter-related ecological goals.

The 10 interconnected goals in the vision guide our collective efforts. The vision facilitates collaboration and provides new solutions to complex issues. It recognises that together, we can foster a culture of environmental stewardship, implementing sustainable land management practices, and embracing innovative conservation strategies.

In 2050 native biodiversity is thriving across Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula. Native ecosystems underpin our resilient communities, recognising that when nature thrives, people thrive.

Ka ora te whenua
Ka ora te tāngata



Kate Whyte checking out a new covenant above the Summit Road. Photo credit: Marie Neal

GOAL ONE – PROTECT ALL REMAINING OLD-GROWTH FOREST REMNANTS

Covenant Engagement and Support Programme (CESP) visits to remnant blocks

Each year staff reconnect with around 20 covenants. This year we were fortunate that the set included five truly special areas featuring 'old forest' remnant podocarps – places that were spared from clearance. A whole chain of interdependent ecology in various canopy layers, from tree crowns down to the forest floor, has built up over very long periods around these ecological lynchpins. These ancient trees have stood the test of time and could never be replaced in multiple human lifetimes. Many of the old tōtara, mataī and kahikatea trees are thought to be 1000 years old, possibly even older according to some.

A lesser-known peninsula podocarp, miro, is also present but localised and not under a BPCT covenant. Thankfully there are wonderful specimens in DOC's Hay Reserve in Pigeon Bay. Red beech is another very special, uncommon species on the peninsula, and we are really looking forward to visiting an amazing stand of it near Flea Bay in the next set of support visits.

Thank you to the landowners of Mataī Podocarp Block in Koukourārata Port Levy, Tirowaikare in Little River, Kaik Hill on the Akaroa Heads and the two original Paua Bay Valley covenants. It is such a privilege to walk amongst these old tree communities – but primarily thank you for having the foresight to protect them for the benefit of the wider community now, and for future generations.

Team building at Tirowaikare covenant

In October, BPCT staff joined forces to help landowner, Wayne Beggs, at his family's beautiful covenant Tirowaikare (meaning 'view of the rippling waters'), overlooking Te Roto o Wairewa Lake Forsyth. It was a fantastic day clearing tracks through the centre of the covenant and carrying out weed control. This block houses many remnant podocarps, including monstrous old mataī and kahikatea, which tower over the other trees and shrubs.

Darwin's Barberry is a nuisance in the covenant, threatening to displace native regeneration progress. Many years of ongoing control work by volunteers and family has been successfully undertaken, but there is still work to do. We were thrilled to have secured funding for a contractor to carry out concentrated control in the difficult parts and thanks to the team day, there is now a good clear track to make access easier.

Pest animals are also present here though not in high numbers. The Pest Free Banks Peninsula dog handlers did an amazing comb through and got five possums – thanks guys!

A well-earned break over lunch was had while hearing about Wayne's work for DOC with kākāriki karaka, the orange fronted parakeet. How wonderful it would be to have these birds back on the Peninsula again one day! With the right habitat and effective pest control there's every chance it could happen.

BPCT staff enjoying the newly cleared track at Tirowaikare covenant. Photo credit: Ollie Rutland-Sims

Stunning ancient kahikatea towering over forest canopy in Paua Bay A covenant. Photo credit: Marie Neal

GOAL TWO – PROTECT THE FULL RANGE OF RARE AND NATURALLY UNCOMMON ECOSYSTEMS

Covenant Engagement and Support Programme (CESP) visits

Every year, we undertake a programme of covenant site visits, which enables us to work alongside landowners to assess the health and impacts of these precious, protected areas.

Catherine Marshall Reserve

Catherine Marshall Reserve covenant encompasses Duvauchelle Peak sitting at 738m above sea level and is an extension of the original Duvauchelle Peak covenant.

The covenant is home to stunning volcanic rock bluffs and boulder fields, which provide habitat for a variety of specialist native plant and animal species, as well as mosses and lichens.

Monitoring was undertaken showing the presence of three species not listed in the original ecological survey in 2000. The dainty *Asplenium hookerianum* fern, *Stereocaulon ramulosum,* a fruticose lichen, found in the sub-alpine rocky area, and a *Polytrichum* moss were all recorded during this visit.

Boulder fields atop Duvauchelle Peak and rocky bluffs below at Catherine Marshall Reserve covenant. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Hauroko Covenant

Hauroko covenant in the Kaitorete Ecological District is home to many unique species due to the sand and gravel substrate and environmental extremes of the area.

The area is of significant ecological value because of its many endemic species, such as Kaitorete prostrate broom, the peculiar leafless *Muehlenbeckia ephedroides,* and the tiny *herbaceous Galium* species "lake", which grows in open patches of stony ground. The covenant is fenced, and grazing ceased in 2005 allowing the native shrubs, climbers, ferns, and mosses to recolonise the area.

The diversity of drought-tolerant, wind-sculptured native shrubs is also of great botanical interest. The CESP visit showed good shrubland regeneration, and also highlighted the need for ongoing weed management. Because of its proximity to the settlement of Birdlings Flat and the many garden escape weeds present in the area, we must safeguard this regeneration from invasive species.

Native shrubland regeneration at Hauroko covenant in the Kaitorete Ecological District. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

French Farm Wetland covenant showing peat bog wetland and drier forest ecosystems thriving. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

French Farm Wetland

French Farm Wetland is one of only a few covenanted wetland habitats. The site provides an important refuge to retain biodiversity and ensure local persistence of wetland species.

Covering 4 ha, it contains a distinctive peat-based bog system with high plant diversity and native bush in drier areas. Bioindicator and photopoint monitoring were undertaken in November 2023, clearly showing that the exclusion of stock has increased native biodiversity and protected the peat bog ecosystem.

GOAL THREE – PROTECT STREAMS AND COASTAL SEAS THROUGH BETTER LAND MANAGEMENT

Pōhatu Kororā Colony

In-depth monitoring of White-flippered Little Penguins (kororā) at Pōhatu/Flea Bay continued throughout the year. The aim of the project is to better understand the population dynamics of one of New Zealand's largest mainland colonies of kororā, and determine survival, habitat use, foraging behaviour, diet, and the effects of marine and terrestrial threats.

The Pōhatu colony now has 248 actively monitored nesting boxes. Using a custom smartphone app, the birds are identified by their microchip and their weight,measurements, and general health is recorded.

Within the actively monitored nesting boxes there were 174 breeding pairs recorded, with at least an attempt at breeding (i.e., eggs were laid), 355 eggs laid and 289 hatched. 230 chicks fledged naturally after being fully raised by their parents, indicating an 80% breeding success. With intervention for a further 36 penguins, including supplementary feeding at nests and 18 chicks uplifted for rehabilitation, the breeding success rate increased to 85% for the year.

Kororā are a key indicator species, and understanding long term population demographics provides insights not only into the stability and resilience of the colony, but also on the health of the wider marine environment. This data can then better support marine spatial planning and conservation decision-making.

Our grateful thanks to the people helping the penguins - Rachel Hickox and the Helps Pōhatu Conservation Trust (HPCT), the Pōhatu Penguins team, Helps family, the South Island Wildlife Hospital, the International Antarctic Centre, numerous students and researchers from the University of Canterbury and Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, various funding providers, DOC staff, Julie Chandelier, NZ Penguin Initiative, and our many valued volunteers.

Kanakana (lamprey) Detection Studies in Banks Peninsula Streams

Lamprey *(Geotria australis)* are ancient fish, which have existed for more than 360 million years. There are 38 known species worldwide but only one is found in New Zealand. Once prolific, but now rarely seen, lamprey (also known as kanakana and piharau) are an important taonga species for Māori.

Over the last year, we have been working alongside DOC Freshwater Fish Specialist, Brittany Earl, to identify Banks Peninsula streams where kanakana are present and possibly breeding. Both eDNA and Polar Organic Chemical Integrative Samplers (POCIS), which sample pheromones excreted by the juveniles (ammocoetes), were used. Indications of lamprey presence were discovered at multiple sites,with most showing strong to moderate presence.

One of the monitored penguin boxes
Photo credit: Julie Chandelier

Kanakana/Lamprey discovered during electric fishing at Goughs Bay.
Photo credit: Alice Webster

Other research, including that undertaken by NIWA, indicates their populations are impacted by habitat loss, poor water quality, loss of riparian vegetation, drainage of wetlands and swamps and the effects of pest plants.

Our efforts to protect streams through better land management, and to enhance native biodiversity in the rural sector, will ensure we protect, restore and create kanakana habitat so they can continue to thrive in our waterways.

Whangairimu Covenant

Whangairimu covenant, in the heart of the Wildside, links with Hugh's and Haley's heritage covenants in the upper reaches and down to Shell Bay on the coast, creating a sea-to-summit area of protected habitat.

This sea-to-summit ecological linkage protects the species on the land and the sea with the gully draining into Shell Bay. The area is a rich habitat for seabird populations such as spotted shag, white-fronted terns, black-backed gulls, red-billed gulls, yellow-eyed penguin/hoiho, and the white-flippered penguin/kororā, which is endemic to Canterbury.

These taonga species are threatened by habitat loss, predation, and climate change, making Whangairimu covenant a valuable site for their survival.

Whangairimu was visited as part of the Covenant Engagement and Support Programme (CESP) in December. Since the last visit in 2018, the area has been affected by the devastating floods of December 2021. The visit showed the scars of this catastrophic event, but also the incredible tenacity of nature regenerating quickly.

Whangairimu covenant, protecting important habitat for taonga sea bird populations.
Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Flood Protection on Banks Peninsula
Protecting waterways on Banks Peninsula's hilly terrain literally has direct flow-on effects - all the way downstream through wetlands and lakes to our coastlines and ocean.

Protecting and enhancing riparian areas, together with the headwaters that feed them, is of great benefit. Biodiverse landscapes help support both environmental and economic resilience. Ecological protection and enhancement, such as restoration plantings and safeguarding existing bush, are valuable investments - reducing sedimentation and increasing erosion and carbon sequestration.

Since 2021 BPCT has been working with covenant holders impacted by the extreme flooding event that year.

Many covenants lie in gullies with streams running through them. The torrential rain set off a series of giant mudslides in Banks Peninsula's far eastern bays, compromising years of biodiversity gain. Seemingly random pockets of direct flood washout damage occurred, but the main threat to covenanted areas was the loss of stock fencing at overflowing catchment points and through slips. It doesn't take long for wandering stock to unravel decades of regeneration by munching their way through vulnerable, highly palatable species. This imbalances the area's ecology, meaning overall recovery takes longer. As well as unwanted nitrogen-rich dung in waterways, stock also push through bush breaking vegetation as they rub, and pug the ground damaging vulnerable new seedlings.

Covenant holder Orest Tarnawsky inspects flood damage in Long Bay Road covenant. Photo credit: Marie Neal

Environment Canterbury (ECan) responded quickly to the flooding event, providing access to emergency biodiversity funding, along with specialist staff. BPCT was then able to quickly get alongside landowners to assess damage and coordinate repair plans. Banks Peninsula fencers were also instrumental in the recovery. They worked in difficult terrain, trying conditions and under time pressure.

Valuable points reinforced by this experience are to plan fences wide enough around waterways, keep drains and culverts clear and establish well-designed floodgates - all simple but effective ways to help mitigate impacts of future floods.

Though aquatic life was devastated at the time, it is great to see recent sampling results from ECan of flood-affected streams now showing a good abundance and diversity of native fish species re-establishing.

Covenant holder Peter Richardson and neighbour Hugh Fraser repair flood damaged boundary fence on Long Bay Road covenant. Photo credit: Marie Neal

GOAL FOUR – ESTABLISH FOUR LARGE BIODIVERSITY HUBS OF INDIGENOUS VEGETATION

TE KĀKAHU KAHUKURA

Born out of a need to restore the Port Hills after the devastating fires in 2017, the TKK working group includes local agencies, community conservation groups, and private landowners.

The group has developed a strategic vision for the restoration of the area, spanning the Southern Port Hills from Victoria Park to Gebbies Pass, from the plains to Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour basin, including Ōtamahua/Quail Island.

The vision for Te Kākahu Kahukura is:

"The Southern Port Hills has a thriving and resilient indigenous forest that supports an abundance of native birds and invertebrates by 2050."

Te Kākahu Kahukura co-chair, Craig Pauling, planting tōtara at Te Mana Tamatea, Rāpaki. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Unfortunately, several TKK projects were affected again by the February 2024 Port Hills fires. The Summit Road Society lost some plantings in Ohinetahi Reserve and others in the area had losses or close calls. It is a sobering reminder of the fire risks that will only become more challenging due to climate change, and the need to counter that by planting species that are more resilient to the threat of fire and climate change.

TKK is part of the overarching 2050 Ecological Vision for Banks Peninsula/ Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū. While all of the goals of the Vision are relevant and interrelated, TKK particularly supports Goal Four, which is to protect core areas of indigenous forest of more than 1000 ha each.

Highlights of the work being undertaken by TKK partner organisations are detailed below and also referenced in a number of other goals in this report.

Te Kākahu Kahukura Working Group

Craig Pauling & Maury Leyland
– Co chairs
Penny Carnaby and Maree Burnett
– Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust
Sophie Hartnell
– TKK restoration Coordinator (BPCT)
Lisa Chrisstoffels
– Administrator (BPCT)
Marie Grey (retired) **& Paula Jameson**
– Summit Road Society
Paul Devlin & Alison Evans
– Christchurch City Council
Craig Pauling
– Te Ara Kakariki
Ian McLennan & Helen Hills
– Ōtamahua Quail Island Ecological Restoration Trust
Denis Aldridge
– Living Springs
Stephen Brailsford
– Brailsfords
Paul Dahl
– Ngā ti Wheke
Hamish Fairbairn
– Conservation Volunteers New Zealand
Will Todhunter
– Environment Canterbury
Sarah Wilson
– Pest Free Banks Peninsula
Shelley Washington
– Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust
Ken Rouse & Gavin Kingson
– Rotary Club of Cashmere
Karen Banwell (retired) **& Brent Barrett**
– Whaka Ora Healthy Harbour
Denise Ford
– Selwyn District Council

Te Kākahu Kahukura podocarp enrichment programme update

This project was initiated in response to Professor David Norton's assessment of the Southern Port Hills native vegetation and the lack of the mature phase podocarp forest species - tōtara, mataī and kahikatea.

Podocarps are an integral part of the forest ecosystem. However, their seed source is scarce meaning the enrichment programme is vital to the restoration of the Port Hills.

These forest giants provide the canopy of the forest, refuge for indigenous fauna and capture carbon for a more climate-resilient Ōtautahi/Christchurch city.

The TKK Strategy is to plant 10,000 tōtara, kahikatea and mataī in the Te Kākahu Kahukura area, from Gebbies Pass to Godley Head, with the intention of both enhancing native biodiversity values and for carbon sequestration purposes.

1165 tōtara were planted in 2023 across 13 sites in the Port Hills ecological district, bringing the total to 4165 tōtara planted since 2021.

500 podocarps, including mataī and kahikatea, have been ordered for the 2024 planting season and another 2250 for 2025. These trees are expected to remove 1813. 86 tonnes of CO2 from the atmosphere after 50 years and 6168.73 tonnes of CO2 after 100 years.

An important part of the success of the programme is the monitoring data collected by all planters. The monitoring received from planters shows that the survival rate for the podocarps planted to date is 85-90%. The monitoring requires planters to record the height at the time of planting and height, presence of dieback, and mortality in Autumn for two years following planting.

This highlights the importance of finding the right sites for these mature phase forest giant species and the importance of monitoring to build rigour around decision-making and to guide future decisions about site criteria and plant maintenance.

We would like to thank Trees That Count, who have generously supported this project with trees since 2021; Cashmere Rotary who are key funders of this project, and our planters for being such incredible custodians of these special trees. BPCT continues to support the podocarp enrichment planting efforts with volunteer help.

Te Kākahu Kahukura Kaimahi for Nature Whakaraupō event
Sophie Hartnell, BPCT, and Karen Banwell, Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour organised an event in October 2023 at Rāpaki to celebrate the incredible Kaimahi for Nature Whakaraupō project.

The group, which included Te Kākahu Kahukura working group members from ECan, Ngāti Wheke, Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust, Pest Free Banks Peninsula, Banks Peninsula Geopark, Summit Road Society, Conservation Volunteers New Zealand, Ōtamahua Quail Island Ecological Restoration Trust, Lyttelton Port Company, Selwyn District Council, Living Springs, Te Ara Kākāriki and local conservation champions and landowners, were welcomed onto the marae with a pōwhiri.

Kaimahi for Nature Whakaraupō project leads, Anna Columbus (Living Springs) and Dylan Steeples (CVNZ/Rāpaki), presented to the group and shared their work to date and future aspirations within the wider Whaka-Ora and Te Kākahu Kahukura projects.

It was incredibly inspiring to understand the magnitude of the project and the substantial conservation wins. Succession plans were high on the agenda as the funding for the Kaimahi for Nature projects finished at the end of March 2024.

In the afternoon, Dylan Steeples, CVNZ, and John Kottier, Ngāti Wheke, led a hīkoi to Rāpaki sites, 1A and 2B, showcasing the planned nursery and the extensive planting from sea to summit, ki uta ki tai, that the Kaimahi crew has achieved since the start of the programme.

This event was a fantastic opportunity to connect with Te Kākahu Kahukura working group members, mana whenua, conservation groups, and corporates working in the conservation space towards the aspirational visions of Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour and Te Kākahu Kahukura.

Ōpāwaho Heathcote River Network
2023/2024 was another big year for the Ōpāwaho Heathcote River Network (OHRN).

Here are some of our highlights:

- Commissioning and publishing an ecological baseline assessment of a headwaters spring (Bunz Stream) in a continuation of our journey in the Springs project to understand and publicise their importance.
- Being the subject of research by the Cawthron Institute into the effectiveness and challenges of collectives in environmental restoration. This has led to important discussions about how we can better achieve our objective of being a voice for the river.
- Supporting 25 community groups with equipment, tools and apparel, providing information for these groups and opportunities for sharing ideas, challenges and solutions to common issues.
- Undertaking a trial of wheelie bin latches in 700 households within the general catchment to reduce litter escaping into the waterway.
- Producing a treasure map as a mechanism for encouraging children's exploration of river reserves.
- Supporting the Te Tuna Tāone Action Learning Programme in local schools.
- Funding and supporting the Mother-of-All-Clean-Ups project and supporting the PickUp5 campaign.
- Community engagement activities including guided community walks along the river, speaking about river issues to community organisations and celebrating World Rivers Day with public information in South Library.
- Submitting on local government long-term plans and advocating for the river in Resource Consent application matters, as well as submitting on government environmental legislation - the Fast Track Approvals Bill and the Resource Management Amendment Bill.

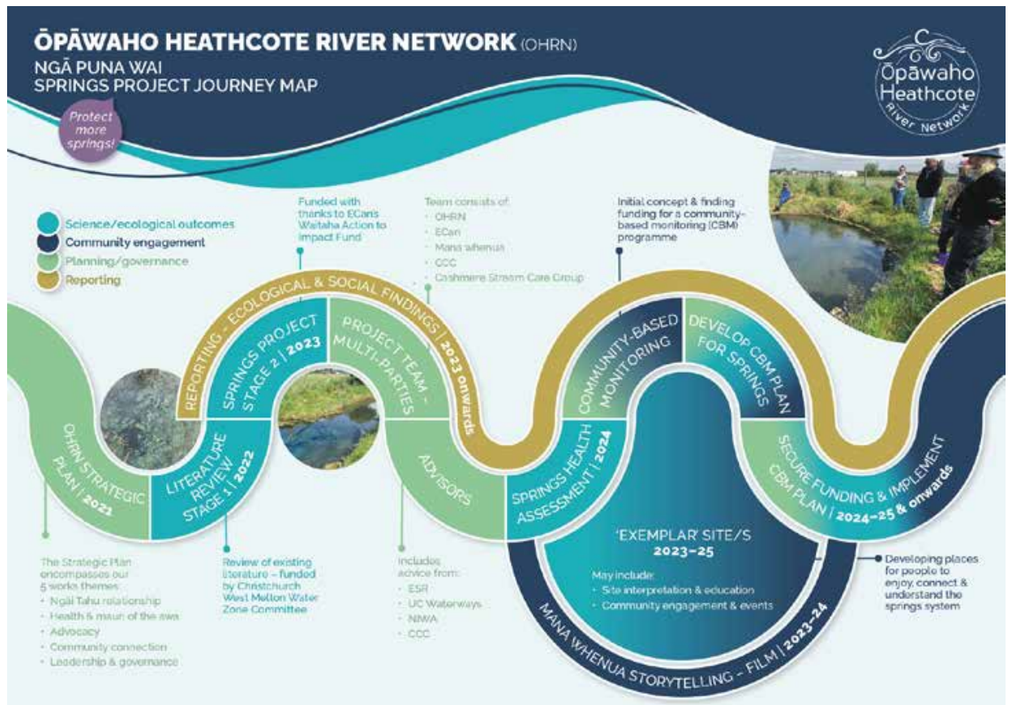
Predator Free Port Hills
Over the past year, Predator Free Port Hills (PFPH) has made significant strides in protecting Ōtautahi's native flora and fauna.

The first half of the year saw PFPH holding trap building days across Avoca Valley, Purau, Halswell, Mt Pleasant, and St Martins, as well as participating in local markets and fairs like the Mt Pleasant Farmers Market, Governors Bay Fete, and Orton Bradley Spring Fair. Our school programme expanded, working with Mt Pleasant School, St Martins School, Diamond Harbour School, and TKKM o Te Whānau Tahi, reaching new audiences and engaging nearly 1,900 households in the Predator Free vision.

In January, PFPH transitioned to new leadership, with Bill Martin becoming General Manager of the Summit Road Society, and Natasha Szczecinski McIntosh taking on the role of PFPH Coordinator. This change laid the foundation for further community engagement and conservation efforts. Following the transition, PFPH held additional trap building days at Te Kura ō Ōhinetahi Governors Bay School and Te Raekura Redcliffs School, supportedby Conservation Volunteers, Trees for Canterbury and Blockhaus.

Volunteers at Living Springs podocarp enrichment planting event.
Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Dylan Steeples leading a hīkoi onto the Rāpaki 1A2B Māori Reserve, showcasing the extensive planting of Omaru Stream linking the summit to the sea.
Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell



This year also marked a brand update for PFPH, featuring a new logo that reflects our mission and revitalised direction. Our digital presence grew, thanks to University of Canterbury students who created engaging social media content. Backyard trappers reported more catches, bringing the total to 12,737. We also enhanced our website, incorporating data from reserves with help from GIS in Conservation Volunteers, and supported the launch of Predator Free Selwyn, contributing to the broader Pest Free Waitaha initiative.

Many thanks to our volunteers, funders, and partners – your support is vital to our success.

Redcliffs Trap Building Day. Photo credit Alicia Moggrè

Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust

Highlights of Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust's mahi this year was hosting five walks during the Banks Peninsula Walking Festival.

The walks held in the Te Kākahu Kahukura area included Brice Falls Walk, Green Dots and Grand Views, Vistas of Te Kākahu Kahukura – Otahuna Valley, From the Valley Floor Changes at Omahu Bush and 5 Kids Adventure at Sugarloaf.

The guides included local landowners and members of Te Ara Kākāriki Greenway Canterbury Trust, Te Kākahu Kahukura, Summit Road Society and Predator Free Port Hills.The walks ranged from 2 to 6hrs in duration and participants had a fantastic time enjoying the scenery and learning about biodiversity and history.

Our Trust was pleased to provide the Summit Road Society with a grant to help them with track building and maintenance, signage and interpretation, re-planting post fire and rockfall remediation. We were also involved in the Head-to-Head Walkway, we provided funding support for a book on the history of Whakaraupō, and we published walking brochures and information for Governors Bay.

Of further benefit to Te Kākahu Kahukura has been our annual grant to Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust for the next five years, and funding for the Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour Pest Project coordinator. We also supported the Banks Peninsula Native Forest Climate Change Group, Pest Free Banks Peninsula and provided funding for feral pig and goat control. We made submissions to CCC, ECan and SDC that included requesting Te Kākahu Kahukura be supported, along with Summit Road Society, and other biodiversity and recreation work in the area.

Conservation Volunteers New Zealand

This year's planting season in Whakaraupō, within the boundary of Te Kākahu Kahukura, has been productive for Conservation Volunteers New Zealand.

We have supported the Lyttelton Reserves Committee, coordinating a fun community planting day up at Urumau Reserve, where we planted close to 600 plants with 21 volunteers.

At Steadfast Stream, we worked alongside the vibrant Cass Bay Reserves Committee on two different sites with two action-packed community planting days, during which we planted 1500 native species. One of these sites was also helping to support a slip.

We have also partnered with the Summit Road Society, suppporting their restoration efforts at Ōhinetahi Reserve after the Valentine's Day fire. Here we had a beautiful day, perched above the clouds overlooking the harbour, planting 450 mixed species.

Our Conservation Work Skills programme supported these restoration projects with site preparation, planting and layout. CVNZ's Whaka-Ora Pest Project is making solid gains as we continue to work closely with local trappers expanding to further reaches within Whakaraupō. In total we have now trapped close to 1400 predators across the catchment and cleared many hectares of weeds.

Summit Road Society

The Port Hills Fire of 2024, which impacted Ōhinetahi Reserve, followed a path similar to the 2017 fire but on a smaller scale.

This year's fire burned around 22 hectares, significantly less than the 80 hectares affected in 2017, leading to a more manageable response.

Following the fire, tracks in the vicinity of Mt Ada were closed due to rockfall risk, including popular areas like Bivvy Rock. The community's response was strong, with various organisations and individuals contributing to recovery efforts - notably a Give A Little page, which raised over $3,500 for fire restoration.

A replanting initiative is underway, involving 4,000 native plants, and is supported by volunteers, including the Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke Tiaki Taiao team, GCH Aviation, Conservation Volunteers Christchurch, Trees for Canterbury and Riverside Nurseries.

Other key contributors to the recovery include Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ), Christchurch City Council (CCC), local farmer, Ged Double, and, of course, the Ōhinetahi work party volunteers.

Our community planting days offer locals the opportunity to engage directly in the recovery process and this collective effort demonstrates the community's resilience and dedication to preserving the Port Hills.

The Summit Road Society is now advocating for a comprehensive fire management strategy for the Port Hills, acknowledging the recurring nature of such events and the importance of protecting both the environment and the community for future generations.

Ōhinetahi fire damage

Conservation actions on the Port Hills by Christchurch City Council
The Port Hills and Banks Peninsula ranger team have ongoing animal and plant pest control operations in council-managed reserves, and they also support the work of other conservation groups active in the TKK area, including the Summit Road Society, the Whaka-Ora Project, Living Springs and several reserve management committees.

This includes animal pest control for feral ungulates with a focus this year on Otahuna and Kennedy's Bush reserves. We have also completed coordinated toxin pulses in these reserves to control rodents and possums and we maintain trap lines across several of the Port Hills reserves for mustelids, rodents and possums.

Our pest plant control work builds on existing work programmes outlined in our Christchurch City Council Pest Plant Plan. This includes containment of species, such as old man's beard, spur valarian, Californian poppy and banana passionfruit, as well as pastoral weeds like nasella tussock, pig's ear, gorse, wilding pines and broom.

In addition, we have been doing threatened plant surveys, slow-walk transects to monitor birds and lizard survey work across the Port Hills, as well as preparing to get approval for brown creeper translocations into Kennedy's Bush.

The team has also supported the establishment of 37,800 plants in the Bowenvale Reserve this winter to reduce sediment run off and to connect with earlier established forest corridors.

Environment Canterbury: Banks Peninsula Rock Outcrop Protection:
Environment Canterbury (ECan) has worked closely with the Christchurch City Council, DOC, community groups and landowners to continue this project, now in its eigth year.

The work involves helicopter and abseil spraying of weeds, particularly spur valerian *(Centranthus ruber)*, on volcanic rock outcrops across Banks Peninsula. These rock outcrops are a naturally rare ecosystem, which provide habitat for numerous threatened and endemic plant species. Rock outcrops on the Peninsula have provided a refuge for flora from the pressures of grazing, fire, and land conversion. Weed species displace indigenous ones and form dense mono cultures. Many of these invasive species have escaped from people's gardens in urban centres.

Whaka-Ora produced a brochure on the 12 worst rock outcrop weeds for local Lyttleton communities to improve awareness, educate on best control methods and help people consider what they put in their garden.

Mt Bradley Spanish Heath:
ECan has been working with Te Ahu Patiki (TAP) Trust and Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour to eradicate a large infestation of Spanish heath *(Ericalusitanica)* on the slopes of Mt Bradley.

This was identified as one of the highest priorities in the 2023 Ecological Restoration Plan, developed for the TAP Trust by Boffa Miskell. ECan has been project managing this with Boffa Miskell staff and contributed funding towards helicopter control. Spanish heath limits the natural regeneration of forest and shrubland species in this environment and displaces low growing indigenous vegetation.

ECan is an integral partner in a number of BPCT's programmes, notably in Goal 9, where you can find out more about our work removing transformer weeds on the Peninsula, such as gunnera and pig's ear.

Mt Bradley Spanish heath. Photo credit: James Dobson

EMERGING NEW BIODIVERSITY HUB - WAIREWA SOUTHWARD

Having a significant area under protection enables more species' populations to survive and thrive through whole ecosystem stability. Whole catchment protections are the gold standard, especially when they reach ki uta ki tai – from summit to sea. Large areas act as bastions of refuge between ecological 'stepping stones' – isolated pockets of protected biodiversity across the landscape.

When effectively managed through well-maintained fencing and plant and animal pest control, they contribute significant biodiversity gains, improve soil and water quality, mitigate erosion proneness and promote carbon sequestration.

Across Banks Peninsula there are four major biodiversity hubs under way: the Wildside in the Eastern Bays around to Okains, Te Oka in the Southern Bays, Te Kākahu Kahukura along the Port Hills and another swathe of contiguously protected land now covering over 2200ha from Kaituna Valley to Waipuna Saddle, taking in protected areas on both sides of the ridge – including Mt Herbert into Orton Bradley and toward Charteris Bay, Te Pōhue The Monument and Western Valley.

The tenure of these multi-faceted areas is mixed between formally protected reserves and covenants by DOC, CCC, QEII and BPCT, plus some private areas 'just being looked after'.

There is a growing movement amongst communities to protect, enhance and connect where possible, from growing ecological awareness and in the face of a climate crisis. The sum of the whole is greater than the sum of the parts when protecting big areas, both ecologically and for direct community benefit and enjoyment. Efficiencies of scale also arise for their management.

There is a new landscape scale biodiversity collection gathering momentum from Wairewa southward across to High Bare Peak, into Prices Valley, and eastward toward Te Roto o Wairewa Lake Forsyth and surroundings, including Birdlings Flat and Kaitorete.

Key to this new area are four Wairewa covenants located on Latham's sheep and beef farm above Little River on the other side of Western Valley. The fourth one nearing completion acts as a lynchpin connecting two large existing covenants in the head of the catchment, with the third another headwater covenant in an adjacent gully.

These covenants encompass both new and existing biodiversity values, including majestic ancient forests of old tōtara and mataī trees that date hundreds, and some even to around a thousand years old - possibly even older.

Regenerating forest and bushland, and waterways that feed into local streams and water supplies, are important habitats also protected. They are havens for many ecologically rare and threatened native species, an amazing diversity having arisen due to a wide altitudinal range encompassing several diverse ecological communities over time. The impressive array of fern species is testament to this. Renowned botanist, Hugh Wilson, noted that "the ferns, tree ferns, very rare hanging fork ferns *Tmesipteris* species, make this a very exciting plot indeed, along with the superlative tōtara."

These Wairewa covenants give a valuable living insight into what Banks Peninsula old forests were like – and what parts of the Peninsula can be like again thanks to the generosity and foresight of landowners like the Lathams.

Landowners Matt Latham and son Guy with BPCT covenants liaison Kit Grigg amidst Wairewa covenants. Photo: Marie Neal

THE WILDSIDE

Invertebrate Monitoring

Several years ago, we established a network of wētā motels and wooden discs in collaboration with entomologist, Mike Bowie, and Lincoln University Summer Scholarship Students.

These simple monitoring tools for invertebrates were monitored over the summer months. 12 sites across private and public land were re-monitored, including three sites outside the Extended Wildside Possum Elimination area. At each site we had the challenge of trying to re-find six wooden discs, often covered in leaf litter and undergrowth on the forest floor, and at least 10 wētā motels.

Wētā motels often house our endemic Banks Peninsula Tree Wētā *(Hemideina ricta)* or Canterbury Tree Wētā *(Hemideina femorata)*, a range of spiders, leaf vein slugs or Waitaha Geckos *(Woodworthia cf. brunnea)*. Wooden discs are used to identify ground and forest floor living invertebrates such as worms, beetles, spiders, millipedes, centipedes, slaters and amphipods.

It was a joy to be able to employ Guy McKinnon to assist with most of the monitoring and be able to invite various members of the Pest Free Banks Peninsula team out to gain a better understanding of the biodiversity they are working hard to protect.

A very crowded house - three Banks Peninsula tree wētā in a motel. Photo credit: Alice Webster.

We are grateful to our team of volunteers and supporters who helped make this monitoring programme possible, including the Akaroa Men's Shed, who built the wētā motels, and a local arborist who cut the wooden discs.

The 50 wētā motels were made by residents living at Ryman Healthcare's Charles Upham retirement Village, and were distributed out into the community to allow locals to 'get up close and personal' with a range of invertebrates in their own backyards and farms. 10 of these new wētā motels were set up in the Garden of Tane by the Akaroa Area School Eco Warriors.

Tītī Monitoring in Stony Bay

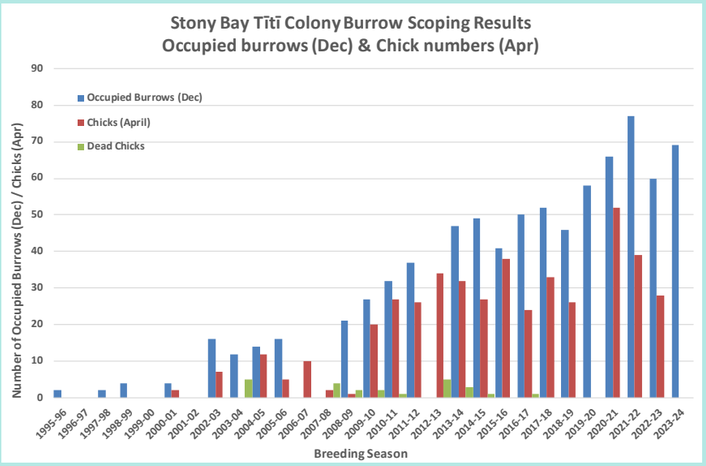
This year's monitoring showed that chick numbers (April 2023) were down again, likely due to egg predation by rats and the marine heat wave, which moved food supplies deeper and further out to sea, leading to lower fledging success rates across many seabird species.

However, occupied burrow counts from December 2023 show promising signs that the population is hopefully rebounding. 69 occupied burrows from 116 scoped made this the second highest occupied count.

The graph shows how important predator exclusion has been for the tītī population on Banks Peninsula. However, natural disasters such as the Christchurch Earthquakes and climate change leading to epic and isolated storm events – such as that of December 2021 Wildside Deluge – also show us how vulnerable having just one colony can be, especially poised on the edge of a cliff that seems to still be moving.

With increasingly wild weather events expected to continue, we know that the predator proof fence at Stony Bay is on borrowed time.

Earlier this year, we experienced some of the strongest winds ever recorded on Banks Peninsula, which caused damage to the top lip of the fence when nearby corrugated iron smashed into the fence before being blown off the cliff. It is clear we need to start thinking



about a site for a 'back up colony' and discussions with Ngāi Tahu secured $15,000 to fund an initial scoping report to look at possible other sites to establish tītī.

One of the best things about working with this tītī colony is the collaborative nature of this project and enthusiasm of everyone involved. Our thanks to local landowners, DOC, Christchurch City Council, ECan and Te Rūnanga o Koukourarata. Having a regular team from Te Rūnanga o Koukourarata help with monitoring is particularly special as we all work together to try to restore tītī nesting numbers to what their tīpuna would have once experienced all over Banks Peninsula.

Tītī monitoring Stony Bay. Photo credit: Alice Webster

Burrow scoping for tītī at Stony Bay. Photo Credit: Kaitlyn Leeds

Electric Fishing on the Wildside

The collaborative Wildside 'Electric Fishing' project to understand the damage to stream ecosystems from the extreme weather event in December 2021 continued throughout 2024. This year we 'electric fished' streams in Stony Bay, Otanerito (Narbey Stream) and Le Bons Bay.

Electric fishing is undertaken in small flowing streams, whereby fish in a defined 50 metre stretch of the waterway are stunned, scooped out with nets and placed in a bucket of water. They are measured and their species recorded, before being returned, unharmed, back into the stream.

ECan fish expert, Martin Rutledge, was pleased with the diversity of species found, however, it was noted that we didn't catch the numbers nor larger sizes of fish that we had done prior to the deluge event.

We are grateful for ongoing project support from ECan, Te Rūnanga o Koukourarata, Christchurch City Council and local landowners.

Electric fishing in Stony Bay. Photo credit: Alice Webster

GOAL FIVE – ENHANCE NATIVE BIODIVERSITY WITHIN THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

Farming a Biodiverse Future

It seems fitting for an organisation founded by farmers that in 2023 we launched our Farm Biodiversity Programme. Funded by the Ministry for the Environment's Essential Freshwater Fund, and administered by the Ministry for Primary Industries, the three-year Farm Biodiversity Programme is designed to empower farmers to manage and enhance biodiversity in a way that contributes to their farm's productivity and profitability.

The programme covers the diverse landscapes and catchment areas of Banks Peninsula, including the Port Hills and Kaitorete Spit. Farmers, and farming groups, who participate in the programme receive expert planning advice, user-friendly biodiversity monitoring tools, knowledge resources to help them better understand their local ecosystems, and a clear plan of targeted action to help improve their on-farm indigenous biodiversity.

Importantly, the programme integrates with the existing farming system and provides farmers with useful evidence of the impact their land management is having on biodiversity outcomes.

Whilst still in its infancy, the programme has a clear focus on the strategic and operational benefits it will deliver for the rural sector. They include:

- Enhanced productivity and profitability through multi-purpose land management planning (e.g., mitigation of nutrient, sediment and bacterial load in waterways through restoration of wetlands with plants and features capable of boosting biodiversity.)
- Advice on accessing government funding for fencing gullies, wetlands and other landscape features that make mustering difficult, but have great potential biodiversity value.
- Evidence of excellent biodiversity management, which is useful for farm assurance programmes, industry standards, and regulatory compliance.
- Improved ecosystem services – actions taken to improve biodiversity also provide benefits to the natural environment in the form of improved soil moisture retention, improved water quality, stable land and soils and extended flowering seasons. These ecosystem services all benefit primary production values and human wellbeing.
- Leadership – ultimately, this project will help to ensure that the practices of the Banks Peninsula farming community are recognised as a model for agricultural management, one that promotes the well-being of indigenous biodiversity for the benefit of the wider community.
- Landscape-scale benefits will be realised when groups of farmers are supported to work together at a catchment level.
- Developing resilience to a changing climate will benefit the farming operation, biodiversity and the community - for now and the future.

The programme leverages community and expert advisory groups to provide ongoing support and adaptive management strategies. Engagement with farmers, catchment groups, and community volunteers is central to the programme. Advisory groups, including the Ecological Advisory Group and Farm Community Advisory Group, provide expertise and feedback to ensure the programme meets community needs.

> Our Farm Biodiversity Programme builds on BPCT's long association with the rural sector and recognises the efforts of the farming community to interweave good farming practices with biodiversity enhancement.

Despite being operational for just six months, our small Farm Biodiversity team has already made a big impression with local landowners, catchment groups and iwi.

Case Study: Stencliffe Farm

In February 2024, the Farm Biodiversity (FB) team headed out to Stencliffe Farm, which is owned by Hugh and Jane Eaton. This was the team's first farm visit and was intended to test out the programme's biodiversity monitoring tools and tap into the wealth of knowledge and experience that Hugh and Jane have developed through their time farming the land and managing its native ecology.

Stencliffe Farm visit.
Photo credit: James Wright

The FB team were shown around Stencliffe farm, with Hugh and Jane discussing their ecological restoration journey and how they have integrated native forest, wetland and wildlife management into their working farm business.

While on site, several areas of the farm were identified as being of high biodiversity value, outside of the already-covenanted areas. Records of ecological observations and the history of the land's management were collected in the field and formalised back at the office in a Farm Biodiversity Management Plan. The report included a full census of the species observed on the property historically, and recommendations for actions that could be taken to further protect and enhance the identified high value areas.

Following on from the site visit and report, Stencliffe Farm has already put some of the recommendations into action, including looking into formally protecting two additional high value areas of bush through a BPCT covenant.

Looking forward:
One of the priorities for the Farm Biodiversity Programme is to seek out existing, and establish new, catchment connections. Emphasising and creating awareness of the importance of connectivity is critical to the programme's success. Therefore, we'll be looking to engage at a catchment level, which will enable landowners to see how their individual efforts contribute to the broader landscape-scale biodiversity goals.

Our other priorities over the coming year include:

- Addressing the challenges posed by invasive species.
- Establishing a monitoring framework to enable long term, continuous biodiversity monitoring.
- Utilizing eDNA testing and SHMAK protocols to guide freshwater management practices.
- Continuing to innovate and create accessible biodiversity data management solutions for farmers.

Meet our Farm Biodiversity Team

James Wright,
Farm Biodiversity Project Coordinator


James Wright

"After falling in love with the South, I relocated to Christchurch in early 2020. From there I've spent plenty of time exploring the surrounding hills and bush of the region, including the Peninsula.

I joined the team with a background of study in Environmental Science and professional experience as a Geospatial Consultant. I'm really enjoying working on this unique project and working with fantastic landowners and the wider Banks Peninsula community. I'm looking forward to seeing how our work can enhance the native biodiversity of the peninsula alongside the rural community."

Josh Foster,
Farm Biodiversity Advisor


Josh Foster

"I grew up in rural Wairarapa in the foothills of the Tararua Ranges and have always had a love for our farming landscapes and communities, as well as our unique native species.

Over the past 15 years, I have studied and worked in various ecology and conservation roles. I began my career in conservation through pest control and captive breeding of endangered birds and reptiles. In recent years, I have focused on understanding how to improve the quality and function of native ecosystems in the farm landscape and this is where I hope my work can have greatest effect. I'm grateful and excited for the opportunity to put my skills to work in the Farm Biodiversity Programme to support both the ecology and the people of Banks Peninsula."

Discovering Biodiversity in our Backyard
Peninsula farmers, landowners and residents experienced 'hands on ecology' in March, attending the Farm Biodiversity programme's first ever field day.

The event was all about understanding ecology and discovering the biodiversity in our backyard," said Farm Biodiversity Advisor, Josh Foster. "The number of residents and landowners joining us is a clear indication of their ongoing commitment and contribution to protecting the Peninsula's biodiversity."

"Landowners understand more about their local ecosystems than they get credit for. Our Farm Biodiversity programme can help them track simple but meaningful ecological changes in their forest and freshwater resources that can inform future land management."


Farm Biodiversity Advisor Josh Foster.
Photo credit: James Wright

Mataī Podocarp block covenant support visit
In mid-March we visited the Coop family's covenant in Koukourārata Port Levy. This fantastic mataī-dominant podocarp remnant lies in a sweeping valley in the lower part of the catchment.

It's a superb asset to the surrounding farm land and further enhanced by riparian plantings connecting the flow of biodiversity right to the bay. It was great to find that fence repairs required after previous damage had been completed to a high standard and general biodiversity is progressing well. The bird life was particularly lively with many species chiming in.

The next job is to nip a grey willow incursion in the bud at the bottom of the covenant to prevent this choking weed getting further established downstream.


View over Mataī podocarp covenant on Coop's farm to Koukourārata Port Levy.
Photo credit: Marie Neal

House Gully - new covenant

This 13ha covenant lies in the Okains Bay catchment near Manny's Reserve and below the spectacular West Peak Bluffs covenant registered by previous owners, Chris and Annie Thacker.

BPCT was thrilled when new farm owners, the Ruddenklau family, decided to honour the Thacker's vision by completing this third covenant.

The area comprises secondary growth kānuka forest, with interspersed hardwoods, including broadleaf, māhoe, kōwhai, marbleleaf, wineberry and a good variety of ferns (including silver tree ferns and the skirted tree fern). Shrubs and ground cover herbs, which had previously struggled to take hold, are now thriving thanks to stock exclusion.

Weed management is proactively being carried out on banana passionfruit and Gunnera (Giant Chilean Rhubarb) by the landowner, a contractor and collaborative agency work across the whole catchment.

The area protects a significant length of Opara Stream, and the new Okains Bay settlement water supply will be sourced from the land just below the covenant purchased specifically by the Council.

New fence on southern boundary of House Gully covenant in Okains Bay. Photo credit: Marie Neal

Beautiful view up Opara stream into House Gully covenant in Okains Bay. Photo credit: Marie Neal

GOAL SIX – INCREASE THE ABUNDANCE OF RARE AND UNCOMMON NATIVE SPECIES

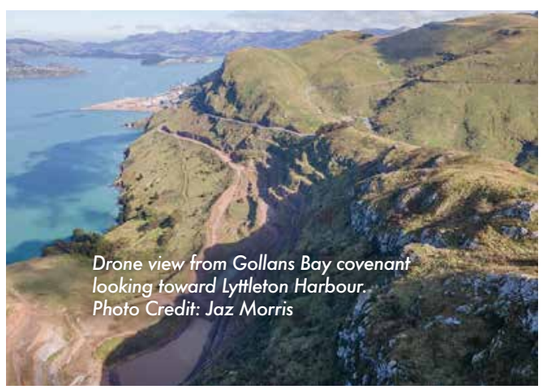
Gollans Bay – new covenant

This unique covenant is owned by the Lyttelton Port Company and is a key habitat for the protection of lizards. The 11.5 ha area sits on the Crater Rim plateau and slopes on to steep tumbling faces and ledges of a retired quarry zone high above Evans Pass.

The three main ecosystems represented in the covenant include grass and shrubland, rock-bluff vegetation and māhoe coprosma scrub forest. It provides ideal habitat for some special natives: porcupine shrub, matagouri (At Risk – Declining), Banks Peninsula blue tussock (At Risk – Naturally Uncommon), Solander's geranium (At Risk – Declining), Banks Peninsula aniseed (At Risk – Naturally Uncommon) and *Coprosma virescens* (At Risk –Declining). Easter orchid *Earina autumnalis* specimens have also been noted in this area.

Two species of indigenous lizard: southern grass skink and Waitaha 'Canterbury' gecko were observed on the ecological survey by Boffa Miskell ecologists, Jaz Morris, Cara-Lisa Schloots and Matt Turner.

CritterPic motion-activated camera units have been set up allowing images to be sent remotely over the mobile network so people can observe in real time. They also pick up rats, mice, hedgehogs, and mustelids, which can also help understand target species dynamics. It would be great to pick up other species in the future such as McCann's skink or the Nationally Threatened Canterbury spotted skink.



Drone view from Gollans Bay covenant looking toward Lyttleton Harbour. Photo Credit: Jaz Morris

Volunteering Programme Update – Gollans Bay

BPCT is proud of its partnership with Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) and together we're helping take care of a little community of rare and endangered skinks and geckos, living in the rocks above the Gollans Bay Quarry.

"These skinks and geckos have a special place in our natural heritage, and they need our help to survive", says BPCT Volunteer Programme Coordinator, Sophie Hartnell. *"By placing a conservation covenant on Gollans Bay, LPC have demonstrated their commitment to always protecting that land these lizards live on."*

The Gollans Bay covenant means the area will be protected in perpetuity and actively managed to ensure the site remains free of the plant and animal pests that can threaten lizard and gecko habitats. The rock bluffs within the covenant support a range of distinct plant species that provide ideal habitat for local skinks and geckos.

Earlier this year, a group of BPCT and LPC volunteers took to the rockfaces to remove a very invasive species - pig's ear - which is deemed a significant threat across Banks Peninsula because it grows in the cracks of the rocks, taking up space and resources that the lizards need.

Working alongside ongoing contractor work, our incredible volunteers removed more than 50 sacks over two 'weeding bees' - we are so grateful for your mahi!

Charlotte Jones, Environmental team from LPC, removing Pig's Ear at Gollans Bay. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Tikao Bay – new covenant

We are thrilled to have helped the Williams family formally protect this beautiful 16ha area surrounding the Tikao Bay settlement. The hillsides are now protected from development and will steadily continue to regenerate in native biodiversity like the seeps and wetland areas in the gully floor, which are already flourishing in the absence of grazing stock.

Fence funding was made possible through ECan and the Christchurch Biodiversity Fund, and local fencer, Tom Evans, did a superb job in difficult terrain. As well as natives colonising the mosaic of retired pasture areas, the forest floor is recovering under established native tree species on the lower slopes, and seeps and streams are filling in with lush native grasses and sedges. There is also a stunning waterfall dell to explore or just sit and enjoy.

Walkers enjoying the recent Tikao Bay covenant walk. Photo: Marie Neal

This is a wonderful gift to the community for visitors to the bay now and into the future. These generous and forward-thinking owners have already developed fantastic walking tracks with incredible views over the covenant, out to the bay and beyond to Akaroa Harbour. Animal pest and weed control is also well underway – crucial for our native flora and fauna to survive, thrive and spread. Thank you, Williams family!

Covenant Engagement and Support Programme – CESP Before and After photos

Leonardo PP05.6 175° March 2019. Photo credit: Marie Neal

Leonardo PP05.6 175° March 2024. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Kenneth Bush PP02.2 140° December 2018. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Kenneth Bush PP02.2 140° December 2023. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Covenant Engagement and Support Programme (CESP)

The Covenant Engagement and Support Programme ensures BPCT remains connected with landowners. In addition to gaining a collective understanding of biodiversity gains through monitoring, discussion and practical actions, it provides regular opportunities to discuss any issues which might have arisen (or might arise) including problems with animal and weed pests, and fences for example.

It also enables information dissemination about other Trust programmes, which gives the opportunity for covenant holders to get involved in them if they are interested – for example the Tūī Reintroduction project, Biodiversity Hub collaboration, Pest Free Banks Peninsula, Volunteer programme, Te Kākahu Kahukura – Greening the Port Hills initiative, and Farm Biodiversity programme work. We are grateful to the landowners that agree to accommodate and participate in community engagement and education days in their covenants – so many of these connections begin as a result of a CESP conversation.

Setting up French Peak boulderfield regeneration study with Boffa Miskell staff as part of a covenant support visit. Photo credit: Marie Neal

Revisiting each project on a five-yearly cycle is rewarding and allows a good chance to get to know new owners better where covenants have changed hands, and at the same time, ensure they are confident in managing these formal protections so that past gains are not lost. Covenants are legal protections forever (in perpetuity) so it's always reassuring for everyone to discuss future handovers, and sometimes if needed, covenant management plans are updated with this in mind. We were very fortunate to have had Boffa Miskell staff and a community volunteer assist in setting up a specific boulderfield regeneration study at French Peak. It was a great opportunity to combine this work with the usual covenant support visit and upgrade the management plan as a result.

Monitoring covenant health via the re-taking of photopoints and 'bioindicator species' surveys is a key component of support visits. These simple citizen-science methods measure covenanting success over time both quantitatively and qualitatively to help demonstrate and document ecological gains. Presence or absence of bioindicator plants – certain species are very sensitive to animal pest grazing - directly correlate to populations present of those pests. For example, plants delicious to possums include our native mistletoes, five finger, fuchsia, hen and chicken fern and others. As we go about our visits, you can quickly tell where landowners and Pest Free Banks Peninsula are carrying out effective pest control work - it absolutely turbo-boosts overall ecological function!

Decanter Bay

Decanter Bay covenant, situated in a remote part of Banks Peninsula, is home to many rare and threatened plant species. Of note is the fragrant tree daisy population, *Olearia fragrantissima,* which is deemed 'At Risk-Declining' and found here at its northern natural limit.

During our monitoring visit in January, many seedlings of *Olearia fragmantissima* were seen, indicating the population is growing and thriving. This highlights the importance of fencing these vulnerable plant communities to keep stock and other browsing mammals out. Our visit showed several understory species starting to take hold and the palatable bioindicator species thriving. Worthy of celebration was the discovery of several new plant species that were not recorded in the original ecological survey. This discovery confirms the visible and tangible conservation wins resulting from habitat protection.

Decanter Bay Covenant is home to many rare and threatened plant species.
Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Lizard Monitoring

Banks Peninsula hosted the SRARNZ (Society for Research on Amphibians and Reptiles in New Zealand) Conference at Ōnuku Marae. This event was not only a fantastic one for learning more about lizards, but most importantly because we were able to meet and talk with all of New Zealand's lizard experts. This included talking to the National Lizard Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and showing them around our small but seemingly thriving population of Canterbury spotted skinks *(Oligosoma lineoocellatum)*.

Until recently this species has been regarded as 'Threatened - Nationally Vulnerable'. However, their ongoing decline at lowland sites, due to the ongoing effects of habitat modification and predation by mammalian predators (rodents, mustelids, hedgehogs, and cats), has seen Canterbury spotted skinks reclassified as 'Threatened - Nationally Critical'- the highest threat classification before extinction. It is therefore critical we work hard to protect the individuals we have left.

In November 2023, BPCT staff joined the Southern Lakes Sanctuary team to learn more about their new method of identifying rare skink species using eDNA. Their eDNA trial compared baited and non-baited tubes to determine if there is a difference in attracting lizards to walk through the tubes.

BPCT, working alongside Christchurch City Council and Lincoln University, contributed to progressing this national lizard monitoring project by undertaking our own trials. We looked at whether the new eDNA method could be used to detect Canterbury spotted skinks and we compared this method with traditional tracking tunnels and artificial cover objects (ACOs).

The eDNA kits proved a successful detection tool, especially to determine specific species of lizards in an area. However, the cost is a barrier to deploying them on a larger scale.

Hugh Wilson, Max and Wildside Coordinator, Alice Webster with jewelled geckos during their SRARNZ Conference field trip. Photo credit: Marieke Lettink

Sea Bird Coastal Nesting Surveys

A census of Spotted Shag breeding pairs around the Banks Peninsula coastline was done for the sixth time. A dedicated team from DoC and Christchurch City Council, led by bird expert, Andrew Crossland, undertakes the nesting surveys of spotted shags and other seabirds every three years. It was undertaken again in October/November 2023.

This survey predominantly focuses on counting the active nests of the 'Threatened –Nationally Vulnerable' spotted shag. Total numbers from this most recent census were 3192 active nests, which is less than half recorded in 2017 and 2020, and only 14.4% of the number of active nests recorded in 1996.

Some 8800 birds, mostly adults, were located 80 km away from Banks Peninsula (135 km along the coast) at the Ashburton River mouth – and appeared to abstain from breeding. However, this only accounts for maybe two thirds of the missing adult birds and doesn't account for the very noticeable lack of juveniles and immatures.

All sectors of Banks Peninsula's coastline lost birds, but most dramatic were the southwest bays, where numbers were only one-fifth of previous counts.

Grateful thanks to Tom MacTavish and the DoC team for safely navigating around the unforgiving Banks Peninsula coastline, their boat and expertise is essential to the success of this long-term collaborative monitoring project.

Spotted Shag survey 2023.
Photo credit: Andrew Crossland

Bat Detection on the Wildside

Another collaborative project on the Wildside has been further deployment over the summer and autumn months of bat detectors and analysis of audio recordings. With thanks to ECan for purchasing four DOC AR4 bat detectors, and Christchurch City Council for lending us some Audio Moths, we are now able to monitor for bat activity in Hinewai, Stony Bay and Le Bons Bay. These areas were chosen because of possible sightings.

In 2023, BPCT Trustee, Laura Molles, built an AI programme to help identify possible bat audio from our recordings. Analysis of our audio is currently in progress; as yet we have not detected the presence of bats.

Alice Webster setting up a bat detector in Stony Bay.
Photo credit: Martin Rutledge

Mistletoe Monitoring

Working alongside DOC, we continued our Mistletoe Monitoring project, analysing and recording information on 26 individual mistletoe plants at four sites.

Two species of native mistletoe are prevalent on Banks Peninsula: green mistletoe *(Ileostylus micranthus)* and white mistletoe/tāpia *(Tupeia antarctica)*. Green mistletoe is not threatened, however, as white mistletoe is ranked as 'Nationally at Risk - Declining' we are fortunate to be a stronghold for this species in Banks Peninsula.

White mistletoe is highly sensitive to possum browse and is therefore a focal point of outcome monitoring for possums as part of Pest Free Banks Peninsula (PFBP) Extended Wildside Possum Elimination Project.
A population of white mistletoe at Peraki Saddle Scenic Reserve, which has only had goats (no other pests have had control) removed, has been selected as a control site to compare with two sites, Armstrong and Ellangowan Scenic Reserves, which are both part of the Extended Wildside.

DOC's annual monitoring of white mistletoe has revealed some very interesting results. They include:

- The Peraki white mistletoe population showed a general decline in the average size of the plants, and this appeared to be due to possum browse, with many plants having next to no foliage remaining. Unfortunately, this was somewhat expected as the reserve does not currently get any possum control.

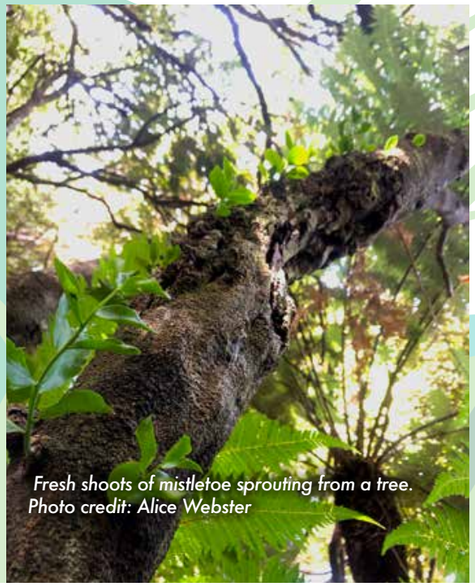
- At Armstrong Scenic Reserve, it appeared that the medium sized mistletoe individuals had more possum browse than the previous year, potentially reflecting that no possum control has occurred in the reserve since a Feratox operation in 2020. More possum faecal matter was also observed.

Given PFBP has since run their possum knock down in Armstrong Reserve, it is hoped we will see the white mistletoe bounce back and may start to see it popping up in more places, as it won't be chomped back so immediately.

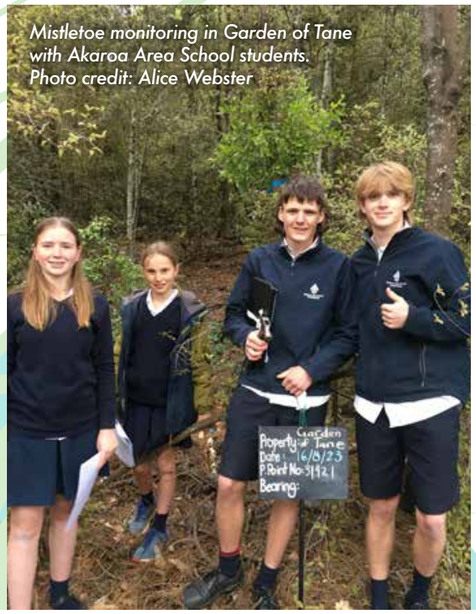
- At the end of 2022, a mature white mistletoe cluster was rediscovered in Ellangowan Scenic Reserve. Observations this year show the plant looks to have resprouted new foliage since the AT220 possum trap network repairs were completed, and the annual DOC RTCI presented the lowest possum relative abundance in the reserve in recent years (0.68% RTCI).

- Two other white mistletoe were discovered in Ellangowan Scenic Reserve by chance during trapline work early in 2023 and have since been banded and measured.

- Through this project, a growing awareness in the community of *T. antarctica* has resulted in more pockets being found, and more eyes on the lookout for further re-emergence of this rare mistletoe. The Akaroa Area School Enviro Group have also learnt how to spot and monitor *T. antarctica* and have taken initial measurements of plants in the Garden of Tane.



Fresh shoots of mistletoe sprouting from a tree.
Photo credit: Alice Webster



Mistletoe monitoring in Garden of Tane with Akaroa Area School students.
Photo credit: Alice Webster

Biodiversity Monitoring Workshop
Biodiversity monitoring is a critical element of BPCT's work, allowing us to understand and measure the impact of our programmes. In 2023, we hosted a very successful Biodiversity Monitoring Workshop – designed to help our partners, landowners and people in the community observe and measure changes in biodiversity, assess ecological changes and from there, evaluate the impacts of their conservation efforts.

The workshop was held at the Akaroa Heritage Park, and included a 'walk around' Mark Nixon and Megan Reynolds' neighbouring property. They shared their experiences with monitoring and predator control on their property.

Biodiversity Monitoring Workshop.
Photo credit: Taylor Kees

The workshop was a great opportunity for hands on learning, with presenters explaining the types of biodiversity monitoring being undertaken across the Extended Wildside. Forest Indicator Species Transects, mistletoe monitoring and photopoints are useful tools that people can use to monitor biodiversity changes over time.

The workshop concluded with participants being given ruru and rifleman nesting boxes and wētā motels to support their community biodiversity monitoring efforts.

Getting hands on at the Biodiversity Monitoring Workshop.
Photo credit: Taylor Kees

GOAL SEVEN – RE-ESTABLISH POPULATIONS OF LOCALLY EXTINCT PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES

Tūī Reintroduction Project Update

Me he korokori tūī
How eloquent is he who has the throat of a tūī

Believed to have become locally extinct in the early 1990s, tūī were reintroduced to the Peninsula in 2009, an initiative between Ngāi Tahu, BPCT and the local community.

Once a rarity, now 15 years later, tūī are now seen, heard and treasured in communities across the Peninsula - and there's evidence to suggest they are slowly making their way into Christchurch City.

This year's tūī banding day saw a record number of tui captured. Under the guidance of ecologist and BPCT Trustee, Laura Molles, the tui team bands the captured birds so they can be identified and monitored, then they are weighed, sexed and even given names. Volunteers then monitor bird feeders and record sightings so they can understand how the population behaves.

Phil the Tūī. Photo credit: Laurie Richards

Tūī Bath. Photo credit: Jenny Williams

This is Laura's report on the 2023/24 season.
We had a best-ever banding season in winter 2023, catching a total of 38 new tūī, including 25 on one very successful weekend trip. On that weekend we also had one rather keen bird (Maestro) get captured twice: first on Haylocks Road, where we banded him on Saturday, and then on Smith Street the next day!

Our data shows that the Akaroa-based population is continuing to increase, and sure enough, we've had to change the x-axis of our population graph for the first time to fit this year's estimate on, which is a promising sign.

One especially exciting sighting came from our own garden in Cashmere. In April 2023, my husband, Jon, was working at home and heard a tūī singing in our garden. He got several photos of it singing and checking out our feeders before it moved on. As in previous years, we did have a scattering of sightings from the Port Hills, all of which were unbanded (like the one in our garden) or unidentified tūī. As the population on the Peninsula increases, these visits should become more and more common.

As always, many thanks to the folks who volunteer their time to monitor the banded birds and assist with our banding sessions – your efforts help make the Peninsula an ever-better place for tūī to live.

Laura Molles
Scientific Advisor

Unbanded Tūī. Photo credit: Jon Sullivan

GOAL EIGHT – ELIMINATE OR CONTROL PEST ANIMALS TO PROTECT NATIVE BIODIVERSITY

PEST FREE BANKS PENINSULA

Pest Free Banks Peninsula / Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū is a collaborative programme to protect and enhance biodiversity on the Peninsula through the widespread elimination of animal pests.

A bait station with a view!
Photo credit: Ollie Rutland-Sims

About PFBP

At a strategic level, Pest Free Banks Peninsula delivers Goal 8 of the 2050 Banks Peninsula Ecological Vision, which is to eliminate or control pest animals to protect native biodiversity. As with the other aspects of the Banks Peninsula Ecological Vision, the pest free programme delivers wider benefits - it supports Ngāi Tahu values, community wellbeing and development, and sustainable agriculture and tourism.

The focus of our work is on two sites. On **Kaitorete** the aim is to eliminate possums, feral cats, mustelids and hedgehogs across ~5000 hectares. On the **Extended Wildside** the aimis to eliminate possums across ~23,000 hectares and suppress mustelids and feral cats.

A team of 15 staff are now actively undertaking these ambitious and complex programmes, alongside the community, iwi and landowners.

A Programme Oversight Group provides governance support, and our operational plans are overseen by an active Programme Management Group. We also receive guidance from a Technical Reference Group – a group of pro bono advisors, whose expertise is critical in assisting the elimination project with key operational decisions.

PFBP Project Oversight Group

Mark Christensen (Chair) (Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust)

Rik Tainui (Te Rū nanga o Ngā i Tahu and Chair of Ōnuku Rū nanga)

Jana Hayes (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu)

Councillor Paul Dietsche (Environment Canterbury)

Genevieve Robinson (Environment Canterbury)

Councillor Tyrone Fields (Christchurch City Council)

Celeste Donovan (Christchurch City Council)

Lydia Gliddon (Selwyn District Council)

Jo McPherson (Eastern South Island Operations Director, DOC)

PFBP Project Management Group

David Miller (Chair) (Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust)

Shaun Burkett (Environment Canterbury)

Paul Devlin and Alison Evans (Christchurch City Council)

Mailee Stanbury (DOC)

Natasha Mcintosh (Predator Free Port Hills)

Maree Burnett (Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust)

Marie Gray (Summit Road Society) *retired*

Hugh Eaton (Landowner)

Richard Ball (Independent advisor) *retired*

Richard Suggate (Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust)

Denise Ford (Selwyn District Council)

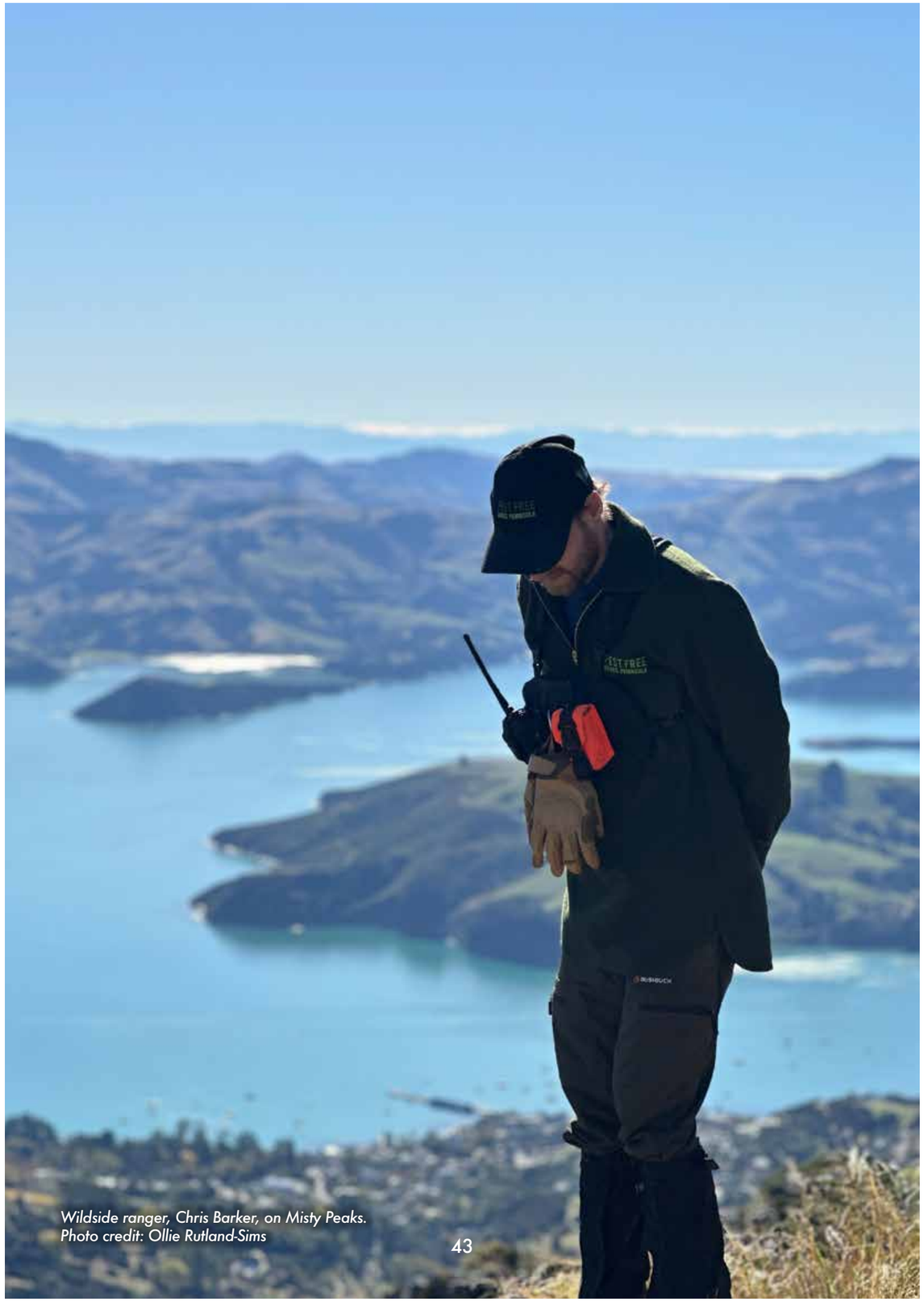
Laura Molles (Ecologist)

Paul De Latour (Landowner)

Matthew Hellicar (Cacophony Project)

Sarah Wilson (Project Leader)

This year, we bid farewell to long-time conservation advocate and PMG member, Marie Gray. Marie has worked tirelessly to eradicate and control pest animals and plants in the Port Hills over many years. We have truly valued her contribution, and her legacy will live on in the rich biodiversity she has helped nurture over the years.



Wildside ranger, Chris Barker, on Misty Peaks.
Photo credit: Ollie Rutland-Sims

2023/24 Programme Highlights

At every level we have learned substantial lessons. The project governance and management groups have worked hard to bring to life the vision of a "community led, and agency supported" project. The field teams have pivoted as new lessons have emerged. Together with landowners and the community we are a world leading project.

On Kaitorete we have successfully proved that we can eliminate hedgehogs across an 800 ha area. This "proof of absence" was provided by dog sweeps, cameras and a leg hold trapping pulse. This is the first time in Aotearoa that this has been achieved. In 2025 we hope to achieve hedgehog elimination across all 5000 ha of Kaitorete.

Meanwhile, we have huge challenges on Kaitorete with feral cats and weasels. While we have removed significant numbers of each of these target species, we have mostly learned that we don't know enough to remove them completely. The next year will be devoted to trialing new tools and research. This is likely to mean using toxins as well as trapping.

On the Extended Wildside, our team of pest free rangers did the hard yards amongst gorse, bush lawyer and steep ground. By 31 March 2024 we had intensively removed possums from 7,000 ha. An independent study by a Lincoln University student showed that the possum knockdown was successful, reducing possum detections to zero over 3 months. Our next focus is to hold the line in these areas, remove the final remaining individuals and continue to move forward.

On both pilot project sites, our dog handlers and their detection dogs honed their skills and have become incredible detection machines. The commitment of the handlers and their dogs is inspirational.

The broader community effort across the whole peninsula has been incredible. With the assistance of Jobs for Nature funding there has been significant predator control work undertaken in Living Springs, in the Whakaraupo basin through Ngāti Wheke and CVNZ and continued expansion of backyard trapping by Predator Free Port Hills.

2023 was the year when we farewelled feral goats from Banks Peninsula up to Gebbies Pass. This huge achievement was accomplished with willing landowners and expert hunters, and was many years in the making. Meanwhile the trapping efforts on feral pigs stepped up as we try to get to grips with this terrible destroyer of farms and biodiversity.

Celebrating our Partners: PFBP Annual Partners' Hui

People are at the heart of our success, and we were so happy to spend time with some of our favourite people earlier this year – our partners!

The annual PFBP Partner Hui at Wairewa Marae was a great opportunity to get together to talk about our collective impact across the Peninsula and beyond.

"PFBP started out as a big idea and it has now morphed into a strategic, connected series of projects being delivered by dozens of community organisations and thousands of people," said PFBP project lead, Sarah Wilson. *"We can map and track our impact on the ground, from the Wildside of Banks Peninsula, across the Port Hills, and right into Christchurch City."*

Presentations at the hui covered an array of projects currently underway, as well as making the connection with the work on the ground to its local, regional and national impact.

"What we're doing here connects and contributes to the national Predator Free 2050 vision. We're also really conscious of our regional alignment and impact – our work is funded and supported by Canterbury ratepayers, and we are always conscious of proving the value of their investment in our work," said Wilson.

Welcome to our five new partners to our family of 14 foundation members:

- Conservation Volunteers NZ
- Mikimiki Conservation Trust
- Te Ahu Pātiki Charitable Trust
- Orton Bradley Park
- Hidden Valley Conservation Trust

Group shot from Wairewa.
Photo Credit: Ollie Rutland-Sims

Extended Wildside Summery

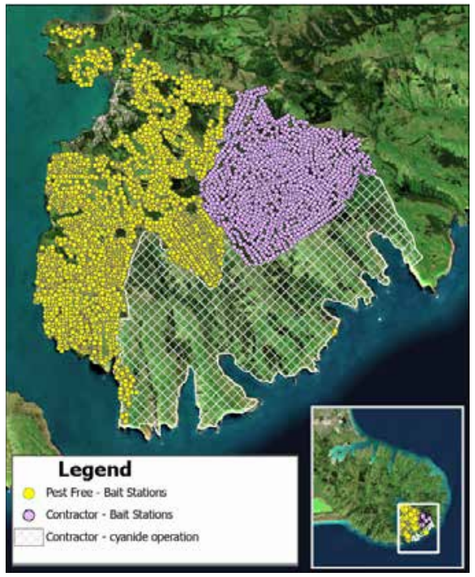
Our goal for the Extended Wildside is to eliminate possums, and suppress feral cats, mustelids, and rats in areas of high biodiversity across an area of 23,000 hectares.

The Extended Wildside Possum Removal Project:

Our focus over the past 12 months has been on the removal of possums. Our staff, working alongside contractors, have made significant progress across some very difficult terrain and in inclement weather conditions.

The Curry's operational block behind Akaroa has had significant attention from PFBP with rangers working across multiple properties every day, which requires them to have a deep understanding of the terrain and conditions, any restrictions that might be in place, and what methods can be used on each property.

PFBP has worked hard to create positive relationships with Peninsula landowners, and this has been a critical element of our planning, and success.



As we moved down the hills behind Akaroa, we encountered 'perfect possum habitat' - small landholdings with part-time landowners. In total, we worked across 59 different properties, whilst respecting all landowner's

permission agreements. This is a huge reflection on Hollie, Ollie and the team's commitment to community engagement and creating awareness of what we're doing in the community and the benefits it will deliver.

There are significant swathes of public property on the Wildside, and we have worked closely with Christchurch City Council to complete both the refill and final installation of bait stations within the cut tracks of Misty Peaks. This has been a challenging piece of work due to its rugged, densely vegetated terrain, much of it covered in bush lawyer, and with large slips, rock waterfalls and windthrow.

As a follow up to this possum knockdown, PFBP worked with contractors to use cyanide paste within Misty Peaks, followed by the installation of FTP AT220 traps and possum dog sweeps.

We continued working with contractors during the winter months, to help protect the intensive possum control work already undertaken in Hinewai. The Downer Excell contractors delivered a cyanide paste operation within the eastern bays, from Long Bay Road to Lighthouse Road, extending into the summer months.

We remain grateful for the input and expertise provided to us by the PFBP Technical Reference Group. Their expert knowledge has proved invaluable as we navigate the different tools and methods available to us. Whilst we know brodifacoum is a more reliable tool because cyanide paste is only left out in the environment for very short periods of time, we know that a multi-pronged approach will prove successful in the long term.

Working alongside the Downer Excell team has also provided valuable learning opportunities for our team. We now have staff confident and technically competent in the safe handling, field use, transport and disposal of cyanide paste, and we can use this knowledge as we embark on cyanide paste operations in the coming year. Downer Excell also used their highly trained possum dogs in parts of this operation – providing a great opportunity for our own dog handlers, Jason and Karin, to learn from these experienced dog handlers and accelerate their own development.

These efforts combined for an excellent result - we have observed little bait-take from the Hinewai boundary along Long Bay Road.

As our operation moved through the Wildside, we also removed bait stations, traps and signage, while Jason and our possum dog, Scmack, completed surveillance work.

This process confirmed most bait stations had little to no bait-take, indicating an initial strong bait uptake. Most of the AT220 traps had no possum kills and no possums were found by Jason and Scmack – another great result.

Looking ahead, PFBP are aware that more work needs to be done in and around Nikau Palm Gully and the imposing cliffs. Following reported sightings of possum activity by a local boatie, we have been offered free boat transport to install traps in some of the 'boat only access' bays and we will undertake this work when conditions allow.

Signage on the Wildside.
Photo credit: Wall Street Journal

We have also been working closely with the community surrounding Ōnuku marae, with many locals expressing concern about the use of toxins on their land. We have been able to find acceptable alternatives, including installing traps, and hunting possums with our possum dog, Scmack. There are still 31 traps dispersed through the 340 ha Ōnuku operational block, and our monitoring and sweeps have shown this combination (dog detection and trapping) to be working well.

Looking ahead, our possum knockdown now moves to 'town'. We are setting up an operation in Takamatua, and we will undertake an intensive programme of community engagement ahead of our Akaroa township operation in late 2024.

Extended Wildside Mustelid and Feral Cat Programme (MUSCAT):
During the year, we took the opportunity to assess our MUSCAT efforts on the Wildside to determine a new approach going forward. This process involved collating all of the different suppression control activities being undertaken by PFBP, volunteers and agencies.

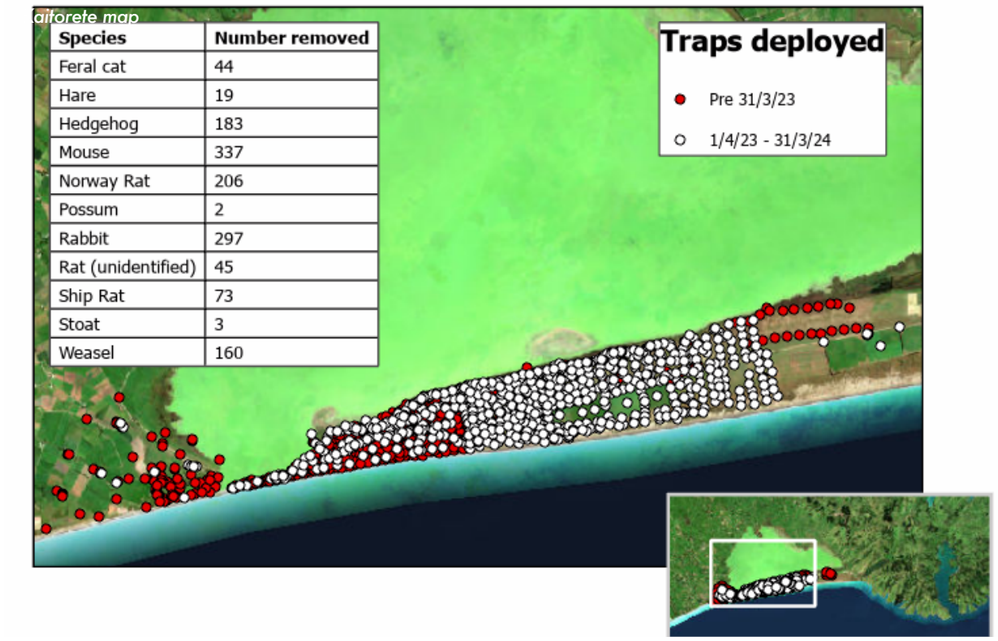
We then collated this information and made it available to the community, so together it can guide and influence our collective efforts so that we achieve the best and most efficient outcomes. Reviewing the trapping information from a wider lens rather than from individual traplines, helps us identify gaps in our operations. It also helped identify groups needing additional support and to help promote, assist and 'normalise' trapping across the Peninsula.

Dog handler, Jason Millichamp.
Photo credit: Adrian Jack


PFBP Ranger, Joe Hickey, installing a monitoring camera. Photo credit:Tim Sjoberg

Looking ahead - Christchurch Mayor Phil Mauger lends his support to Akaroa Pulse
PFBP engaged Christchurch Mayor, Phil Mauger, to lead a campaign to encourage residents and bach owners to join the great Possum Knockdown in Akaroa. *"Getting rid of possums from the Peninsula will bring environmental, recreational and economic benefits to the community"*, he said. *"I'm pleased to be helping out, and I encourage all property owners to get in touch with Pest Free Banks Peninsula to help them in their mission to rid the Peninsula of pests. It's important we all play our part."*


PFBP lead hand, Blake Thomson, with Christchurch Mayor, Phil Mauger. Photo credit: Nikki Hawkey



kaitorete map

Species	Number removed
Feral cat	44
Hare	19
Hedgehog	183
Mouse	337
Norway Rat	206
Possum	2
Rabbit	297
Rat (unidentified)	45
Ship Rat	73
Stoat	3
Weasel	160

Kaitorete Summary

Our goal: a multi-species elimination programme targeting hedgehogs, feral cats, mustelids (stoats, ferrets and weasels) and possums over an area of around 5000 hectares.

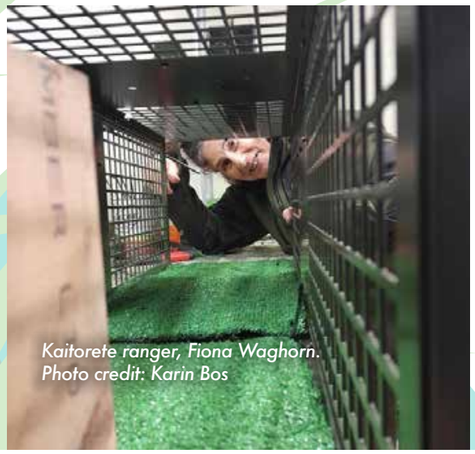
Kaitorete is a priority for PFBP because of its outstanding biodiversity and cultural values, both of which are under constant threat from browsing and predation.

Over the past 12months, our staff, working alongside partners, iwi and the community, have been intensely targeting hedgehogs, weasels and feral cats.

Hedgehogs: number caught: 182

Hedgehogs are arguably our most under-rated predator. Their prevalence in people's gardens seemingly doing no harm, and the fact some consider them 'cute', means the vast majority of New Zealanders wouldn't consider them a pest, let alone a predator.

The reality however, especially in an environment like Kaitorete, is that hedgehogs pose one of the greatest threats to our unique and threatened ecosystems. They devour many of our endangered species and are accelerating the decline of our native wading birds, lizards and invertebrates.



Kaitorete ranger, Fiona Waghorn. Photo credit: Karin Bos

Lizard numbers have dramatically increased and we believe removal of hedgehogs and weasels has greatly contributed to this increase.

PFBP's relentless focus on hedgehogs over the past two years is delivering measurable success. Last year, we undertook a 'rolling front' approach in our elimination efforts; this year we have been able to prove this concept works. The combination of grid trapping, hedgehog detection dogs, leg trap pulses, installing a low height 'active fence' and engaging the community in backyard trapping has resulted in the elimination of hedgehogs in an open-ended system - the first time this has been achieved in New Zealand.

Weasels: number caught: 157

As their name suggests, weasels are an elusive species and here in Aotearoa, very little is known about them. Much of the research undertaken tends to focus on their larger-mustelid 'cousins' - stoats and ferrets.

These are some of the things we do know about weasels: their favourite foods are mice and lizards, they're also partial to native birds, eggs and insects and they will tackle prey much larger than themselves – making nesting birds an easy target.

Because there are very few stoats and ferrets on Kaitorete, PFBP is well-placed to lead the way in removing weasels and creating better understanding of their behaviour, impact and of course, the most effective means to eliminate them.

This year, there was an abundance of grass and grass seed available on Kaitorete, which meant a spike in mice – and an increase in weasels wanting to eat them. Unfortunately, weasels eat higher up the food chain than other mustelids, so there can be no doubt they were also feasting on other vulnerable species, like lizards and small birds.

We know that regular and ongoing trapping has proved effective in removing weasels from Kaitorete, but because so little is known about them, our fear is that we are simply harvesting the overall population rather than fundamentally impacting them, meaning we are essentially retaining the status quo.

Looking ahead, we will be undertaking genetic research to determine the movement and population of weasels, which will enable us to gain a better understanding of their impact on our native wildlife, and our progress towards eliminating them from Kaitorete.

Dog handler, Karin Bos, and hedgehog detection dog, Nighdee. Photo credit: Maree Burnett

Feral cats: number caught: 44
Feral cats are our most challenging predator on Kaitorete. They are considered one of the most ferocious predators in our ecosystem – known to have a devastating effect on native species, particularly native birds, lizards, wētā and other insects.

Our efforts to target and remove feral cats have put us on a very steep learning curve - controlling them is an ongoing battle because they reinvade controlled areas over time, their predation isn't always motivated by hunger (which makes food-based trapping difficult), and we must ensure our methods don't impact domestic cats.

Over the year, we have increased our understanding of feral cat behaviour, and we have achieved some success in removing feral cats.

We remain conscious of our responsibility to the community to ensure our activities don't impact domestic pets. We have a programme of community engagement planned to ensure Kaitorete communities are well informed as we move our feral cat trapping operations closer to populated areas.

How to be Pest Free - Lessons Learned

End-of-year is traditionally a time for reflection. As the 2023 financial year ended, and forecasting for future business plans and budgets commenced, the PFBP team took the opportunity to reflect on the project to date – its successes, learnings, challenges and opportunities.What we discovered will help guide our priorities and operational delivery so that we can successfully deliver our very ambitious project within budget, timeframe and scope.

Introducing Terry, our new feral cat detection dog. Photo Credit: Karin Bos

Some of the key lessons learned from Kaitorete

General:

- Multiple species elimination is complex, time consuming and costly.
- The field team is more efficient when their focus is on one task or one pest species at a time, rather than attempting to remove all six pests at once.
- The simple active fence at the Taumutu end of Kaitorete is an effective way to reduce reinvasion by hedgehogs. Signs of weasels and feral cats, although reduced, are still observed at both open ends of the fence. Traps at the fence ends frequently catch target animals and are acting effectively to haze pests into the traps, rather than animals jumping over the fence.
- It is critical that all team members record accurate data in the field, that staff are proficient at using the GIS platform dashboards and stay connected as a team to work effectively.
- Relationships with mana whenua, landowners and the wider community are crucial for success, as is clear communication with all project partners.
- Biodiversity monitoring on Kaitorete is vital and requires agencies to work collaboratively to share information. The PFBP partners need to work together more effectively on our collective ability to tell positive, relatable stories that connect to biodiversity outcomes.
- Observations of biodiversity outcomes in the last three years are noticeable, yet poorly understood or recorded. At the end of 2021, skinks were not common among the feral cat prints that covered the landscape at the active fence. Now it is rare not to see up to 20 skinks (of all sizes) while walking along the 100m active fence.

Mustelids:

- Evidence to date with mustelids (primarily weasels) and feral cats indicates that we are unlikely to be successful with trapping alone.
- Visibility on weasels is poor and their biology is appallingly misunderstood, not just on Kaitorete, but across Aotearoa.
- Weasels are very challenging to capture on our cameras, although we are working on refining the settings and lures. Although we catch a lot of weasels (245 as of late April 2024), we currently have poor information on total weasel numbers, distribution, home ranges, feeding patterns or whether our actions are driving weasel populations down.
- A focus in the next year will be to commission studies (eg DNA analysis to help usunderstand movement patterns) to assist our understanding of these cryptic pests.
- The remote reporting Holden and DOC150 traps are the most effective traps for weasels on Kaitorete.
- The remote reporting system Celium certainly saves substantial labour input, however the system is really pushed when remote reporting traps are moved frequently.

Hedgehogs:

- PFBP are confident in the trapping method for hedgehogs and our ability to remove all individuals.
- Double door cage traps being moved through the landscape in a systematic fashion within a tight trapping grid, followed by a network of DOC150/ DOC200 kill traps and detection sweeps with highly trained dogs and cameras, is working very well.

Feral cats:

- By using cameras and our feral cat detection dog, we can reliably detect feral cats. However, using this information to remove these individuals is more difficult.
- From the limited movement patterns collected, it seems that some feral cats are roaming across large areas of Kaitorete (10km recorded from camera to trapped location for one feral cat).
- Feral cat captures are related to food resources on Kaitorete. When food is in high abundance, feral cats do not need to interact with traps no matter what bait is used or presented.
- Unlike weasels, reinvasion onto Kaitorete by feral cats is better understood. Our effort to date has reduced (but not stopped) feral cats accessing to and from the narrow Taumutu end into Kaitorete.

Key lessons from the Extended Wildside

General:

- Without community and landowner support PFBP cannot operate with the most effective tools.
- It takes time to train staff, obtain controlled substance licenses and have confidence in their ability to use, store and travel safely around this landscape.
- The Extended Wildside landscape and roading network means that much time is spent driving to worksites. Providing sufficient, safe vehicles is critical to our success.
- Multiple workstreams require significant labour resources. We need to be smart about where our team adds the most value vs using external contractors
- The Land Liaison Officer role (which focuses on engaging with landowners and maintaining support) is critical to PFBP's current success.
- Having the knowledge and experience with all required permissions (Te Whatu Ora, DOC, landowners etc.) has enabled PFBP to move at a faster pace than many other predator free projects. Working closely with agencies can enable generous permissions restrictions.
- Biodiversity and outcome monitoring needs to be more prominent within the PFBP story. Not undertaking and/or reporting on possum-specific outcomes has greatly restricted the ability to tell positive, relatable stories that cement strong connections to the project's outcomes.
- PFBP needs to get better at telling success stories, explaining failures and communicating our objectives.

Possums

- Possums within the Extended Wildside are found everywhere, across all habitat types, have very small home ranges and are in high abundance regardless of season.
- When and where PFBP can use brodifacoum, excellent results are achieved. There are places within our treatment area where we are unable to find any possums.
- It is still unclear about possum preferences to food-based lures, however installing the perfect bait station set most likely overcomes lure type.
- Possums are readily detected by cameras. However, cameras sit static in the landscape and without meaningful response, cameras and the collected data do not drive possum populations lower. Work is needed to progress a system where a possum detection results in removing individuals detected.
- Having an internal possum detection dog is key. This highly effective tool can detect and remove possums at both low and high density. The combination of dog sweeps and the use of toxins (e.g. Feratox) needs to be explored further.
- Removing possums from built-up areas (urban/peri-urban) is time consuming and complex, with staff often undertaking work across multiple landowners in one day.
- Although the attempted 'Bay Barrier' (using AT220 to reduce possums and reinvasion) generated great interest and results within the Le Bons Bay catchment, our ability to maintain these traps posed logistical challenges; no evidence was gained regarding preventing possum reinvasion. As such, PFBP believes the only way to defend against possum reinvasion in this landscape void of large rivers is to constantly progress forward, not hold a hypothetical barrier line.

Mustelids:

- Attempting to combine the mustelid community trapping with possum elimination work is difficult and requires its own set of resources to reach out, connect and support community trapping efforts. The community is keen, PFBP needs to resource appropriately.

These learnings drive the evolution of how we seek to deliver our work in the most efficient manner, reducing time, money and inconvenience to landowners, and bringing the community on the journey alongside us.

Together, we'll remove pests from Banks Peninsula so that our precious native plants and animals can thrive.

Every day's a beautiful day on the peninsula!
Photo credit: Ollie Rutland-Sims


John Williamson at Kaitorete
Photo credit: Karin Bos


William Fisher.
Photo credit: John Williamson


Bait Station.
Photo credit: Ollie Rutland-Sims

Feral Ungulate Programme Update

Feral goats are gone!
In what MPI described as 'New Zealand's largest feral goat eradication programme', PFBP has achieved total eradication of feral goats on the true Peninsula (from Gebbies Pass). We removed 4,246 goats from a 45,000 ha area of the Peninsula.

All eradication programmes require ongoing monitoring. As well as relying on the community to alert us to possible sightings, PFBP has also engaged the regional council's might. Feral goats are now deemed a 'site-specific pest' in the Regional Pest Management Plan. This recognises how important it is for landowners to manage domestic goat populations well, so they can not escape and re-establish feral populations.

Eradicating feral goats from such a diverse and vast landscape was enabled by more than 300 private landowners. All-important funding and significant operational support was received from the DOC, Christchurch City Council and ECan - proving the power of community-led and agency supported conservation programmes.


Mustered feral goats off Peraki, Southern Bays.
Photo credit: Jess Helps

Targeting Pigs on the Peninsula
Feral pigs are incredibly invasive and are a serious threat to biodiversity and pastoral farming in New Zealand. A large portion of the population on Banks Peninsula resulted from illegal releases, which has caused a huge problem.

PFBP's programme has been operating since August 2022, and to date more than 2200 feral pigs have been removed from the operational area. Surveillance indicates we have achieved more than 75% suppression.

However, because of their aggressive reproduction rates, there is a need for ongoing control work. Project Manager, Graham Corbishley, is continuing suppression using traps and thermal ground-based shooting. Specialised contractors and our landowner network assists this control work by reporting sightings.

The programme is now guided by the feral pig committee, which includes representatives from DOC, ECan and Christchurch City Council, the Rod Donald Trust, Te Ahu Pātiki Charitable Trust and local landowners.

They are guiding the future direction of the programme, weighing up whether we accept the need for ongoing annual suppression to maintain/improve previous suppression efforts, or we attempt elimination - starting from a suppressed population.

We believe our pilot feral pig control programme is a potentially nationally significant piece of work that will deliver measurable benefits to farmers, and to our long-term biodiversity outcomes.

Feral pig damage near remnant tōtara stand at Te Ara Pātiki Kaituna Basin covenant. Photo credit: Marie Neal

Community Trapping Network

One of the guiding principles of PFBP's strategy is to be community led - the programme was initiated by the community and in order to be successful, it must include their participation and reflect their aspirations.

Nowhere is community-led action more evident than in the community trapping network that now covers vast swathes of the Peninsula. From Akaroa to Te Aumutu, and virtually every bay in between - Takamatua, Okains, Le Bons, Robinsons, Duvauchelle and Birdlings Flat - nearly every inch of the Peninsula is represented by a community trapping group.

Carol Osgood looks after the Le Bons Bay trappers, a group of around 20 households that monitor 173 traps across an estimated 30kms - from the very steep top of the Summit Road down to the dunes and woods surrounding the beach settlement. They're a "good strong, close community" who work well together and who take their trapping responsibilities pretty seriously.

Carol knows of trapping volunteers who climb upto the Summit Road regularly to check their lines, others who clamber around the dunes and in the woods near the beach. Carol stores bait in her freezer and when people need a top up, she'll drop it in their mailbox next time she goes past.

The community shares 'best catches' on their social media page - "it might seem a bit gruesome, but if someone gets a prize target like a weasel, they share it on the page, and it generates lots of feedback." Carol even has plans to encourage a little 'healthy competition' by introducing the 'uphill vs downhill' challenge to see who can catch the most pests. *"There's just so much enthusiasm in our community for this work, anything we can do to encourage people to get out there monitoring and checking their lines, the better!"*

The Le Bons Bay trappers routinely remove ferrets, weasels, possums, hedgehogs and rats. Most are *"astounded"* at the numbers, especially when PFBP adds kill stations up in the trees. *"We'd find 8 or 9 possums on the ground; it looked like they'd been climbing over each other to get to the stations. I think most people have no idea just how prolific pests are in our community."*

To date, PFBP has supported six community groups and many more individual landowners to set up a community-run trapline. As of January 2024, the combined efforts of these community groups have removed 131 mustelids, 71 possums, 269 rats and 340 hedgehogs.

Want to be involved?
PFBP can help your community establish a trapping network. You can also get online help and support through **www.trap.nz** - a nationwide forum for community trapping networks.

Participation connects people with people, and it connects people with their environment.

Not even Christmas day can stop Carol Osgood from checking her traps in Le Bons Bay! Photo credit: Carol Osgood

Long-time trapper and environmental advocate, Robin Burleigh, with a hedgehog. Photo credit: Carol Osgood

Give A Trap – celebrating the Willocks family Legacy

PFBP was an early pilot organisation for the Give a Trap (GAT) programme – we were keen to honour Penny Willock's legacy and to help people who might not be able to physically do trapping, but who wanted to contribute to a predator-free future by donating a trap to others in the community.

Over the two years of the programme, we've distributed more than 50 traps. The programme now includes a wide range of different traps for different places and needs, which we pass on to community volunteers and trappers. The Akaroa Trap Library is also a key means of distribution for PFBP.

GAT removes the initial barriers people face - like not really knowing what to do, how to set up a trap and monitor it, or what trap is for what pest - and creates lifetime trappers. *"We know from speaking with trap recipients, that they get 'hooked on' predator control, so they start with a donated trap and then many go on to buy more of their own traps or even create their own trapping network. GAT has inspired an expanding network of trappers"*said Sarah Wilson,

"GAT is such a great initiative to be involved with because it's so seamless - both for people donating traps and those who need traps. PFBP, and the people who donate a trap, know the traps go directly to where they're needed, and by engaging the community in trapping, they become passionate supporters of the predator-free goal."

Karin Bos at Akaroa Trap Library.

Community Outreach: A lesson in pest control

During the year, PFBP Senior Team Leader, Tim Sjoberg, took ten Akaroa Area School students out of the classroom and up into the back blocks, all in the name of higher education.

For the past three years, Tim has turned teacher, working to deliver Unit Standards in pest management and control - inspiring the next generation of trappers and providing young people with career ideas beyond the traditional pathways of university, polytech or the trades.

"It's a really humbling experience working with young people. They're interested in the world around them, they're direct, they want to know the hows and whys, they're keen and they just have this built-in belief that anything is possible. That's the right attitude when you're in the pest-free business – you have to really believe in what you're doing, because let's face it, the task is a pretty daunting one!"

Tim's students engage with the whole 'life-cycle' of predator control – from engaging with landowners, mapping priority areas and processes, health and safety, right through to trapping, monitoring and recording.

Akaroa Area School teacher, Garry Brittenden, was generous in his praise of the pest free programme.

"Tim's willingness to put the hard yards into making this partnership so effective for our students has been outstanding. Tim, and his fellow workers, have been outstanding role models for our students. I believe the programmes that have been undertaken throughout the school with PFBP are some of the best examples of what the future of education looks like. Long may it continue."

Tim and the Akaroa Area School students. Photo credit: Hollie Hollander

Our knowledge exchange with Lincoln University

For many years, PFBP has been working alongside Lincoln University students, giving them valuable field experience in exchange for their valuable research outcomes – some of which have gone on to influence the way we work.

This year's placements included:

- Jared Bezzant (BSc). Project title: A Heat map of Podi traps, Cage tunnel traps, and Holden traps displaying trap catch frequency in the Kaitorete Spithead Operational Area, Lake Ellesmere (Te Waihora), Canterbury.
- Andrew Wells (Masters of Pest Management). Project title: A feral cat (Felis catus) trapping network, augmented with semi-permeable (leaky) active fences at Kaitorete Spit, Lake Ellesmere (Te Waihora), Canterbury.
- Ben Ryan (Masters of Pest Management). Project title: Passive Hazing with a Permanent Fence on Kaitorete Spit, Banks Peninsula, Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Chida Chapagain (Masters of Pest Management). Project title: Trap Deployment Duration Analysis of Podi, Cage, and Holden Traps in the Kaitorete Spithead Operational Area, Lake Ellesmere (Te Waihora), Canterbury.
- Callum Mclean (Masters of Pest Management). Project title: Hedgehog Populations on Kaitorete Spit, Canterbury, Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Luke Richards (Masters of Pest Management). Project title: Hand Broadcast of Cereal Bait in Gorse (Ulex europaeus) on Banks Peninsula, Canterbury, New Zealand.
- Anna Gardiner (PG Diploma in Applied Science). Project title: Assessment of feline audio lures at Kaitorete Spit, Lake Ellesmere (Te Waihora), Canterbury.
- Mel Barnett (Masters of Pest Management). Project title: Testing a new bait station design targeting possums at Kaitorete Spit, Lake Ellesmere (Te Waihora), Canterbury.

PHD student, Jean-Louise Roberts, has been working with PFBP for the past two years. Her research is focused on the Wildside Operational Zone, where she has been evaluating the removal of the local possum population in Nīkau Palm Gully.

"I have been lucky to work alongside the PFBP team for all my fieldwork with the operational and logistical support provided being vital to achieving the results we have so far. Working in applied research and being able to see the results immediately feeding back into the work being done on the ground is incredibly satisfying and provides crucial context for the data I am working with. Being able to bounce ideas off the team and get feedback so quickly has been fantastic for the quality of the research produced so far, and the enthusiasm shown by all for bringing science into the field has made this a very exciting and enjoyable project to be a part of," said Roberts.

Jean-Louise Roberts. Photo supplied

Brittany Graham is also completing her PhD. Her research addresses the question of how to best integrate ground control tools (traps and bait stations) with the best available attractants, aiming to optimise the integration and deployment of the latest control tools and determine the optimal combination of audio, social and food-based lures.

She worked with the team from PFBP to identify the home range size of possums living along the sea cliffs in Le Bons Bay. *"Being able to work with the PFBP team meant we were able to get access to the sea cliffs from landowners and also to help with catching and GPS collaring the possums. Many hands make light work, and they made it an absolute dream running this research trial."*

Mohamed Safeer Mohamed Ismail is undertaking his MSc in Conservation Ecology. His field research is testing multiple combinations of audio (aggressive possum sound), visual (constant flashing LED light) and social lures (possum bedding material) to determine the best lure, or combination of lures, that can attract possums towards the control devices.

"My Master's research has demonstrated that possums are highly attracted to lures. A combination of lures with traps could greatly assist New Zealand in achieving its ambitious goal of becoming Predator Free by 2050. Pest Free Banks Peninsula staff helped me immensely with logistical support throughout my fieldwork in Akaroa. My sincere thanks to Tim Sjoberg, Ollie Rutland-Sims, Blake Thomson, Sarah Bisley, and other PFBP staff."

Mohamed Safeer with James Ross (Lincoln University) and Ollie Rutland-Sims in the background. Photo supplied

Towards Pest Free Waitaha

In February, we welcomed 'Predator Free Activator' Lawrence Smith to the pest free whānau. Lawrence is leading Towards Pest Free Waitaha - a new collaborative approach that supports community-based initiatives to suppress, and eventually eliminate, pest animals in Canterbury.

The role is funded through our partnership with Predator Free New Zealand Trust, and involves supporting community initiatives currently underway in Christchurch city, the Port Hills, Selwyn and Waimakariri districts.

The role is focused on supporting and connecting already-established predator control groups, community engagement, sharing knowledge and delivering practical workshops, training and events. A survey ran earlier this year showed that local groups face a number of hurdles, the main ones being recruiting enough volunteers, and securing funding.

Lawrence Smith

"I'm here to work alongside predator control groups and partners to ensure our collective on-ground efforts are effective, efficient and strategic," said Smith. *"With around 45 different groups working to control pests, I see my role as connecting to, and creating connections within, the pest free sector. Pests don't respect regional boundaries or communities of interest so it's my job to really amplify the 'communal' contribution to pest control and biodiversity."*

Community-run predator control groups, backyard trapping networks and volunteers are a critical element of PFBP's programme and success. However, as the network grows, there is an increasing need for funding and support. A critical element of the Activator role will be to share lessons and ensure alignment. This, in turn, should remove unnecessary competition for funding, which has been an ongoing challenge, and help enable better targeting and distribution of vital resources.

Team Hutchinson Ford - the driving force behind PFBP!

Fostering connections with the corporate sector is a focus for BPCT, and we've been fortunate enough to have had the support of many renowned and respected Canterbury businesses since our inception.

One of those businesses is Team Hutchinson Ford. As a business, they are genuinely driven (if you'll excuse the pun!) by community and conservation outcomes, demonstrated by their support of community, arts and sporting groups in our region.

A THF vehicle for all terrain and all seasons!

THF's support for BPCT includes the supply of an awesome 'go anywhere' vehicle - vital to the delivery of our programmes. Like our 15-strong team of pest-free people and dogs, we need our vehicles to be hardy, reliable, trustworthy, tough and able to reach into rugged environments.

THF is a very valued member of our corporate family. Together, we're driving positive environmental outcomes on the Peninsula and for the people of Canterbury.

Ruru doing its own pest control!
Photo credit: Wall Street Journal

GOAL NINE – ELIMINATE OR CONTROL TRANSFORMER ECOLOGICAL WEEDS

2023 saw the introduction of two new goals to the 2050 Ecological Vision for Banks Peninsula.

Introducing Goal 9 - Eliminate or control 'transformer' ecological weeds

Ecological 'transformer' weeds are non-native plants, usually garden escapees, that can smother, outcompete and impede the natural regeneration of our ecosystems. They are also a threat to the many native fauna species that rely on healthy native ecosystems for their very existence.

On Banks Peninsula, the weeds we are most concerned about include conifer species, sycamore, old man's beard, banana passionfruit, Chilean flame creeper, Spanish heather, spur valerian, pig's ear and pride of Madeira.

Ecological weeds are incredibly challenging to eliminate or control because they come in many different forms (trees, shrubs, climbers, succulents, freshwater or marine plants), they thrive in a range of different environments and can spread by many different means (wind, water currents, birds, animals and humans). Typically, they are fast growing, able to outcompete our native species, or are better adapted than native plants to environmental pressures, which used to be uncommon in Aotearoa, such as wildfires or soil disturbance by mammals. Left unchecked, ecological weeds can expand exponentially and become increasingly costly to control.

The purpose of Goal 9 is to identify and understand which weeds pose a particular threat to native habitats, to ensure new weeds do not establish, and to eradicate any new infestations before they spread. Understanding how these weeds proliferate is important to understanding how to control them.

We know that climate change has the potential to increase the conditions that suit many weed species, and so controlling them now is a priority.

Gunnera control in Okains catchment

Gunnera, also known as Giant Chilean Rhubarb, is an ornamental garden escapee, which has spread in recent years to places where it is not welcome. It is an Unwanted Organism under the Biosecurity Act and without control, it will rapidly invade waterways, coastal cliffs, forest edges and wetlands.

Plants can reach over two metres in height. They are easily identifiable by their massive wrinkly leaves and thick stalks covered in red spikes. Each plant can produce over a quarter of a million seeds, which can spread by water, birds and plant rhizomes. Plants form clumping communities and make matters worse by smothering whole areas. Not only does it suppress native habitats, but it can also block waterways and contribute to erosion.

It is a major pest in the Taranaki area costing millions to manage each year; on Banks Peninsula we have a chance to literally nip it in the bud.

Reporting Gunnera locations found in the Okains catchment – Kaitlyn Leeds and Ian Hankin DOC, and Will Todhunter ECan
Photo credit: Marie Neal

Worryingly this invasive culprit has quietly slipped into the Okains catchment where it threatens productive farmland and conservation values. Its concerning rate of spread has not gone unnoticed by ECan, DOC and BPCT staff over recent years. Together with all local landowners in the catchment, a fantastic first year of collaborative control work has been carried out using contracted professionals. This programme will continue over the next two years for the best possible chance of wrangling it into submission.

If you see this pest in places it shouldn't be, it's useful to report it to us or one of the local agency rangers. Removing, bagging and disposing of the prolific seed heads immediately is a good start to slow its spread.

Gunnera Plant.
Photo credit: Weedbusters

Introducing the Pig's Ear Working Group

The Pig's Ear Working Group was formed following a well-attended community meeting in Pigeon Bay, which highlighted the community's growing concern and attempts to control the noxious weed, Pig's Ear *(Cotyledon orbiculata)*.

Pig's Ear is a fast-growing succulent that can rapidly out-compete native and other desirable plant species. It thrives in vulnerable habitats and regrows very easily from small plant fragments. It produces vast volumes of seed, which is then spread by wind into residential gardens, rocky outcrops, coastal slopes, pasture, grassland and low scrub.

It is also toxic to stock, and Peninsula farmers spend many thousands of dollars annually in an attempt to control this weed on their own properties.

Without a dedicated, landscape-scale collaborative effort, the Pig's Ear problem will only get worse. Hence the task group made up of farmers, community members, and staff from ECan, CCC, BPCT and Landcare Research, was established to try to tackle the problem.

The Pig's Ear Working Group has applied to the Christchurch City Council's Biodiversity Fund to help fund the costs of a spray trial, which will be undertaken by eastern bay landowners. It is hoped this trial will help determine the best spray formulation to use for getting rid of Pig's Ear, whilst not causing harm to the native plant species around it.

Pig's Ear.
Photo Credit: Carolyn Lewis

Akaroa Weeding Group and Christchurch City Council rangers after tackling Japanese honeysuckle.
Photo Credit: Rachel Howells

Akaroa Weeding Group

The Akaroa Weeding Group was a bit quieter this year with several members purchasing their own conservation blocks on the Peninsula, which has meant their spare time was spent dealing with multiple noxious species of fast spreading weed infestations on their own blocks.

However, the group still managed a big session with CCC rangers working on Japanese honeysuckle on Stony Bay Rd, and several working bees continuing their fight against Old Mans Beard, climbing asparagus and Sycamore along Woodills North track and Stony Bay Rd above Akaroa.

Since Sept 2023 combined volunteer weeding hours have focused on Old Man'Beard along the Christchurch-Akaroa Highway, on Woodhill's Track, in Robinsons Bay and at a BPCT covenant. They have also targeted Climbing Asparagus and Honeysuckle on Stony Bay Road and Sycamore on Woodhills Track.

Christ's College weeding

Our partnership with Christ's College sees us work on multiple sites every year with Year10 students during their Service Week. Tirowaikare covenant, in the Little River area, was one of the sites visited in 2023.

The site is home to a healthy population of *Microlaena polynoda* / bamboo grass which is the larval host plant of the rare day-flying moth *Epichorista lindsayi*, which was rediscovered in Tirowaikare after an 80-year hiatus on Banks Peninsula.

Tirowaikare's proximity to the Little River settlement means the seeds of exotic tree species are dispersed by visiting birds. Barberry is just one of the weedy species within the covenant boundary and over the years the landowners have done an amazing job managing the populations of these invasive plants.
The volunteer programme has assisted these efforts with various groups. The huge threat of invasive plant species to our native biodiversity is becoming more widely understood.

Year 10 Christ's College students enjoy a break from barberry control at Tirowaikare covenant.
Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Josef Langer Reserve is home to many specialist plant species. Its rare and distinctive rocky volcanic-like formation, known geologically as a trachyte dome, is widely recognised as providing habitat for a rare associated ecosystem – a unique set of associated flora suited to its features.

Hugh Wilson recorded this in 2009 to be the only known locality on Banks Peninsula for the gentian species, *Gentianella serotina*. This occurs with snow tussocks and *Dracophyllum* around the bluff tops.

The Christ's College Service Week partnership involved a morning of gorse control at Josef Langer Reserve near Panama Rock. Not far away, Hinewai Reserve has used gorse effectively as a nurse crop for native regeneration. However, it poses a threat to the dwarfed species native to the rocky outcrop ecosystems that are so unique to Josef Langer Reserve.

Christ's College students in the clouds at Josef Langer Reserve with tools for gorse control. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Little River School students with their weed haul at Hauroko, Birdlings Flat. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Hauroko – weeding bees 2023
The rare and valuable shrubland ecosystem at Hauroko covenant is under constant threat from exotic and invasive plant species, most of which are garden escapes from nearby properties. This highlights the importance of long-term strategic weed management and continued assistance from the volunteer programme, dovetailing into the work undertaken by DOC.

The weeds are numerous, and some are more invasive than others, so prioritising particularly invasive species is paramount to the protection of the native plant communities.

In 2023 we partnered with the students from Little River School for our annual weed blitz where we focussed on the very invasive pig's ear succulent plant that is a Peninsula-wide problem. In December we teamed up with long-standing BPCT supporters, Rough and Milne Landscape Architects, and removed parsley, pig's ear, and purple flowering *Linaria purpurea*. All can easily out-compete the native species that occur in the native shrubland and provide habitat for the many taonga fauna species in the area.

Rough and Milne staff member removing Linaria purpurea from regenerating native shrubs in Hauroko covenant. Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

GOAL TEN – IMPROVE NATIVE HABITAT CORRIDORS BETWEEN THE PENINSULA, URBAN CHRISTCHURCH AND THE REST OF CANTERBURY

This goal is the second of two new goals introduced to the 2050 Ecological Vision for Banks Peninsula in 2023.

This goal aims to develop and enhance native habitat areas and corridors to support the safe movement of native species from the Peninsula, throughout urban Christchurch and across Canterbury. By doing so, we will also ensure more resilient populations of native birds.

Developing networks of native habitat linking through the hills and valleys on the western and northern margins of the Peninsula to the wetlands, parks, gardens and reserves of Christchurch city and Canterbury will benefit indigenous biodiversity and facilitate natural migrations.

Various community-led groups are already working towards this goal. We acknowledge the tireless work and great foresight of these groups, which include Whaka-Ora, initiated by Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheki to replenish the mauri of Lyttelton Harbour, and Te Kākahu Kahukura (TKK), supported by BPCT, Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheki, Summit Road Society, Living Springs and Te Ara Kākāriki Canterbury Greenway Trust, which is planting forest corridors on the plains.

Te Ara Kākāriki Canterbury Greenway Trust
It has been a year of changes as Jobs for Nature projects were completed and the Trust set up a not-for-profit Professional Restoration Services arm. This offers paid services to landowners seeking help with their native biodiversity projects and importantly, allows us to keep up the planting momentum, encourages eco-sourcing and ensures the ongoing employment of our experienced kaimahi. The team are currently planting and maintaining sites between Robinsons Bay and the Malvern Hills under the guidance of co-chair, Peter Joyce, and team leader, Becs Jelfs.

Another change for the Trust was the departure of Lou Drage after almost ten years as our KDP coordinator, and three years overseeing the Jobs for Nature programme. Lou handed over the reins to Brie Liberty, a former primary teacher with a passion for local biodiversity; she has stepped into her role nicely, receiving excellent feedback from students and schools.

Early in the year, Te Ara Kākāriki met two significant milestones – planting their quarter-millionth native seedling and their 150th greendot.

Te Kakariki planting events are very popular with Canterbury schools, businesses and communities

In Autumn, six Kids Discovery Plant out days were held. Looking ahead, the trust will hold four weekend community planting days in Spring, four weekday planting events for corporate groups and a further eight Kids Discovery Plant out days with Selwyn schools. Volunteer planting events have been really well supported by the community, with October event registrations showing continued enthusiasm for getting involved planting the native corridor to link the Canterbury Foothills with Te Waihora.

Our ecologists have selected new planting sites for 2025, restoration plans have been written and plants have been ordered so we can do it all again next year!

Young's Wetland - new covenant

This extraordinary new wetland covenant restoration project is located off Old Tai Tapu road, just dipping into Selwyn District and is a valuable asset within the Te Kākahu Kahukura Greening the Port Hills programme area.

Ten years ago, landowners, Kaye and Roger Young, started out with a basic hollowed depression in their front paddock which intermittently filled with water – known as an ephemeral wetland. These are isolated without a permanent inlet or outlet but at certain times may overflow. They are not suitable for fish but do allow breeding of some amphibians and invertebrates, which in turn attracts lizards and birds.

Over 4,700 locally-sourced plants of 34 species were planted through Brailsfords, who are based nearby. The layout follows zones of what would typically happen naturally in these places - turf swards on the margins and centre, with rushland, scrub and forest vegetation radiating outward.

The Youngs are really diligent on weed control, which is crucial to the success of any good restoration programme. They declared war on a highly invasive hybrid *Pseudopanax species (lancewood family),* which moved in under the radar arriving probably as a garden escape. Animal pest control has also trapped impressive numbers over the years - over 1355 possums, plus many mustelids, feral cats,rats, mice and magpies.

As a result, birdlife is impressive - pied stilts have nested, pukeko, kingfisher, kererū, grey warbler, silvereye, fantails, quail, and ducks have all made themselves at home. Geckos and skinks are plentiful and there are many fungi, mosses and lichens naturalising.

It is well known that wetlands enhance water quality, and this wetland is no exception. When it floods heavily, there is a controlled drain into the Halswell River, like letting a plugout of a bathtub. Photos taken during a heavy flood event show clear water flowing from this wetland compared to the muddy brown water gushing past in the river's main flow.

The connectivity value of this covenant is literally a step in the right direction as aimed for in Ecological Vision Goal 10. We look forward to seeing more native protections heading from the Port Hills out to Selwyn and across the plains to the Alps.

Glorious wetland restored by the Young family near Tai Tapu.
Photo credit: Kaye and Roger Young

Port Saddle Restoration Project

This restoration project is being delivered in partnership with Lyttelton Port Company. Since 2017 we have seen significant biodiversity gains. We have planted 3188 plants with 410 volunteers and 258 Whakaraupō Enviroschools students from Lyttelton, Diamond Harbour, Heathcote, and Governor's Bay schools.

This project is an integral part of the volunteer programme, enabling valuable community outreach and connection, while enhancing the native biodiversity of an area close to a large residential population and a popular recreation area. Since the project began, we have worked with 14 different groups, including corporates, schools, and conservation organisations to achieve a monumental 4988 hours of volunteer hours supporting the restoration project and undertaking weed control. In addition, 61 local volunteers have assisted at the restoration site to support the biodiversity at Port Saddle.

Thanks to Lyttelton Port Company for their continued support of this project and to the many partner organisations and volunteers who have helped us achieve what we have to date. We are looking forward to seeing all the amazing work over so many years come together under formal protection shortly.

Recent plantings at Port Saddle, Lyttelton.
Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

Volunteer at the community planting day at Port Saddle in 2023.
Photo credit: Sophie Hartnell

CONSERVATION COVENANTS

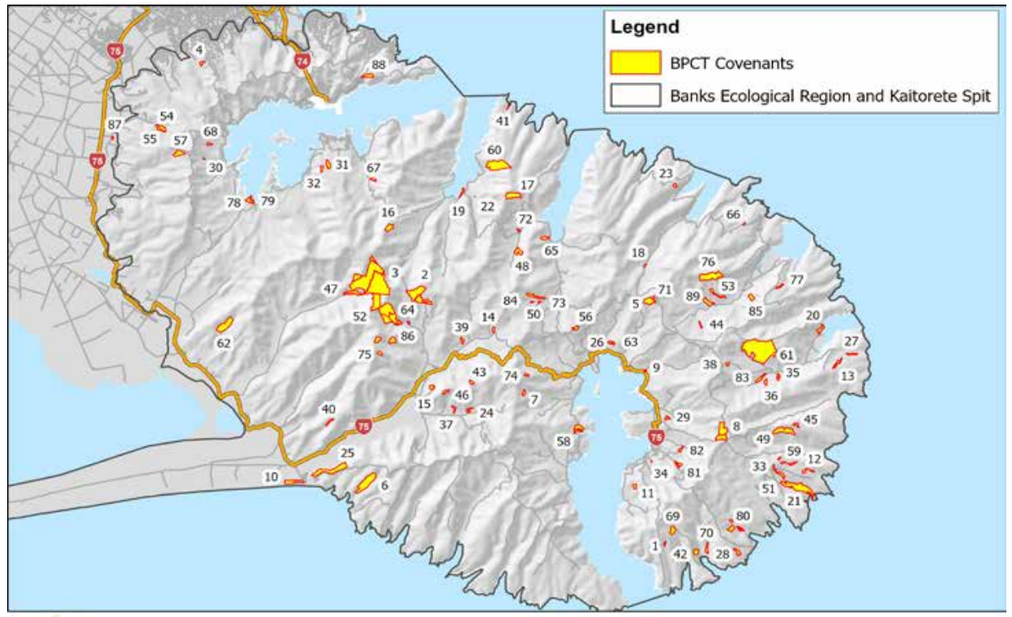
Our Conservation Covenants programme enables landowners to protect important indigenous biodiversity, landscape, and cultural values on their property. A well-managed covenant results in high value biodiversity being not only protected, but also enhanced. The quality of indigenous habitat quickly improves when stock is excluded, under good management weed and animal pests reduce, and soil and water quality, as well as carbon sequestration, improve.

There are now 105 covenants on the peninsula (as at 31 March 2024), protecting 1651ha. The covenanting programme experiences high demand from Banks Peninsula landowners seeking to protect biodiversity on their land. BPCT undertakes a careful selection process that ensures covenants contribute to the goals outlined in the Ecological Vision and conservation funds are invested where they will have most impact.

Establishment of a covenant includes fencing the area, ecological survey, land survey, and undertaking the legal requirements to register the covenant on the land title. Landowners retain full ownership of their covenant and manage it with advice from the Trust provided through an ecological management plan developed for each covenant, and ongoing landowner visits through the covenant support programme.

The programme also benefits from the expertise available to us on the Covenants Committee. We are grateful to the following members for their ongoing support of this programme:

Francis Helps – Chair
Richard Simpson
Philip Helps
Edward Aitken
Kate Whyte
Tina Troup
Pam Richardson
Kit Grigg
Jenny Williams



Map Number	Covenant name
1	Haylock's Stream
2	Waipuna Saddle
3	Te Ara Pātiki Kaituna Basin
4	Streat's Bush (2)
5	Duvauchelle Peak
6	Hikuraki
7	French Farm Wetland
8	Christ College of Trans Himalayan Wisdom
9	Woodlands
10	Hauroko
11	Kaik Hill
12	Pāua Bay (3)
13	Points Bush
14	Kenneth Bush
15	Tirowaikare
16	Te Pōhue The Monument
17	Māori Gully
18	Little Akaloa
19	Kanuka Block
20	The Inwoods
21	Whangairimu
22	Matai Podocarp Block
23	Decanter Bay
24	Manaia
25	Oashore
26	Kukupa
27	Brickeys Bush
28	Stony Bay
29	Allan's Gorse Gully (2)
30	McPhail

Map Number	Covenant name
31	Hunter Gully
32	Dog's Head Rock
33	Haley's Heritage
34	Cherry Farm
35	Church Block
36	Leonardo
37	Okuti Valley
38	Tititipounamu
39	Tikapomo Rāhui
40	Poranui
41	Beacon Rock
42	Pōhatu
43	Springvale
44	Okains Bay
45	Top Bush
46	Cooptown-Okuti (2)
47	Kōwhai Bush (2)
48	Bellbird Bush
49	Goughs Bay Multi (4)
50	Festing Waterway
51	Hugh's Covenant
52	Western Valley Multi (5)
53	Manny's Reserve
54	Lansdowne A
55	Lansdowne B
56	Kaupu
57	Burke's Bush
58	Tikao Bay
59	French Heritage and Etienne's Bush
60	Kakanui

Map Number	Covenant name
61	Langer Reserve
62	Sallys Bay
63	Pawsons Valley
64	Belleau Wood
65	Fantail Farm
66	Chorlton
67	Kārearea
68	Seb's Block
69	Nelcimor
70	Mabel Hope Reserve
71	Catherine Marshall Reserve
72	Pīpīwharauroa
73	Stencliffe Farm
74	French Peak
75	Wairewa (3)
76	West Peak
77	Luke Thelning Reserve
78	Head of the Harbour A
79	Head of the Harbour B
80	Stony Bay Stream
81	Balguerie Stream
82	Woodills South Block (2)
83	Le Bons Valley
84	Stencliffe Wetland
85	Kawatea
86	Pekelharing Extension
87	Young's Wetland
88	Gollans Bay
89	House Gully

BANKS PENINSULA CONSERVATION TRUST VICGIS.COM

COVENANTS LIST
Completed to 31 March 2024

Celebrating a Centenary!

BPCT is thrilled to have assisted landowners to reach 100 covenant protections in the Banks Ecological Region since it was formed in 2001.

Creating 100 covenants is testament to the generosity, foresight and commitment of landowners, supporters, collaborators, BPCT trustees, covenants committee members and staff past and present.

A wide range of indigenous ecosystem types are represented across the Banks Ecological Region. These include ridgetop rocky outcrop communities to sea level saltmarshes, remnant podocarp forests to regenerating young forests, wetlands to dry grey scrub communities, coastal cliff protections, which house species-specific protections for highly threatened flora and fauna, as well as pure 'landscape value' covenants.

A special afternoon tea and walk in Little River was organised as a way to celebrate our 100th covenant milestone. It was a wonderful event, enabling people to reflect on what we have collectively achieved together.

Chair Penny Carnaby speaking at 100th covenant celebration in Little River. Photo credit: Marie Neal

A special afternoon tea and walk in Little River was organised as a way to celebrate our 100th covenant milestone. It was a wonderful event, enabling people to reflect on what we have collectively achieved together.

Fittingly the cake was cut by Annelies and Kees Pekelharing, owners of the 100th covenant.

They have worked tirelessly over decades restoring and protecting native ecology in the wider community.

Their covenant is the latest addition to a rapidly expanding biodiversity hub of connected, protected land, which stretches from Kaituna to Waipuna Saddle – now totalling just under 2200ha. It is satisfying to see covenants increasingly linking with other protections to strengthen this and other key core areas of biodiversity around Banks Peninsula, the Port Hills and Kaitorete. As well as including this small but mighty latest covenant, this core area also includes the largest BPCT covenant Te Ara Pātiki Kaituna Basin at 334ha just over the ridge. Cheers to that - and to the next 100 covenants to come!

Annelies and Kees Pekelharing amongst 100th BPCT covenant in Western Valley. Photo credit: Marie Neal

Celebrating our partners: Lyttelton Port Company (LPC)

A healthy, natural environment is fundamental to our success as a business. Operating within the important Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour landscape, Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) are committed to protecting and improving this environment for the good of people and nature.

We're proud to be the first New Zealand company to adopt the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) Recommendations to understand and address our nature-related risks and opportunities. This new framework enables us to quantify our actions towards becoming biodiversity positive.

We continue to engage in several environmental partnerships, including our principal sponsorship of Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust, Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour, which aims to restore and protect the health of Whakaraupō/Lyttelton Harbour as mahinga kai, conservation efforts focused on lizard habitat enhancement at our Gollans Bay Covenant Site, further planting and maintenance at our Port Saddle Site and continuation of our Predator Control Programme.

This year also saw us create seawall tidal pools at our Cruise Berth, and a predator-free tern sanctuary on a disused timber wharf. Seawalls around the port are composed of quarry rock, and some, like at our Cruise Berth, also have rock bags. These rocks have mostly smooth surfaces that lack texture and cracks, which makes them difficult for many organisms, such as barnacles and mussels, to attach to. The tidal pools were designed to incorporate fine scale surface texturing, which promotes a range of micro-habitats for many organisms. The success of these pools in promoting marine diversity is being monitored over time by implementing a comprehensive post-installation programme.

In FY24 ,we adopted more ambitious targets for carbon reduction and refreshed our Emissions Reduction Plan that delivers to those targets.

Volunteers hard at work weeding Pig's Ear at Gollans Bay Covenant site

Our science-aligned targets include both near- and long-term goals to ensure we make sufficient progress. Contributing to our targets is the improvements to our lighting infrastructure at the Dry Dock and coal yard. The new exterior light upgrade at the Dry Dock was recognised nationally with two top awards - the Black Sky Highly Commended Award from the Royal Astronomical Society of New Zealand for protecting the night environment, and the Lighting Design Award – Highly Commended from IESANZ. One of the most impressive outcomes of installing LED lights in the coal yard was the 62% energy savings and lamp power reduction of around 29%. Both systems allow for pre-set lighting configurations, and LPC uses dimming and time control when the coal yard and Dry Dock are not operating, further reducing energy consumption.

Other environmental actions taken in FY24 include the installation of three dust monitors to actively measure the impact of inner harbour operations on air quality. While initial results indicate that dust concentration at the Port boundary was well below guidelines, our staff are continually evaluating and reviewing dust monitoring data to reduce the potential for dust generation during vessel unloading.

In FY24 we also carried out a comprehensive port-wide waste audit. This hands-on review identified exactly what makes up our waste, and which categories could be diverted from landfill. As a result of the audit, we have identified several 'quick wins' which will help us move closer to our goal to achieve an 80% reduction of waste to landfill by 2030.

Lyttelton Port Company's Dry Dock at night-time

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our mahi relies on the generosity of our community.

We gratefully acknowledge all those who support us to continue as conservation sector leaders in Aotearoa.

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- Penny Carnaby and Tina Troup
- Rough Milne Mitchell Landscape Architects

Male jeweled gecko.
Photo credit: Ad Sintenie

10. Strategic Priorities for Banks Peninsula

Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/266811

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō : Jaimee Grant, Zone Facilitator, Environment Canterbury

1. Purpose of Report Te Pūtake Pūrongo

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee with information on how it can help identify strategic priorities in the zone which will help maintain continuity and provide direction for the new governance structures.

2. Officer Recommendations Ngā Tūtohu

That the Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee:

1. Receives the information in the Strategic Priorities for Banks Peninsula Report.

3. Report Te Pūrongo

Background

3.1 The Canterbury Mayoral Forum has endorsed the transition to a new leadership model, which will look to replace zone committees. However, key decisions remain regarding the final structure and focusses of these new governance arrangements.

3.2 In the earlier years of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy, the Committee worked closely with the community to define key water management outcomes and develop recommendations, which are documented in the Banks Peninsula Zone Implementation Programme (ZIP) and its Addendum (ZIPA). Copies of the ZIP and ZIPA can be found at the bottom of the following webpage: Banks Peninsula water zone committee | Environment Canterbury.

3.3 The Committee also has strong community connections and played a crucial role in facilitating discussions on water management issues. Through its involvement, the Committee has gained a deep understanding of local concerns and has been instrumental in engaging the community on matters of interest.

3.4 As part of the transition to the new governance model, zone committees can support the process by identifying strategic priorities for the Banks Peninsula zone which can be informed by the ZIP, ZIPAs, the Zone Committee's Action Plan and other relevant information. This will help maintain continuity and provide direction for the new leadership structures.

3.5 Given the Committee's extensive knowledge and experience in freshwater management, it is well-placed to contribute to shaping the key strategic focus areas moving forward.

Next Steps

3.6 A workshop will be organised in the coming months as part of the work programme up until June 2025 however, feedback is welcome at this meeting.

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

There are no attachments to this report.

Karakia Whakamutunga

Unuhia, unuhia Unuhia ki te uru tapu nui Kia wātea, kia māmā te ngākau, te tīnana, te wairua i te ara tangata Koia rā e Rongo, whakairia ake ki runga Kia tina! TINA! Hui ē! TĀIKI Ē!	*English translation* Draw on, draw on, Draw on the supreme sacredness To clear, to free the heart, the body and the spirit of mankind Rongo, suspended high above us (in 'heaven') Draw together! Affirm!

Karakia mō te kai

Nau mai e ngā hua O te wao O te ngakina O te wai tai O te wai Māori Nā Tāne Nā Rongo Nā Tangaroa Nā Maru Ko Ranginui e tū iho nei Ko Papatūānuku e takoto nei Tūturu whakamaua ki a tina Tina, haumi ē, hui ē Tāiki ē E Rongo, e Rongo Hōmai ngā tipu Hei whakakī i te tīnana Hei oranga Au eke, au eke Hui ē, tāiki ē!	*English translation* Welcome the gifts of food From the sacred forests From the cultivated gardens From the sea From the fresh water The food of Tāne Of Rongo Of Tangaroa Of Maru I acknowledge Ranginui above me Papatūānuku who lies beneath me Let this be my commitment to all Draw together Affirm! Rongo, Rongo Give us the foods, with which to fill the body, and have health That I may ascend Affirm!