

Agenda & Actions: Ruahine User's Group Meeting (RUG)



Armstrong Saddle – rerouted away from slip



Forks hut: Painted and general maint. By NZDA Man.



Parks Peak hut: New water tank deck



Figure 1 - Whats left of a trap

Date:	15/05/2023	Chair:	Demelza Low (DOC)
Time:	19:00-21:00	Minute taker:	Dan Tuohy (DOC)
Venue:	Dannevirke NZDA & Teams Meeting		
Attendees:	Demelza L, Dan T, Julia M, Janet W, Iain P, Vince P, Mike C, Rob D, P Bird, Megan D, John G, John B, Peter D, Rod S, Chris W, Ellie A,		
Apologies:	Marcus Steeneken, Kelly Hancock		

Agenda

- Welcome, Karakia, Introductions & Apologies
- Community updates
- DOC Northern Ruahine National Predator Control Program 2023
- DOC Heritage & Visitor updates
- DOC Biodiversity updates
- General business
- Set next meeting
- Closing Karakia

19:00	<p>Welcome, Karakia, Introductions & Apologies</p> <p><u>Karakia</u></p> <p>Kā toro ki runga, kā toro ki raro</p> <p>Kia mārangī mai ngā māramatanga</p> <p>Ā kui mā, Ā koro mā</p> <p>Hei aratakina i a tātou kia manawatīti</p> <p>Ki ngā mahi katoa</p> <p>Draw strength from above</p> <p>Draw strength from below</p> <p>Let the knowledge and understanding of our predecessors wash over us</p> <p>So, we may Follow their spirit of perserverance and apply it to our work today</p> <p>Acheiving great things</p>
-------	---

19:10

Community Group Updates

NZTA – painted Forks hut, general maintenance around the area, track work, Te Ekaou drain cleaned. Little bit of work on the slip down to the Oroua campground

PNTMC – Starting some work on the huts they manage, Poh river is damaged.

Ruahine Whio Protectors (RWP) - Working through as many of the traps as they can, not too many traps damaged in there

BCT – Cyclone put a halt on planned work, working with DOC to figure out where to put the resource from BCT. Diances hut got a nice wee makeover – new roof, concrete floor bevelled and sealed, new woodburner, new meat safe, new SS bench.

RWP – There is a date for the annual whio hui will be last week in August in Dannevirke, Janet to send out invitations



Diances hut after renovation by BCT volunteers. Photo credit Fiona Burleigh.

19:30	<p>DOC Heritage & Visitor update Blue means work completed since RUG meeting 15/05.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangiwahia hut – general maintenance including fixed drainage, fixed leaking roof, hut warden stays etc. • Colenso hut – service, felled dead standing tree by toilet, cleared windfall trees, rerouted around slip, cleaned out water tank etc. • Ruahine Corner hut – patched cladding, fixed guttering, fixed toilet tiedowns etc. • Wakelings hut – moved toilet as fills with water, installed chimney cap (leaking) etc. • Sunrise hut – replaced some hut tiedowns, chimney repairs, track repairs, moved Armstrong Saddle track away from slip, flew in firewood, hut warden stays etc. • Top Maropea hut – replaced missing toilet door, installed chimney cap, repaired hut door and flashing, etc. • Longview hut – flew in firewood, replaced toilet tiedowns etc. • Parks Peak hut – built platform under water tank, replaced cracked window, installed toilet tiedowns to stop toilet blowing over etc. • Volunteer Bill – regular checks/mowing at Tamaki West. • Kashmir Road – drainage cleared, graded, under and over slips cleared. • Kawhatau Base – replaced missing roofing iron, repaired gutters etc. • Maropea Forks hut – chimney stays, barge boards, gutters, tank connection replaced. • Waterfall hut – chimney cap installed, replaced damaged cladding. • Otukota hut – tiedowns & vent added to toilet, toilet moved, meatsafe lowered to make accessible. Track marking and clearing on nearby tracks, particularly river crossings. • Otukota hut to Bruce Ridge tk – short reroute away from dead standing tree. • Smiths Stream hut – chimney cap installed. <p>Cyclone Gabrielle damage/updates: Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oroua Crpk to Heritage Lodge tk – slips cleared. Thanks to Ian for the help. • Kashmir Road – slips and overslips cleared, reopened. • Holmes Ridge track – cleared windfall blocking stream crossing. Digger work done to level river crossing (update since RUG meeting). • Smiths Stream tk – windfall cleared, track rerouted away from slips. • Waterfall hut – windfall in the stream cleared to prevent future flooding. • Ngamoko Hut to Ngamoko Range tk – short reroute around slip. Windfall tree removed. Vege clearance. <p>Pending:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Mans Road – significant damage, closed. Contractor to scope and quote. Photo 1 and 2.
-------	--

- Leon Kinvig hut – Moved 5m downstream. Woodshed and toilet gone. Closed. Working with BCT with an aim to relocate higher. Awaiting Geotech engineers to assess and then move the hut to higher ground. Janet wanted to point out the strategic importance of this hut for trapping operations
- Yeomans track – bridges upended. Track closed. A review will be undertaken and maybe turned into a tramping track with no bridges. Currently not suitable for cycling
- Hinerua hut to Smiths Stream tk – Track gone, closed. BCT have marked reroute and will cut new track.
- Leon Kinvig hut to Toka – slips. Reroutes to be done. Track open but care required. Photo 3.
- Alice Nash H Lodge to Iron Gate Hut Tk – multiple slips. Closed. Likely to be rerouted. DOC to locate alternative route (target before end of June) and volunteers to cut the track when the new route is stable
- Iron Gate Hut to Upper Oroua River – as above.
- Mid Poh Hut sidle. Multiple slips. Open with caution.
- Waiokotore Campsite to Potae tk – one slip. Open with caution.
- Takapari Road – council section closed to vehicles. Expected repair in 2024. Walking, cycling access only
- North Block Road – currently open to residents and essential services only. Bookings for Sunrise and Triplex will remain closed until road is reopened.

Climbing job for a tree overhanging Te Ekaou Hut – Megan D to check her arborists for their level 4 qualifications. Any interested parties can email Demelza – dlow@doc.govt.nz

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



20:10

DOC Biodiversity Update

Goat control contracts have been completed in the park, both northern and southern. This year we have extra funding to complete an aerial search & destroy and this was focussed around the Northern part. See maps attached to these minutes of this years control.

Deer Control – Chris Wooten is our new Wild animal regional advisor and is working on the Deer plan for the Ruahine, he will be in contact as he gets more into the programme. You can contact Chris on cwooten@doc.govt.nz
Iain P said to talk to Gordon George LNI Red Deer Assoc, Rod asked for timelines, but still too early in Chris's role.

Te Potae trapping – We finally got in and laid the new double set traps along the Ruahine Corner hut to Colenso line. This was a big job, lugging these bigger traps back and forth along the line. Cyclone Gabrielle however had different plans for our work and some of these traps were either covered or moved. We are going through the process with some cyclone relief funding to get these traps replaced and there is a capital budget to replace some more single set traps with double sets

Weed Control – Darwins Barberry, Contorta around No Mans, OMB on the western side

Kiwi repatriation – Question from Janet, “Why the kiwis were repatriated with no funding from DOC or Save the kiwi for monitoring”.

- In **December 2022**, 10 kiwi were released into the Northern Ruahine near Lake Colenso.
- A further nine were released in **March 2023**, around the Blue Slip.
- A total of 80 kiwi are planned to be released over the next five years.
- The releases are a collective initiative between many people and agencies, including Aorangi Awarua, Ngāti Mihiroa, Cape Sanctuary, DOC, Ruahine Whio Protectors, Mauri Oho and Save the Kiwi.
- The released kiwi will boost numbers and speed up the rate of recovery of the remnant population. The population is growing with the trapping and aerial control that has/is taking place but the more kiwi that can benefit from this effort, the quicker the response will be.
- The kiwi have been sourced from the **Cape Sanctuary Kōhanga Kiwi**.
- Some of the original founders of the Cape Sanctuary Kōhanga population, now numbering around 120+ pairs, were sourced as eggs from the Blue Slip area in 2007.
- Returning kiwi to the Ruahine is now possible, as the Cape Sanctuary Kōhanga is producing at least 40+ juveniles each year from the established pairs. These kiwi are young birds that will struggle to find territories at Cape Sanctuary, which is now getting quite full, and so

they can be moved to 'safe' wild places to support growth of large hinterland populations like the Northern Ruahine and other places within the eastern region of brown kiwi.

- Five of the 19 kiwi released have been fitted with transmitters to monitor survival and dispersal.
- Keeping track of these juveniles is proving challenging. There have been a few partly successful attempts to locate signals since the release in December. A fixed wing plane flew the area a few weeks ago to try and detect the signals from above, but so far, only two of the five transmitter signals have been detected. This is not unexpected as young kiwi can disperse large distances in only a few weeks and monitoring in difficult terrain doesn't make it an easy task keeping tabs on them.
- **Save the Kiwi** is planning on holding a kiwi monitoring wananga for those who feel that they could assist with monitoring. We are just trying to lock in a date which is difficult as it's currently catching season and people are all over the place doing kiwi work.
- If there is interest, I could do a presentation on the background to the releases and progress. We could also produce a regular email news update out to interested people (just need contact details/email addresses).
- People who are out on hills regularly could record the location of any sign seen (kiwi probes, footprints, or poo) or calls heard. Take photos if not sure or record using voice memo on their phone.
- Please pass on my email tamsin@savethekiwi.nz if anyone would like more information.

Annual Whio survey - happening this month – Ikawatea / Apias with Lisa and Geoff Whittles, Max Smart and dog and Mangatara with Pete Bird, Glen and dog. It will be interesting to see how the birds and their habitat have fared after the cyclone

National Predator Control Programme (NPCP) – Pete's presentation on the upcoming aerial pest control operation this year in the Northern Ruahine. The presentation is attached to these minutes. Any questions can be directed to Pete on pbird@doc.govt.nz



Northern Ruahine
Slideshow 2023.ppt:

20:30	<p>Access to Forest Park</p> <p>Mokai Access – Public access to the Ruahine Forest Park has been open since Christmas last year. A reminder that the access on to the Otukota hut track only. There is no public access to Iron Bark Hut, anyone caught walking over the farm to Iron Bark will be trespassed. DOC is currently working through the process of getting this access route surveyed and registered against the title. Once this has happened, we will have a maintenance trip to tidy up the marking and erect new signs</p>
20:40	<p>General Business</p> <p>Iain P – What is the progress on Aranga hut? Still trying to connect with the iwi to have a solution that works given its so close to the boundary. The cyclone has had a lot do with the current lapse in work around this as some of the local iwi have been effected by the cyclone.</p> <p>Setup of these RUG meetings going forward – are we comfortable with the locations and layout. The general consensus is to keep the same and if more people join from the southern end of the region, we can re look at the location / layout. Teams is a good option for some people, so if we decide to have a meeting in Palmerston North, the Hawkes Bay groups can Teams in.</p> <p>Facebook update – 570 members. If anyone wants to join they must answer both membership questions or they won't be connected. Contact John Beech for help on connecting to the facebook group. See facebook link at bottom of these minutes.</p> <p>Dan asked the question about the purpose of the RUG – what do the clubs / groups want to see at these regular meetings?</p> <p>The Original goal of the group as mentioned by Mike Charlton was to save any huts before it was pulled out due to lack of maintenance and the local clubs and groups take on the maintenance.</p> <p>An objective for the group going forward would be around securing one main access point at a time. For example looking at unformed legal road (ULR) that goes to the park that would really open up a big section of the park and getting the whole RUG group (all clubs, BCT, FMC and Herenga-a-nuku) behind the campaigning and landowner engagement of the re-opening of the ULR.</p>

	<p>Demelza stated there was no intention of looking at the huts and structures and track in the park with the aim of pulling them out.</p> <p>The general consensus of how the RUG is functioning as a group is good.</p> <p>A stock-take of the current open access points and ULR's Action – Dan to compile a spreadsheet of the current access points and their status, as well as ULR's around the park</p> <p>Back Country hut network from Megan is that its not as safe as people think. There is talk in the DOC national office about rationalising the network. We need to support DOC office maintain the back country hut network.</p> <p>Takapari road will be looked at with 4wd club once the council have cleared the slip at the start – Rod S talked about the vandalism of the road and something needs to be done to mitigate this. The 4wd assoc would not like to see the road closed. Rod would like to see some sort of management plan on this road. Not a priority for DOC, but keen to look into this in a few month once the cyclone effort has passed.</p>
20:55	<p>Karakia whakamutunga</p> <p>Ka whakairiia te tapu Ki a watea ai te ara Ki a ruruki whakataha ai Ki a ruruki whakataha ai</p> <p>Haumi e! Hui e! Taiki e!</p> <p>Clear the obstacles So the path is clear To return to everyday activities</p>
21:00	<p>Meeting finish</p>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/481888953257892>

Find us on Facebook @ Ruahine User Group

Join the email discussion list by emailing: Ruahine User Group via rug rug@tarhc.org.nz

and ask to be added to the email list