



Queen Elizabeth II

Open Space

National Trust

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Nga Kairauhi Papa



Upholding a Family Tradition

Protecting some of the last kahikatea lowland remnants on the Wairoa River flats has become a family tradition for the **Kidd** family of Tatarariki, Northland.

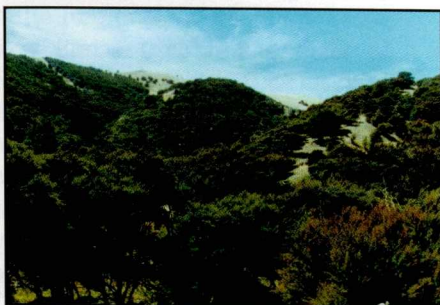
One of the first inquiries the National Trust ever received after it was established in 1978, was a letter from Mr Graham Kidd. He had read about the work of the Trust in a farming newspaper, and he and his wife Mary were interested in protecting some native forest on their farm.

As Mr Kidd observed in his letter, "...it is something which I feel needs to be done to ensure its preservation. The property was first farmed by my grandfather nearly 90 years ago and my father always said to me, *Never allow that piece of bush to be cut down*, so I feel that it is something that is a family tradition to preserve".



Graham Kidd's father, who told him, "*Never allow that piece of bush to be cut down*".

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Three years later, one of the first open space covenants in Northland was registered over 2.1 hectares of Graham and Mary's kahikatea forest. This stand of forest is particularly important because, despite intense pressure from local sawmills, and the easily exploitable flat land, it was never logged. The canopy is in pristine condition and the presence of two large kauri is most unusual on river flats.

Sixteen years on, Trust staff, and DoC conservation officer Diana Manning, carried out a special inspection of the forest and noted a dense understorey with an interesting collection of native plant species below the canopy of 16-20 metre tall kahikatea. In particular, there are abundant tokiwi (*Gahnia xanthocarpa*), with kiekie (*Freycinetia baueriana*) common. Also present are frequent small-leaved divaricating shrubs including swamp mahoe (*Melicytus micranthus*) and *Coprosma areolata*. The groundcover consists predominantly of patches of the native grass *Oplismenus hirtellus* with frequent thread fern (*Blechnum filiforme*).

In 1998, the Kidds decided it was time to covenant more of their forest. Peter Anderson of the Department of Conservation enthusiastically supported this move: "The Kidd bush contains one of the



Three generations of the Kidd Family in front of the protected forest.
From left- Rachel, Roger holding Georgia, Mary, and Graham holding Hamish.

best examples of the nationally rare riverine flood/alluvial forest type remaining in Northland. It is located in the Kaipara District, where only 9% of the original indigenous forest now remains. On the Pouto Peninsula where this remnant is located, less than 1% of the original forest now remains, and when compared to the other forest types, this is the rarest".

With financial assistance from the Northland Regional Council Environment Fund, two more blocks of the forest (totalling 4.5 ha) were subsequently fenced and covenanted.

All three blocks are in close proximity (approximately 200 metres apart). However, while the new blocks complement the first covenanted area, generally the understorey is either very young or has been grazed out by stock over the years. The second block is also dominated by kahikatea, but the canopy is more open and not as tall. It has been fenced for about seven years. The subcanopy contains frequent nikau and occasional mamangi (*Coprosma arborea*),

with numerous cabbage trees on the margins. Another feature is the large native passionfruit vine (*Passiflora tetrandra*).

The third remnant provides an interesting mix, with a kahikatea, cabbage tree, kowhai and tokiwi dominated area on the eastern side and on slightly higher ground in the west, the more typical broadleaf forest of karaka, taraire, titoki, matai, puriri and kohekohe.

An old farm track which separated the third block has been replanted with a mix of manuka, cabbage trees, kahikatea, rimu and matai. Dargaville Conservation Corps students have also planted around the perimeter of the block in an effort to reduce the impact of the wind on regeneration.

Kukupa are frequently seen in these three blocks and flying to and from other pockets of bush in the locality. In time, these blocks should begin to reflect their efforts in spreading the large seeds of native trees.

Graham and Mary recently sold the farm to their son and daughter-in-law, Roger and Rachel Kidd. Roger has the same interest in protection as his father and grandfather before him, and he is dedicated to continuing the family tradition of safeguarding the kahikatea forest.



Flower of female native passionfruit.

Photo courtesy of the Department of Conservation.

COLLABORATING WITH COUNCILS

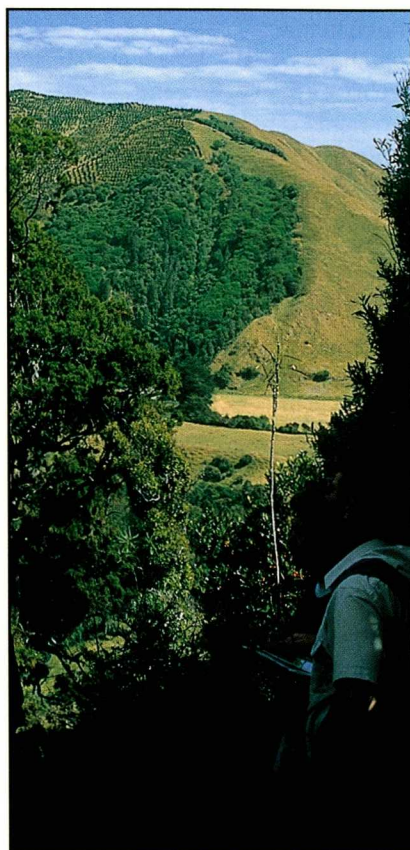
Territorial authorities around New Zealand are increasingly working with the National Trust to protect biodiversity on private land.

Regional councils and other territorial authorities are playing an ever-increasing role co-operating with the National Trust in covenanting projects. As the number of councils engaging in biodiversity protection on private land increases, the Trust is able to work with even more landowners who seek to protect natural and open space features on their land.

It is now obvious that the parts of the Government's Biodiversity Strategy dealing with land outside the Crown conservation estate will increasingly involve regional and district councils as central agents in the biodiversity protection process. (see "Government's response to the Ministerial Advisory Committee report" in this issue of *Open Space*).

The Trust has been working positively, for several years now, with regional councils that are doing their utmost to assist landowners protect unique features on their land. Some examples of councils who have made such a commitment are:- Northland Regional Council, Environment Waikato, Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Taranaki Regional Council, and Wellington Regional Council. All have made significant contributions to the biodiversity protection process on private land.

As the Trust's Hawke's Bay Regional Representative, Marie Taylor, says, "Hawke's Bay farmers are queuing up to protect their land, and we have a huge demand for Trust covenants. And it's mainly due to the Regional Council here being so pro-active and working with the Trust; trying to encourage landowners to protect, rather than legislating". "As an example of how one council arrangement works, new covenants in the Hawke's Bay region will have the funding split three ways: a third each from the landowner, the Council, and the National Trust."



James Delaney (landowner) and Ken Wright (Wellington Regional Council) inspect an area on James Delaney & Caroline Girdlestone's land recently approved for covenant. The landowners, National Trust and Regional Council will be contributing equitably to the establishment of the covenant.

Marie is equally enthusiastic about the Council's pledge to help with predator control in covenants, "It's a marvellous partnership to kick-start covenants: it's a superb commitment!"

Marie liaises with Garth Eyles, the Land Management Manager for the Hawke's Bay Regional Council. He sees the association with the Trust as ideal for the Council. Garth notes, "We are concerned with the ever-reducing extent of indigenous bush in our region, and see the National Trust as the ideal partner to assist with redressing the problem. We appreciate that farmers would not accept regulation to protect these areas." He goes on, "By working with the National Trust, we all win. The region has bush remnants protected, while farmers

retain ownership and get the added value of improving native bush – both economically and emotionally."

In Taranaki, the Taranaki Regional Council has an excellent working relationship with the Trust, and the two organisations are currently focussing on protecting wetlands in the region. From a "hit list" of twenty identified significant sites, six have been given long term protection so far through open space covenants.

Maggie Bayfield (former Chairperson of the National Trust) is co-ordinator of the Taranaki Tree Trust, which is supported by corporate contributions and the Taranaki Regional Council. The Taranaki Tree Trust helps landowners with fencing and survey costs for special sites, and values the National Trust's expertise in providing the legal mechanism for long-term protection by way of open space covenants. The Tree Trust sees open space covenants as being ideal for ensuring that the donated funds expended on private land protection are utilised to best advantage.

In Maggie's experience, landowners choose National Trust covenants because they can retain ownership of the land and because of the Trust's independence and good reputation amongst the landholding community. For its part, the Council is pleased to work with the National Trust as, after contributing to the costs to set up the covenant, the Council hands over ongoing liaison and monitoring to the Trust, knowing the area is well protected no matter who the landowner is in the future. Also, the knowledge that the National Trust is there as an ongoing partner to assist the landowner with future management is important.

"Drawing on each other's strengths," is how Tim Porteous, Biodiversity Co-ordinator for the Wellington Regional Council describes the Council's private land protection programme with the

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NZ Ecological Society Conference

Staff from the National Trust recently participated in the annual New Zealand Ecological Society conference at Waikato University. Charlie Palmer presents a summary of some of the more important themes discussed.

Speakers from research institutions, universities, and conservation organisations presented papers that explored some exciting ecological concepts. One in particular that is receiving recent attention is the application of integrated and co-ordinated ecosystem management based on scientific approaches. Setting aside the jargon it essentially promotes a management regime that focuses on improving entire ecosystem health rather than concentrating on only one species, such as a threatened, interesting or marketable species. Such an approach has partly developed from the success that the Department of Conservation has achieved in intensively managing so-called mainland islands, areas of mainland New Zealand where biodiversity enhancement has been proved to be possible at similarly high levels as those achieved on off-shore islands.

This concept is exciting for conservation in lowland New

Zealand by virtue of requirements for the management of ecosystem health which lead to a landscape based approach to conservation. A remnant of forest or wetland is not viewed in isolation but rather as part of a larger and wider ecosystem, including the surrounding paddocks, nearby remnants, urban areas, rivers and so on - all of which have ecosystem processes that occur across the boundaries of each area. Valued species occur within this matrix utilising habitat that might not be entirely natural. For example native birds use exotic tree species for food and shelter, we use gorse as a nursery species to enhance the growth of native forests, and in one King Country location as a home for a threatened weta species! In order to manage these ecosystems effectively, the management of the surrounding area should be considered, as well as the remnants of vegetation themselves.

In some situations there is potential for management to focus on only one species, this is where that species has been shown to be an important feature of the ecosystem. Such species are known as 'keystone' species and are characterised as having effects that are disproportionally large in comparison to their abundance. This is not a new concept but it is one

that has not been applied often to ecosystem management in New Zealand. Management of these species whether by control of keystone pests or enhancement of keystone native species has the potential to benefit the entire ecosystem. An example that illustrates this effectively is the role of the introduced wasp in eastern South Island beech forests. Wasps consume a great proportion of the insect-mediated, sap-derived, beech tree exudate called honeydew, which would otherwise be utilised directly by fauna and indirectly by the entire forest. Control of wasps, which are a keystone pest, can lead to positive conservation outcomes for the entire ecosystem.

Discussion of these concepts and a daylong symposium on "ecology in human-dominated landscapes" clearly recognises the importance that researchers and practitioners are placing in ecology and its management in lowland New Zealand. The National Trust is excited about these and looks forward to being involved in future developments.

Quotes from Biodiversity and Private Land - the final report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee:

"The Committee completed its consultation hugely impressed by the work of the QEII National Trust and by the goodwill and overwhelming support it enjoys within rural communities."

"successful nature conservation requires willing and motivated landholders."

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National Trust. "The Council has taken the Government's Biodiversity Strategy seriously and initiated a range of programmes to address biodiversity decline in the Wellington region," notes Tim. "A key component of these is the joint programme with the Trust. I know from my experience with the Trust that its rapport with private landowners is second to none, and one that the Regional Council could not hope to emulate. By using its resources to reduce the cost of covenanting to both the landowner and the Trust, the Council can make a positive contribution to biodiversity

protection by ensuring a higher level of covenanting activity."

The National Trust, and the Board in particular, is highly encouraged by the level of interest shown in its covenanting option and the approach shown by regional councils. It is clear that extending and strengthening the partnerships between the National Trust, regional and territorial authorities and landowners is the key to progressing the aims of the Biodiversity Strategy, and this is where the Trust will put much of its effort in coming years.

**By Tim Cossar
CEO**

BIODIVERSITY OUTSIDE PUBLIC CONSERVATION LANDS

– Government's response to the Ministerial Advisory Committee's final report.

In August 2000, the Final Report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Biodiversity and Private Land (formerly *Bio-What?*) was published.

The Government's response to that report is a package of seven initiatives which the Ministry for the Environment and the Department of Conservation will be involved in implementing. The following is a summary of those initiatives from the Ministry for the Environment fact sheet.

1. **Enhancing capacity in local government by supporting pilot projects.** The Government is committed to enhancing the capacity of local government to address biodiversity issues. It will do this by contributing to local government projects aimed at establishing effective regional governance arrangements and enhancing community participation. Local Government New Zealand has been invited to submit a proposal for a three-year funding programme beginning in 2000/2001.
2. **A national policy statement (NPS) under the Resource Management Act.** The Government will develop an NPS on biodiversity in partnership with local government. The NPS will provide guidance on how councils should take account of biodiversity in the exercise of their Resource Management Act functions. Funding for an NPS was provided in the 2000/2001 budget and work will begin in the first half of 2001.
3. **A biodiversity advisory service.** \$3.6 million (over four years) was allocated for an

advisory service in the 2000/2001 budget as part of the NZ Biodiversity Strategy funding package. This funding will be used to provide a service offering advice for landowners wanting to adapt land management practices to achieve better biodiversity outcomes.

4. **Increased funding for existing protection mechanisms.** An additional \$30.5 million over the five years to 2004/2005 was allocated in the 2000/2001 budget. This funding will be shared between the existing programmes operated by the QEII National Trust* (see National Trust's comment below), Nature Heritage Fund, and Nga Whenua Rahui.
5. **Fund aimed at improving the condition of biodiversity.** \$6.5 million (over four years) was allocated for a biodiversity improvement fund in the 2000/2001 budget as part of the NZ Biodiversity Strategy funding package. This funding will be available for ongoing management such as pest and weed control, fencing and restoration projects on privately owned land. No funding will be available until 2001/2002.
6. **Clarify role of local government in legislation.** The lead role of regional councils

and the important role of territorial authorities in biodiversity conservation will be clarified by amending the Resource Management Act.

7. **A commitment to further work on a national governance structure.** A wide range of organisations is involved in biodiversity and private land issues, projects and programmes, but there is currently no specific co-ordination mechanism for sharing information and co-ordinating actions. The Government will investigate how to achieve this at a national level.

For more information on this report, contact Laura Hogg, Ministry for the Environment Resource Management Group - phone (04) 917 7400, or visit the Ministry's web site at www.mfe.govt.nz/about/publications.htm

National Trust reaction:

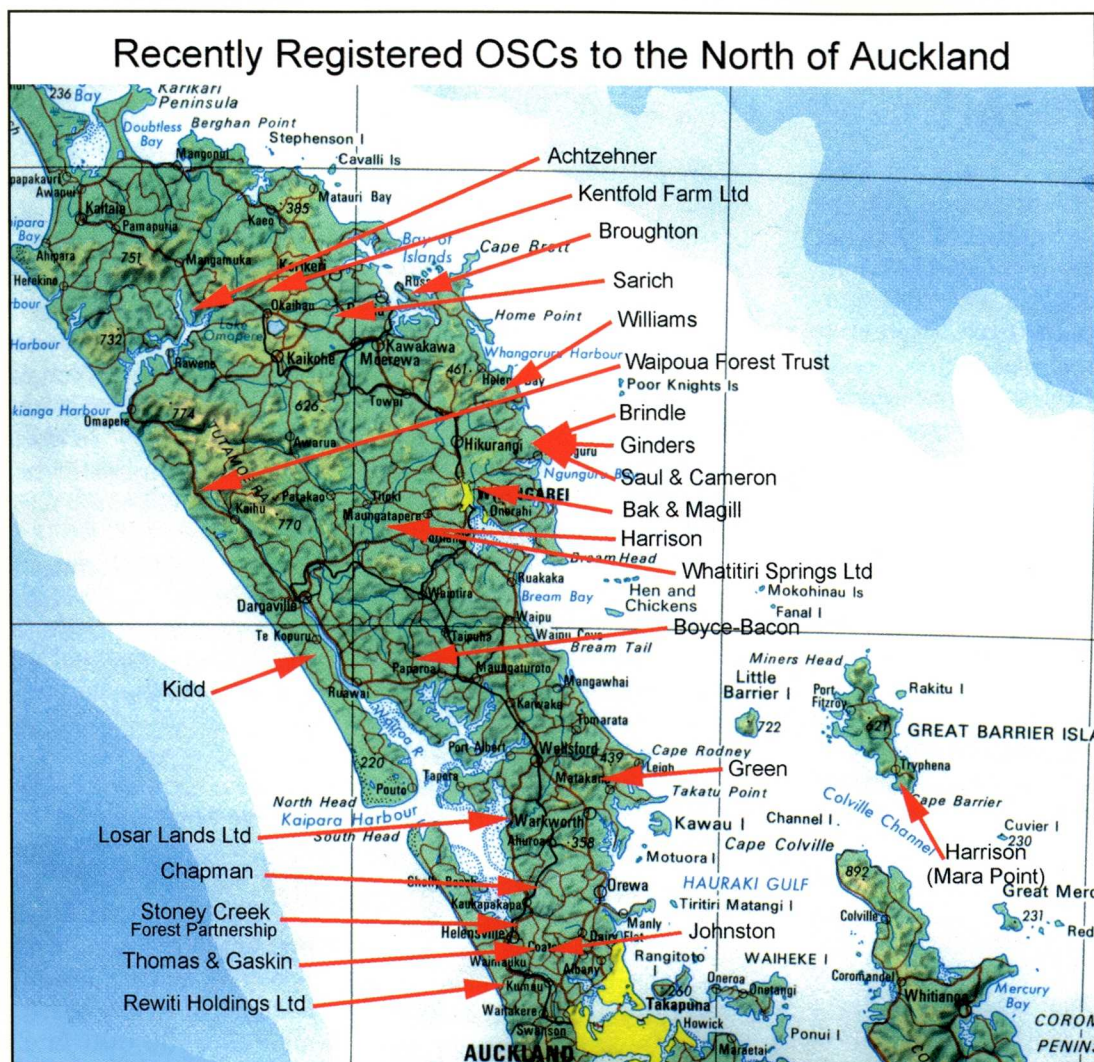
This funding allocation had been previously announced (see Open Space #49). Of the \$30.5 million total, the Trust will receive just \$3.1 million (\$400,000 in 2000/01; \$400,000 in 2001/02; \$600,000 in 2002/03; \$700,000 in 2003/04; and \$1,000,000 in 2004/05. Given the level of support shown for the Trust, the Trust believes that only receiving 18% of total funding in Year 1, diminishing to 7% in Year 5, is not sufficient to credibly fill potential landowner demand.

Tim Cossar, CEO.

The National Trust and covenantors: a partnership to protect biodiversity on private land.

Focus on: North of Auckland

With articles featuring covenants and covenantors in the region between Kumeu and Kaitaia.



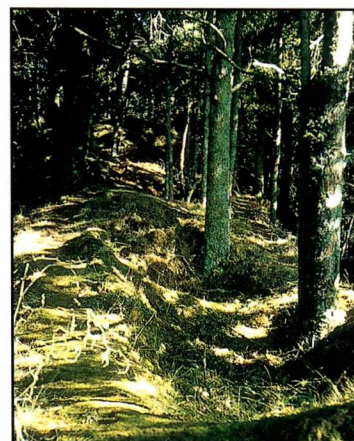
Three National Trust Regional Representatives - Fenton Hamlin, Nan Pullman and Ross Smith - cover this region. Also, Greg and Gay Blunden manage the National Trust's Ecological Centre at Aroha Island, near Kerikeri.

Paparoa Podocarps and Pa Site

Warren and Leonie Boyce-Bacon have protected 17ha of indigenous forest (in four blocks) on their property near Maungaturoto.

Three of the blocks, on steep hillsides, have mainly broadleaved forest dominated by taraire. In one of these blocks, a pa site has been well preserved on a steep-sided ridge. The fourth area, adjacent to Paparoa Station Road, is flat and bisected by Paparoa Stream. The forest canopy here is mainly totara and other podocarps, including a stand of kahikatea. The National Trust is grateful to Northland Regional Council for financial assistance in fencing this block.

Wandering Jew (*Tradescantia fluminensis*) is a widespread problem in this locality. Warren is a former wildlife officer and understands the importance of pest and weed control, but continual re-infestation of the Paparoa Stream by this weed from upstream properties makes eradication unattainable.



Maori archaeological site amongst mature trees.

Subdivision a Catalyst for Covenants

As Auckland creeps further and further northwards, subdivision for residential development is putting pressure on the Silverdale–Helensville–Warkworth rural landscape. The local authority - Rodney District Council – has addressed this issue by requiring subdivisions to include provision for permanent legal protection of significant natural areas. A National Trust open space covenant is increasingly the protection mechanism that is chosen by the landowner, as in the following six cases.

Christchurch couple Stuart and Rosalie Camp approached the National Trust in 1998 with a view protecting part of their Wainui property with an open space covenant. They had fenced a 2.8ha podocarp forest remnant several years earlier and had worked hard to control possums and clear out wild ginger, but needed legal protection in place to allow subdivision. However, almost immediately, the Camps sold the whole property to **Alan Thomas and Loren Gaskin**, with the proviso that the new owners continue with the covenant. The covenant was duly registered early last year.

The protected remnant fronts Whitehills Road, and has an impressive canopy of kauri, kahikatea, rimu and tanekaha.

Two newly covenanted blocks of forest on **Andrew and Lindsay Johnston's** property, less than a kilometre to the north of Alan and Loren's covenant area, contribute to a network of protected podocarp in the Silverdale area. These are important feeding and roosting sites for native birdlife such as tui and fantail.



The Johnstons' forest covers over 7 hectares, and is predominantly kauri, taraire, tanekaha and puriri, with a good variety of other native tree species. The forest had already been fenced and stock removed before Andrew and Lindsay approached the Trust for a covenant, and there is extensive regrowth as a result.

The main block of forest can readily be admired as it fronts the western side of Bodhisattva Road.

When **Alan Chapman** wanted to subdivide his property at Tahekeroa, a condition of the resource consent was that he legally protect almost 8 hectares of regenerating taraire forest on the land. Mr Chapman and the prospective purchasers – Andy Hamilton and Anna Dowling – came to the National Trust together and an open space covenant was registered over the land.



Chapman forest.

Andy and Anna now own the block and are enthusiastic about the covenant. They are busy laying bait stations to reduce the possum population and are working to eradicate some honeysuckle and cotoneaster infestations. They are also keen to create a walking track through the forest to facilitate public access.

This covenanted forest block is a small fraction of an extensive forest which extends onto several surrounding properties. Anna and Andy's neighbours to the east, Brian Alexander and Margaret Mollier, covenanted their portion (18.5 ha) of the forest ten years ago, and this new area complements that one very satisfactorily.

This healthy and attractive block of forest can be viewed easily on the northern side of Krippner Road.

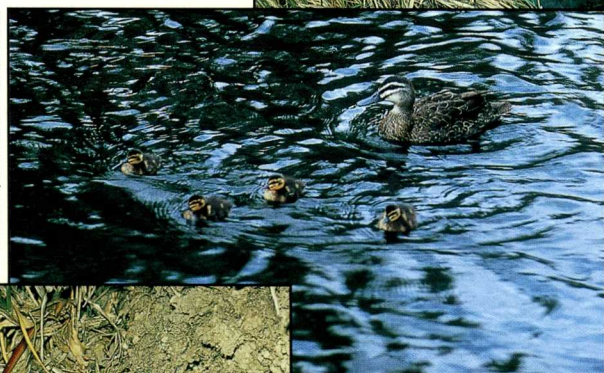
Christian and Ruth Stafford, of **Rewiti Holdings Ltd**, approached the National Trust to covenant 3 hectares of wetlands and forest on their Waimauku lifestyle block so that they could undertake a subdivision.

Wetlands are scarce in this district, so the Stafford wetlands provide much needed habitat for many bird species, including pukeko, cranes, kingfishers and grey duck.

The Staffords are committed conservationists who have worked hard to enhance the natural values of their land since they purchased it three years ago. The regenerating manuka scrub forest has vigorous regrowth of native species, including some excellent totara. The area had been cut



A pukeko in its favourite habitat - *Carex secta* wetland.



Grey duck typically hatch 10 ducklings in October-November.



Kingfishers breed in tunnel nests dug in clay banks or rotting trees.

over by previous landowners but Christian and Ruth are encouraging regeneration by eradicating blackberry, kikuyu and tobacco weed, and undertaking a native planting programme.

John Groome and his associates form a group known as **Stoney Creek Forest Partnership**. The partnership has owned a large block of land at Kaukapakapa since 1963 and has used it for commercial exotic forestry. However, a stand of podocarp forest in the middle of the block has been left untouched and, thanks to stock exclusion for over 30 years and an intensive possum control programme for the last six years, is in exceptionally good condition.

When the partnership decided to subdivide some of the block, legal protection of the indigenous forest remnant was a Council requirement. The National Trust was approached, and the result is an open space covenant over 2.6ha of 10-metre-tall kauri, totara, tanekaha and rimu.

The forest is not visible from the road, but the owners are keen to encourage access for school parties to learn about both exotic and native forests.

In *Open Space* #45 we reported on **David Green** and sister-in-law **Maureen Green**'s first covenant, which was brought about by a subdivision of the Matakana property. A further subdivision has now been completed, resulting in an additional open space covenant; this time over 1.1ha of land in three areas, two of which are almost contiguous.

The new protected areas are fringes of coastal vegetation on the western bank of the Matakana River. The mix of native forest species and mangrove along the riverbanks has ecological and scenic value in this popular boating and fishing spot. The Greens' covenanted land is the only section of the coastal strip in this area that is protected.

FACTS

In Rodney District:

- Total land area is 249,000ha.
- Total area of indigenous forest is 19,000ha.
- Area of indigenous forest in private ownership is 16,000ha.
- 99% of indigenous forest in lowland (under 300m) is in private title.
- 54 National Trust covenants protect 734ha of forest & wetland on private land.

Sources: Final Report of Ministerial Advisory Committee on Biodiversity and Private Land, August 2000, and QEII National Trust.

For more information about the National Trust
and its work, visit our website
www.nationaltrust.org.nz

Great Barrier Landmark Protected



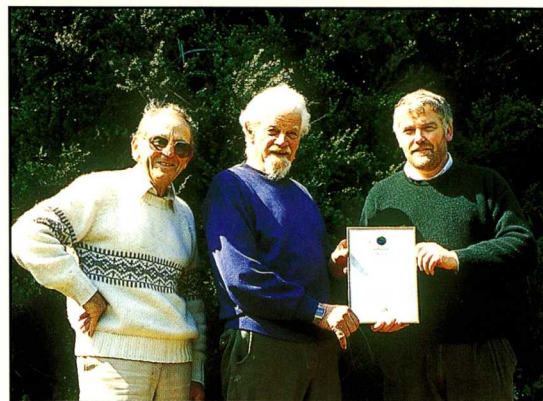
Mara Point dominates the entrance to Great Barrier Island's Tryphena Harbour. Lying on the southern side of the harbour entrance, the height and strategic position of this headland made it a valuable site for a Maori pa in historic times, and it is now the location of the Tryphena navigational beacon.

From 1962 to 1998, **Bob Harrison** owned Mara Point, and he was keen to see the aesthetic, cultural, and ecological values of the headland permanently protected. A National Trust covenant was registered over 6 hectares of the headland in 1998, and Bob's son, Graeme Harrison, fulfilled his father's wishes by subsequently

gifting the land to the National Trust.

Bob Harrison continued to live on Great Barrier until his death last September at the age of 84. John Bishop, the National Trust's Estate Manager, has very fond memories of Bob from the occasions he had the pleasure of meeting him on the Barrier. He comments that Bob was a person with worldly views and a determination to achieve what he considered was the right thing.

The National Trust has been fortunate to have been the recipient of Bob Harrison's generosity



From left: Walter Willis (former Regional Rep for Auckland), Bob Harrison, and John Bishop. Taken in 1994.

through the gift of the Mara Point land, and an open space covenant over the nearby Sandy Bay bush block to protect the natural values of that area in perpetuity. The steps taken by Bob to protect these areas will ensure that they remain his living memorial.

New Covenant Revegetated With Help From Local Marae

On the northern bank of the Hotoe River, near Kaipara Harbour, over 18 hectares of rolling to steep country belonging to **Losar Lands Ltd** has been covenanted recently with the National Trust.

Gordon Perry, who is a director of the company and a committed conservationist, was instrumental in putting the covenant in place. Several years ago, Gordon originated a tree-raising project with the local Puatahi Marae, using manuka seed collected and germinated by Arthur and Val Dunn, for revegetating part

of the area. Val and Arthur have themselves covenanted three areas, totalling 95ha, near Puhoi. Other parts of the covenant area are already covered with a mixture of naturally regenerating vegetation including rimu and kauri, interspersed with kahikatea, totara and hardwood species.

The covenant area links well with

the extensive Department of Conservation Mt Auckland Stewardship Area, on the opposite side of the river, which is mainly in hardwood forest. The New Zealand Walkway passes through the Mt Auckland area, and the lookout platform at the summit allows an excellent view of the Kaipara region, including the covenanted forest.

Always gain permission from the landowner before entering an area protected by open space covenant.

Idyllic Tauwhara Bay

Turquoise sea, golden sands and the lush greens of coastal forest fringed by ancient and gnarled pohutukawas, make Tauwhara Bay on Northland's east coast an idyllic and special place.

Special, because while pohutukawas can be found up and down this coast, it is unusual to also have relatively intact coastal, broadleaf forest. This one has a healthy, dense and vigorously regenerating understorey which includes nikau, kowhai, mahoe, kohekohe, coastal Olearia, a variety of native grasses, flax and rengarenga lilies.

Much of the forested Tauwhara



Bay escarpment is within **John Williams's** property. He has protected 7.2 hectares with an open space covenant. John was keen to preserve the natural values of the property, not only for its scenic merit but as a habitat for wildlife.

The property is partially bush-covered coastal escarpment, and partially regenerating native bush

where pines have been removed, providing an important link with the similarly vegetated Watkin Powell Scenic Reserve at the southern end of the bay. Together, these protected areas provide valuable habitat and food for many native forest birds, in particular tui, kukupa, ruru, shining cuckoo, and even bellbirds visiting from the Poor Knights Islands.



The magnificent kukupa.

Photo by J Kendrick, courtesy of the Department of Conservation.

More Stepping Stones for Kukupa

It has taken many years and several landowners to covenant some of the last big trees on the edge of the Maungatapere-Whatitiri volcanic zone, on Carruth Road. The protected areas may be individually small, but they form significant additional "stepping stones" for the endangered kukupa (wood pigeon or kereru) - see Open Space #48 - and other species.

The previous owner, Mr Irwin Wilson, whose family had owned the property since 1918, was very keen to see this area legally protected, especially to stop the large kauri from being logged. The Trust offered a covenant subject to fencing of the eastern edge. However, Mr Wilson was not able to complete this very difficult and expensive task, which, in the end, involved fixing posts and strainers into buried concrete slabs, before the property was sold. The new owners have now completed this difficult fencing job and the bush is finally protected with a covenant.

Just up the road from the Whatitiri Springs Ltd covenant area lie two small blocks (totalling 1.6 hectares) recently covenanted by

Grant and Shirley Harrison. The covenant protects a broadleaved remnant adjacent to Carruth Road, and a kahikatea/pukatea wetland area slightly to the east.

Regional Rep Nan Pullman noted good species diversity in the wetland, with cabbage trees, tree ferns, rimu and a variety of sedge and rush species present. The number and variety of seedlings sprouting around the trees provided tell-tale evidence of visiting kukupa.

The broadleaved remnant, which includes kohekohe and pigeonwood, extends onto the property to the south, some of which has been protected with a Whangarei District Council conservation covenant.

Covenanting Gains Momentum in Abbey Caves Road

As more of Whangarei's eastern rural fringes are subdivided, patches of isolated forest are being put forward for covenants with the National Trust.

In Abbey Caves Road, Whareora, a large multiply-owned forest block is gradually being protected by each of the landowners concerned. The first area to be protected was 4 hectares of regenerating podocarp forest and scrubland on **Simone Bak's** lifestyle block, and another covenant, on the eastern edge of the same forest, is now close to registration. Land in this vicinity is being steadily subdivided because of its proximity to Whangarei City, which is only 4km to the west, and its attractive rural ambience.

One area of Miss Bak's remnant features a mix of lowland forest with a dominance of kahikatea and totara, plus some puriri on the edges. Another scrubbier area, on the edges of a stream, contains a diverse range of younger understorey species, in particular manuka,



hangehange, karamu and matipo, as well as totara, kamahi, cabbage trees and tree fuchsia.

This is limestone rock terrain, with many caves, tomos and underground streams. The forest is frequented by kukupa and tui, and its proximity to several scenic reserves means it is linked to other seed sources.

Prime Kiwi Habitat Protected

11

The magnificent forest panorama was a major attraction for **Carolynne and Peter Brindle** when they looked at buying their Matapouri lifestyle block in 1998. Keen to ensure the bush remained in its pristine state, the Brindles opted to replace the Whangarei District Council conservation covenant on part of their forest with a National Trust open space covenant over all the forest (5.4 hectares), for legal protection in perpetuity.

The forest is a rich mixture of mature kohekohe, puriri and taraire, with the outer edges dominated by rewarewa, totara and tanekaha. Because much of the forest is in a steep gully, stock have never penetrated very far and there is a wonderful multitude of ferns in the ground cover. The forest is in the middle of a region identified by the Department of Conservation as prime kiwi habitat, and Carolynne and



View from near house site, looking over covenant area and Soda Springs Scenic Reserve.

Peter have seen and heard kiwi activity very close to their house.

As well as being a valuable kiwi and kukupa habitat in its own right, this new open space covenant adds an important link to the extensive Soda Springs Scenic Reserve, about 1km to the north.

Stemming the Tide of Subdivision on Ngunguru Riverbank

On the northern bank of the Ngunguru River, two new covenants provide legal protection for kiwi habitat. In this locality, a total of 23.6 ha now has permanent protection through the National Trust.

Percy Ginders has lived on his property by the Ngunguru River for more than 20 years, and he loves the indigenous forest that covers about 1/3 of his land.

With pine forests planted across the river, and increasing pressure on the area for subdivision, Percy decided to ensure his forest didn't end up the same way.

He approached the National Trust for assistance, and now his 2.2 hectares of forest is protected by open space covenant. A specific aim of the covenant is that subdivision is not permitted. The National Trust is grateful to Whangarei District Council for its financial assistance in registering this covenant.



Lowland podocarp forest on the property of Richard Saul and Roberta Cameron.

Some three kilometres east of Peter Ginder's covenant area, another new covenant protected several pockets (totalling 8.4 hectares) of lowland podocarp forest on the property of **Richard Saul and Roberta Cameron**.

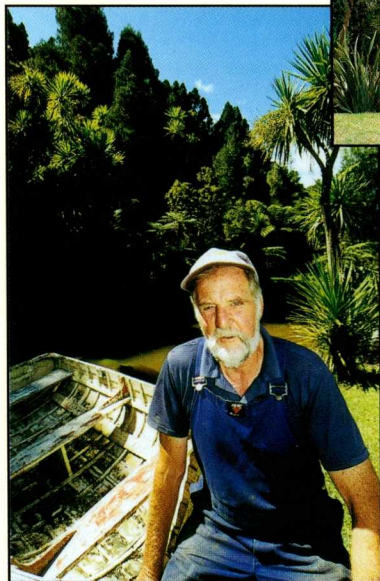
One block is in the head of a south-facing valley and is almost contiguous with Wade and Jan Doak's forest (covenanted in 1988). An association of medium to mature kauri, tanekaha and rimu with occasional puriri and emergent mature kahikatea dominates the canopy. The kauri/tanekaha association is a notable feature of the

Ngunguru River ecosystem and generally under-represented on protected land. With no livestock on the block since 1994, and a continuing, intensive, local anti-possum campaign, natural regeneration on Richard and Roberta's block has been rapid.

A bush strip along the edge of the river is the other area protected by this covenant. Pockets of medium-sized kauri feature along this edge, and a similar mix of vegetation typical of lowland podocarp forest, but there are also areas of dense kanuka and even several reasonable-sized northern rata.



Percy's pet eels are very much at home in this bush-fringed pond.



Percy Ginders, at his new covenant on the banks of the Ngunguru river, Northland.

The species-diverse forest is on a steep, south-facing hillside, which drops down to a small stream, swampy area and pond - home to Percy's large pet eels. Kauri rickers dominate the ridges, with totara and tanekaha on the slopes, and good-sized kahikatea and cabbage trees in the wetter areas. It is a healthy habitat for kukupa, kiwi and tui, thanks to Percy's stoat control programme and the possum-trapping activities of his neighbour to the north.

FACTS

In Whangarei District

- Total land area is 285,000ha.
- Total area of indigenous forest is 48,000ha.
- Total area of indigenous forest in private ownership is 36,000ha.
- 96% of lowland (under 300m) indigenous forest is in private title.
- 61 National Trust covenants protect 1147ha of forest and wetland on private land.

Sources: Final Report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Biodiversity and Private Land, August 2000, and QEII National Trust.

German Couple Treasure their Hokianga Forest Remnant

On the northern shore of Hokianga Harbour, a small indigenous forest block lies within the extensive exotic forestry block of **Tony and Diane Achtzehner**. Tony and Diane are originally from Germany, and they cherish the natural and relatively unpolluted environment here in New Zealand.

Few privately owned remnants have been protected in the northern Hokianga, so it was particularly pleasing when Tony and Diane approached the Trust in 1997 seeking to covenant theirs.

Now registered, the covenant protects 3.8 hectares of species rich forest, with totara, taraire, tanekaha and puriri the dominant canopy species. Tony and Diane don't live here, but their new home, high on the hills overlooking the Kerikeri Inlet, is bordered by a forest remnant where Diane has honed her skills at identifying native flora and fauna. There is currently a high possum population in the Hokianga remnant, and Tony and Diane are keen to control them and improve the habitat for native birdlife.

This new covenant area is close to Umawera Bush, which comprises over 100 hectares of kanuka-totara forest and bracken-mahoe shrubland. Umawera Bush is home to North Island brown kiwi, kukupa and common forest birds, and has an important role in linking smaller indigenous forest blocks to the southwest, such as Tony and Diane's, with the larger Omahuta Forest.

An Important Little Corner in Waimate North

By Fenton Hamlin

Selwyn Gubb is a good keen man. While fencing and covenanting his own remnant at Waimate North (see *Open Space* #43), he realised that it would make more ecological sense to include a tiny (637m²) portion of his neighbour's (the Sarich family) bush in with his own. A friendly chat with the Sariches soon obtained the okay, but that was just the beginning!

The legalities were not so easily dispensed with. The Trust realised that it would be necessary to register a separate covenant over these few square metres. Not a real problem, but it did require a survey plan and then, of course, the signatures of all the members of the **Sarich Family Trust**; some of whom lived out of the district. Finally, 5 years after Selwyn's hard work in fencing the bush, the covenant is registered and adding another protected remnant to the nucleus of superb Waimate North covenants in this historic district.

Open Space
*welcomes contributions
from Covenantors,
Trust members and
friends with ideas,
views or stories to tell.*

13

Waipoua Millennium Forest Project Update

In *Open Space* #48, we reported on the National Trust's involvement with the Waipoua Millennium Kauri Forest project. The main purpose of the project is to provide a link between existing indigenous vegetation and restoration sites. The project entails restoration planting of seedling kauri over about 145 hectares of land. The kauri forest is being protected by open space covenants.

The second and third of the

covenants have now been finalised, bringing the total area protected to 131 hectares.

One of these covenants covers a property that was previously owned by Wayne and Anne Burke and that is adjacent to the Waipoua Forest. This 4ha block is almost covered in 80-year-old kauri "forest" shrubland, which is excellent kiwi and fernbird habitat. The shrubland includes manuka, towai, the ferns waewaekaka and kiokio, as well as kahikatea, totara and kanuka stands

10-15 metres tall.

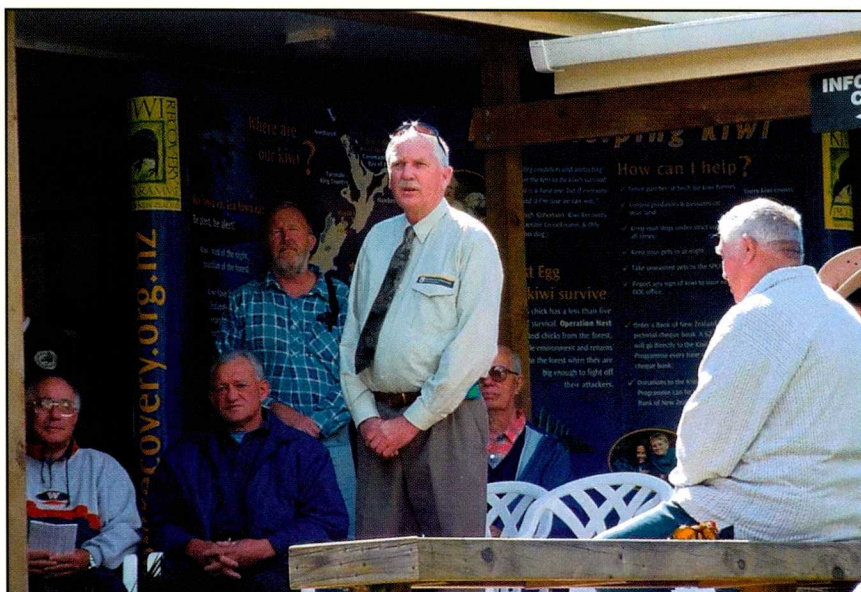
The other new covenant covers a 5ha rolling hill country block of native scrub and pasture that was previously owned by Alfred, Dorothy and Carol McGuire. This block is to be revegetated using manuka, tutu, flax and ti kouka. A pine plantation on part of the land is to be retained in the short term as a shelter for native regeneration – once the pines reach maturity they will be harvested and replaced with indigenous species.

AROHA ISLAND – Predator Control Open Day and Launch of the Kerikeri Kiwi Project

An Open Day focusing on predator control was held at Aroha Island last September. Methods that can be used by private landowners to protect native wildlife on their property were demonstrated. Nearly 200 people visited Aroha on the day, listened to the short introduction, watched demonstrations of how to build and operate traps, found out about other control methods, and generally had a good time. All pest

management equipment was sold at cost price or below to encourage landowners to “start trapping”. Throughout the day, NZ Kiwi Foundation members, DOC staff and other experts provided advice and comprehensive resource material was available. Also, there was face painting for the kids and a pest shy using mandarins past their “best by” date were thrown at different traps to set them off – all in all a very messy affair!!!!

The Kerikeri Kiwi Project was launched on the same day. The initial aim of the project is to control animal pests on the Kerikeri Peninsula and then to extend help to other areas where kiwi still survive on private land. This is not a “Mainland Island” type of control but seeks to control pests sufficiently that the kiwi survival and recruitment rate (when birds reach adult age and size) gets above the critical 20% level needed to maintain the species. Left to their own devices, kiwi recruitment in the wild is very low (estimated at 2%).



John Beachman, DoC Area Manager, opened the day's proceedings. In the background are; third from left, Dick Ryan (QEII National Trust director); Colin Little (previous owner of Aroha), seated behind John Beachman; and three Tangata Whenua from the local Mātoa area.



Main kiwi predators – stoat (above) and ferret.



The pest management system (now partially in place) relies upon landowners maintaining trapping and monitoring systems on their properties, either personally, through local volunteer networks or by paying someone to do the job. Every landowner can contribute to the management system in one way or another.

It was great to see Colin and Margaret Little (former owners) back at Aroha, for Dick Ryan (new Director) to be here and to have Mayor Yvonne Sharp and John Carter M.P. here as well. Many thanks to DoC staff for all their time and expertise, and the subsidising of traps sold on the day.

Greg Blunden

Conservation Awards to Covenantors in the Far North

Three National Trust covenantors were honoured at the Eleventh Annual Conservation Awards in Northland late last year.

In *Open Space* #50 we mentioned Greg and Helen Fife, who were recognised for the great lengths to which they have gone to protect kiwi on their property and in the surrounding areas.

The other covenantor recipients were John Bannister and Guy Bowden.

John was recognised for his long-term background of pest control in the Bay of Islands and his particular expertise in possum control.

Guy was recognised for his assistance with the development of a weed strategy for the Poor Knights and Hen & Chickens Islands, and for providing propagation of native species for the Department of Conservation's restoration efforts.

KING OF THE BLUFFS

By Fenton Hamlin

Joe King, like many kiwi farmers, is a multi-talented person. Through the week he works as a chiropractor in the "Central Business District" of Kaikohe, the Far North's principal town. However, before and after his work at the practice, he can be found attending to the many tasks of running the large **Kentfold Farm Ltd** beef farm on 700 acres of hill country, north of Okaihau.

A stony bottom stream running through the property is bordered for much of its length by impressive limestone bluffs topped by remnants of the historical vegetation for the area. Parties of children from local schools frequently camp below the bluffs and sometimes hone their abseiling skills on them.

Joe and his wife Jenny approached the National Trust in 1991 to help them protect



over 9 hectares of bluffs and vegetation. Joe and I first assessed the site on horse-back, following a trail used by a local trekking operator (no longer operating). The vista across the river and down the Waihou Valley is superb. Goats were present then and the bush slightly degraded, but intensive culling and good fencing have allowed the natural regeneration to proceed unimpeded. Much of the fencing was erected on very steep, rocky country and is a credit to the perseverance of Joe and his fencer.

The bluffs make a significant contribution to the high landscape values of the district and are readily visible from SH 1. As a skirt remnant of Puketi forest, the bush is a valuable part of the wildlife corridors linking the larger forests of central Northland.

National Trust's AROHA ISLAND *near Kerikeri*

A peaceful place to visit and stay.

Open every day.

- Ecological Centre – learn about kiwi and NZ ecosystems.
- Loop track through bush and mangroves.
- Accommodation available – bookings essential.
- Superb camping site.
- School parties welcome, by prior arrangement.

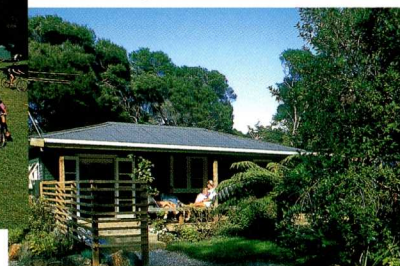
Contact: The Centre Manager
Tel (09) 407 5243 Fax (09) 407 5246
Email kiwi@aroha.net.nz
Or write to Box 541 Kerikeri



Beach, camping area and cottage accommodation.



"Hilda" a visitor to the Ecological Centre.



FARMING, CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AT KAURI CLIFFS, TEPENE

The opening of Kauri Cliffs Golf Course and Resort on 22 January 2001 by Reserve Bank Governor Don Brash brought to fruition a remarkable change of land use for the Tepene Tableland property now called Waiaua Bay Farm. Julian and Josie Robertson have transformed part of David Williams' (former owner) sheep and beef farm into a world class golf course and tourism facility. Julian and Josie are pursuing their dream – this is their personal project – and they are now considering where their family home might be located amidst the coastal splendour of this 2,000 hectare property.

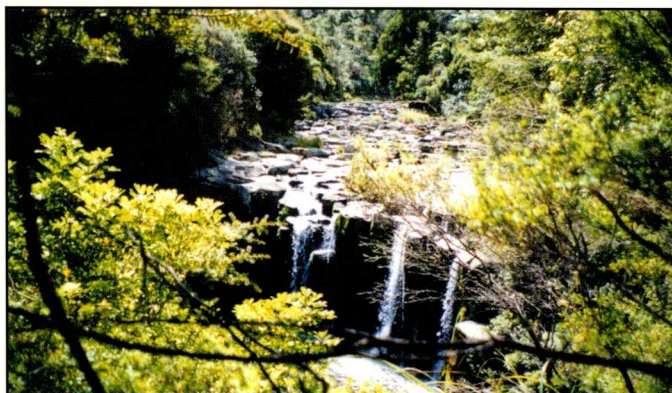
The Kauri Cliffs development has injected approximately \$50 million into the Northland economy, with up to 100 people being employed during the three year construction of the golf course, the Lodge, the accommodation, recreation areas, and the necessary infrastructure. The project has created permanent jobs as well with 50 people now employed in operating the Lodge, golf course and farm. Kauri Cliffs is designed to be the most exclusive tourist facility in the country. Superb cuisine is available, and the Lodge also offers tennis, swimming, walks, and other activities for guests.

Accommodation is provided in cottages nestled in the remnant taraire bush near the lodge. Intelligent use of many indigenous plants augments the remnant to screen the cottages in a delightful way.

The golf course and the resort occupy only part of the estate. Much of the property continues to be managed as a beef and sheep unit with bush and other marginal farming areas previously accessed by cattle being retired to conservation purposes.

enhancing the property, walkways are being developed through the covenant area and around the farm.

Pest management is an essential element of Waiaua Bay Farm. North Island brown kiwi are found on the seaward slopes and in other bush remnants on the farm. Gullies that run through the golf course have been replanted with indigenous species and provide habitat corridors between inland and regenerating coastal bush. In early planning for the project, the Robertsons adopted a policy of using only New Zealand species and over 35,000 plants have been added to the existing land cover.



Several waterfalls, and parts of the Hikurua River and its tributary streams are not located in the covenant area but are to be set aside as conservation areas.



The Robertsons completed a covenanting process initiated by the Williams family. A 13 hectare block of mature forest is now protected under a National Trust open space covenant (see *Open Space #48*) with the feature tree being a kauri more than 600 years old. Further

The transformation from beef and sheep farming to a world class golf course resort, protected habitat and continuing pastoral land use demonstrates that conservation and economic development can occur together given the necessary desire, foresight, resources, and planning. Well done Julian and Josie.



The Lodge/Clubhouse sits at the top of the hill above the 18th hole. The spectacular sea view from the Clubhouse extends from the Cavalli Islands in the north to Cape Brett and Takou Bay in the east. (Michael Campbell ranks Kauri Cliffs Golf Course as being in the top five in the world).

Please note: as with all open space covenants, the Kauri Cliffs Covenant is part of a private property. Public access to Kauri Cliffs is not available except by pre-booking or permission.

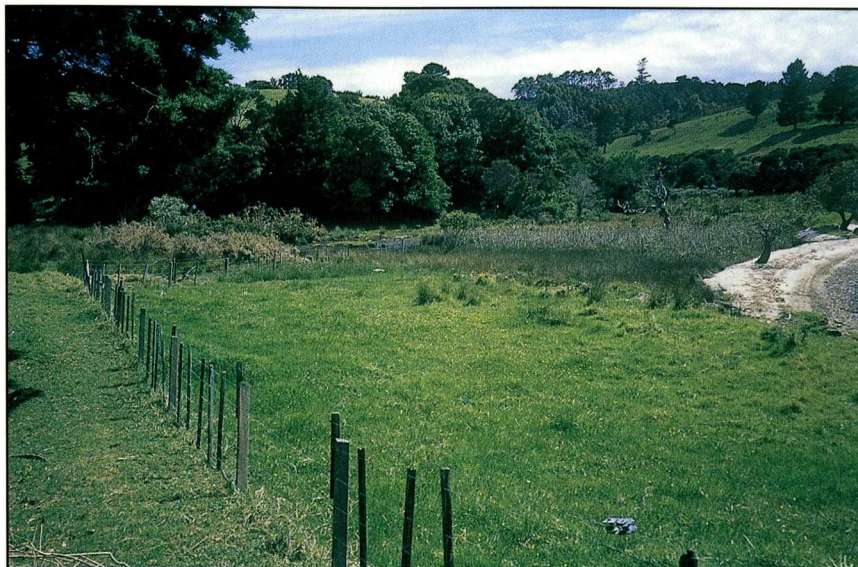
By Greg Blunden

Happy Discovery for Landowners and the Trust

By Fenton Hamlin

Moojebing Park Estate (160ha) on the edge of the Waikare Inlet near Russell, and highly visible from Opuā, represents a huge commitment to protecting the local environment by **Max and Angela Broughton**.

On the recommendation of the Department of Conservation and the Fish and Game Council they set about protecting their riparian bush and providing habitat (ponds) for the rare and threatened pateke (brown teal). The population of pateke, found principally on Great Barrier Island and Northland's east coast, is



Wetland and associated bush.



Typical kanuka canopy – subcanopy well developed.



Covenantor Max Broughton (on right) shares a joke with Mike McGlyn.

dwindling rapidly, so protected habitat for the species is vital.

Angela and Max approached the National Trust in 1996 to place a covenant over the large areas of regenerating coastal shrubland, forest remnants and wetlands on their property. The areas also provide valuable foraging and roosting sites for many other birds, including N.I. fernbird and banded rail, so the National Trust readily agreed to the project.

Over 3km of high quality, new fencing was erected and significant areas of enhancement and establishment planting undertaken, with expert advice and supervision from Mike McGlyn (formerly with the Department of Conservation, Russell).

Eight years after moving to Mooljebing, and two years after initiating the covenant, Max and Angela suddenly realised that the 8ha block of regenerating native shrublands on their eastern boundary was in fact also theirs! To celebrate, they decided to ask the Trust if it was possible to covenant that as well! So, what started out as a proposal to covenant 22ha ended up as a covenant over 30ha.

After ten years of hard work, Max and Angela can now sit back and enjoy the fruits of their labours (as can the pateke and fernbirds). However, I have a feeling that is not the way Max and Angela do things!

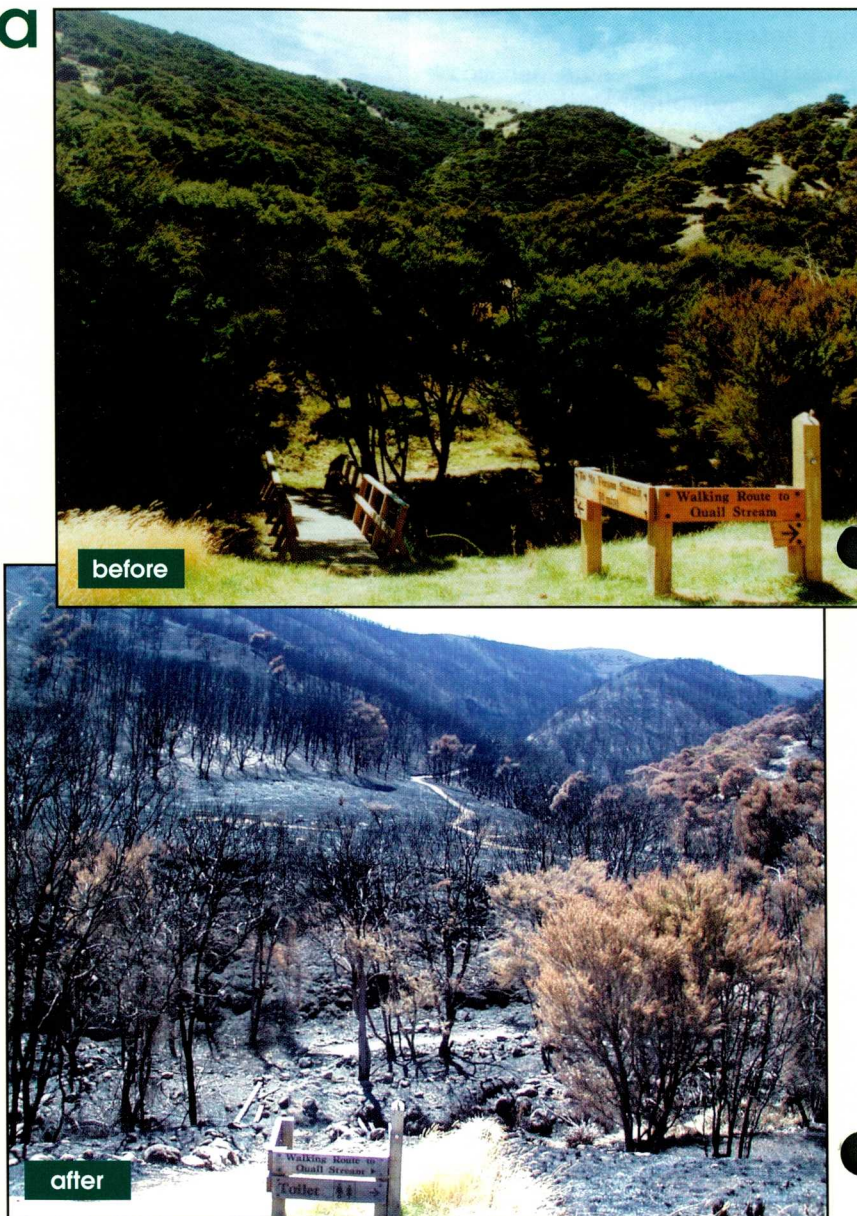
Community pledges to “Start Again” after fire devastates Wither Hills covenant area

One of the many casualties of the Wither Hills fire between Boxing Day and New Year’s Day was a 42-hectare kanuka forest covenanted by landowner Marlborough District Council.

The Sutherland Stream forest was a rarity in this predominantly grass-covered country, and formed an attractive part of the landscape south of Blenheim. An on-going revegetation programme, which commenced in 1995, involved over 30,000 plantings of naturally occurring native species and local endangered species and had enhanced the existing kanuka gullies of remnant broadleaved shrubs. Community groups and schools played a role in much of this work. There was a real local pride in their achievement.

Fire was always recognised as the No.1 threat to this covenant area, and there was a strict fire ban in place at all times. Unfortunately, this was not enough.

The council’s losses on the Wither Hills Farm Park are significant. In particular, the loss of vegetative cover (grasses, shrubs and trees) on these highly erodible hills is of great concern. For over forty years, these hills have undergone a transformation through careful management to stabilise the soils and arrest erosion by way of vegetation re-establishment. Further remedial soil conservation works are now either underway or planned to mitigate any potential hazard. Other losses inflicted by the fire include



100km of fencing, farm water supply pumps, sheds, tanks and fittings and recreational facilities including toilets, signage, drinking fountains, bridges, boardwalks and stiles.

Immediately after the fire ravaged the forest, shock and tears replaced pride. Now, however, there is an intention for the community to begin again. Inspections of the covenant block show that a few pockets of kanuka survived, and some broadleaved species and others are showing early signs of recovery. Fences are damaged, but not entirely lost.

This winter, work will begin on repairing fences and seeding selected sites within the covenant area to assist the natural regeneration process.

Council has been heartened by the numerous offers of assistance and donations from local individuals, groups and businesses within the community to replant the Park and supply equipment to again rebuild this highly valued community resource.

Thanks to Robin Dunn of Marlborough District Council for his assistance in preparing this article and providing the two photographs above.



ASSET OR LIABILITY?

Getting the Best from your Covenant Fencing

Part 2: Allowing Access

Since publication (in *Open Space* #50) of my first article on the subject of fencing, I have been most gratified by the amount of positive feedback I've received. Thank you to the many readers who have taken the time to write in with fencing ideas and experiences they wish to share with others.

One subject that came up in several letters was how to allow public visitors pedestrian access to a covenant area yet keep out stock and public vehicles. We all know that normal farm gates can get left open with quite disastrous consequences.

A simple and cheap option is the traditional stile (see photo - top right). This saves wear and tear on the fence (and clothes) and makes the protected area more "user friendly". Able-bodied people can hop over a stile quite easily, but vehicles, stock, horses, and most dogs, can't.

The main shortcomings of the stile are

- Less-able public visitors are not capable of scaling it,
- Access by the landowner for covenant management purposes is restricted,
- If stock have got into the protected area somehow, it's difficult to get them out again.

Grant Nelson, whose philanthropic organisation "The Gama Foundation" has covenanted several indigenous forest areas in the Canterbury region, has submitted an alternative idea that he has found successful. The design cunningly combines a normal farm gate with the long-established "kissing gate" idea, thus restricting public access but allowing free access by the land manager.

Grant writes:

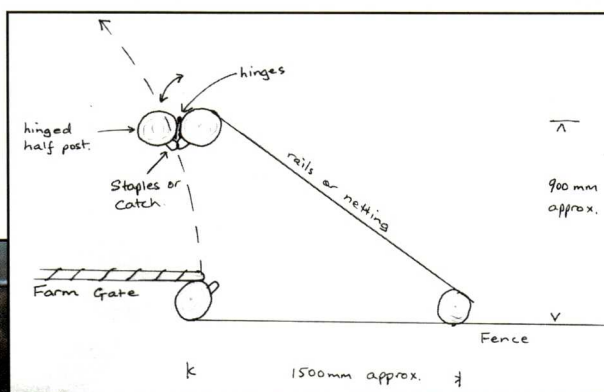
"We have developed a method of allowing pedestrian access to a covenanted area without risking a farm gate being left open and stock getting in. This involves the use of two and a half fence posts (see photo and sketch diagram - below and right).



1. Attach the half post to the top half of one full fence post using two (100mm) butt hinges.
2. Hammer two large staples (of the type used to hook gate chains onto) into the hinged posts so that the staples almost touch and can be padlocked together.
3. Set the full post in the ground about 900mm from the existing gatepost. It needs to be positioned so that when the gate is opened, and the hinged posts are padlocked together, the gate will butt up against the hinged half post. When the padlock is removed, the hinged post should be able to swing out of the way, allowing the gate to open fully.
4. Set the remaining full post in the ground beside the existing fence, about 1500mm from the gatepost.
5. Erect netting, wire or rails between the two fixed posts to form a triangular, semi-enclosed area into which people walk when they go through the gateway."

This would seem to be a valuable structure for anywhere on a farm where public are allowed access. Thank you to Grant for this idea.

By Philip Lissaman



Covenantors and Landowners - We would like to hear more of your ideas and experiences with fencing problems - your knowledge is valued and may help someone else with a difficulty.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

The second article in a series explaining the open space covenant document in plain English. This time we discuss the Second Schedule.

The Second Schedule sets out the meaning of specific words and outlines responsibilities and conditions of the covenant. As this is the largest section of the document, we will just tackle three clauses in this article.

Clause One

Clause 1 defines keywords used in the covenant document to avoid any ambiguity or misunderstanding. A distinction is made between the words “**Covenantor**” and “**Owner**” as there is an important difference between them.

- The Covenantor is the person (or people) recorded as the proprietor of the land on the Certificate of Title at the time the covenant document is registered. The Covenantor is granted covenant life membership of the National Trust in recognition that they initiated the covenant.
- From time to time ownership of the property will change. The Owner is the person (or people), at any given time, recorded on the Certificate of Title as the proprietor. It is Trust policy to grant the Owner honorary covenant membership of the National Trust for so long as they own covenanted land.

Clause Two

Clause 2 begins with a general provision restricting certain activity on the covenanted land. It specifies that nothing shall be done to the land that reduces its value as an area of open space.

When the Covenantor is aware that an activity they wish to undertake on a continuing basis is not in accordance with Clause 2, particular provision will be made for that activity in a separate clause in the Third Schedule.

An Owner can however, approach the Trust Board at any time for approval to undertake an activity that might be in conflict with the general restrictions in Clause 2 (see Clause 3 below).

In sub-clauses (a) to (i) of Clause 2, there are specific examples of what an Owner cannot do without Trust Board approval. It is here that the answer to the question “can I?” is often found. For example, can a dead tree be removed? Sub-clause (a) states the Owner shall not remove

any native trees of any kind. Therefore, unless the prior approval of the Board is sought, the dead tree must remain. The reference to plants of any kind is not intended to include weeds or exotic trees.

Clause Three

Clause 3 applies when an Owner approaches the Trust Board for approval to undertake an activity in conflict with Clause 2.

This clause stops the Board from unreasonably denying approval for the activity, if the proposed activity is in keeping with the aims and purposes of the covenant set out in the First Schedule (see *Open Space #47* for an explanation of the First Schedule).

Therefore (further to our example above), if an application is made and the Board is satisfied that the dead tree’s removal is not in conflict with the First Schedule, then consent to its removal may be given.

Nancy Watters is the Trust’s Covenant Advisor (Legal).

She welcomes queries on covenant issues from readers.

Brodifacoum bait still available at reduced price from Mark Bell-Booth Ltd

Mark Bell-Booth Ltd advises that Pestoff™ (brodifacoum) possum bait is still available to National Trust members at a special discount price of \$35 for a 10kg bag.

Phone Pestoff Marketing toll free on 0800 80 90 91 for details.

The National Trust reminds readers that concerns were raised last year (*Open Space #47*) over brodifacoum use, due to residual traces being found in non-target animals. As with all pesticides, follow the manufacturer’s or regional council’s instructions for handling and use of brodifacoum bait.

BEATING *around the bush*

tips and techniques for native ecosystem management

MOTHER NATURE'S LITTLE HELPERS

Promoting native regeneration amongst gorse and rank grass.

Ecosystem processes have a remarkable ability to allow even severely degraded habitats to recover. But, often the slow, measured approach that Mother Nature takes is not fast enough for us in our haste to restore (at least in part) the former glory of natural areas entrusted to us. It could be that our modern, consumer driven, short attention span, baby boomer or generation X land managers are too impatient to wait for natural processes to achieve results – fair comment. But, I think this is not so much a criticism, but an attribute that we should be utilising. Once the high priority, necessary and obvious tasks such as fencing and weed and pest control are complete, there is an opportunity to try simple and easy methods of forest management that act as Mother Nature's Little Helpers.

Most of you will have noticed (thankfully!) that gorse is a good nursery environment for native trees and shrubs, which eventually grow through and suppress the gorse. This assists us toward two ends - ridding us of gorse, and allowing native forest regeneration. It works like this - gorse provides a sheltered environment with just enough space and light to allow native seed to establish and germinate. In addition, due in part to its nitrogen fixing qualities, it assists native seedlings to grow. Most plants remove essential nitrogen from the soil, but a few, including gorse, the clovers, and a small number of select native species such as tutu, collect abundant nitrogen from the air and provide it to the soil for other plants to use. As gorse matures, the tall (up to 2m) canopy opens allowing light to reach the seedlings. They grow taller, for longer and with a denser canopy than the gorse, eventually suppressing it by restricting the available light.

A few years ago, I suggested to a covenantor that one way to speed up the process of native species growing through gorse would be to open up the gorse canopy in small areas

simulating the natural maturation of gorse. Since the growth of native species through gorse appears to be determined by light - simulating senescence by cutting the odd gorse bush should speed up native regeneration. The results last time I looked at this little experiment it seemed to be going well. The natives under the gorse, which were formerly only seedlings, are now decent sized saplings and taller in areas where a gorse bush was removed.

In Canterbury, Alan Totty has also been experimenting. He has a covenant area that includes several copses of beech trees. Alan wanted to boost regeneration in the open grass areas around the beech trees. Beech trees are notoriously slow to regenerate for a few reasons. Firstly, seed production is highly variable from year to year which results in almost no seeding for a few years, then a massive seed set for one year (rarely two in a row). Called 'mast'



Broadleaf and beech seedlings.

seeding, it is quite unusual in the plant world, but for widely debated reasons is a common feature in New Zealand flora. Secondly, the seed has no dispersal mechanism; it simply falls from the tree. Thirdly, beech seed, when it actually falls, germinates almost immediately into a seedling – but usually only when it falls into a bare patch of soil. In natural beech forests such bare patches are common, as few other species will grow in the deep shade and dry soil of the beech forest. The seedlings grow very slowly and can remain small, though they may get quite old. Some 600mm high saplings have



Alan Totty surveying results of release spraying.

been measured as being over 60 years old. Called 'suppressed juveniles', they are waiting for a canopy tree to fall over giving them the light and space to grow.

Because beech seed is only occasionally produced, rarely germinates in dense vegetation, and if it does, it doesn't travel far from the parent tree, forest expansion is very slow. To speed the process up, Alan used a clever technique. He sprayed grass patches on the forest margins with selective herbicide (Gallant) that killed only the dense grass sward. He timed the spray application to coincide with seed set from the previous summer's 'mast' year. Two things happened - one, the few suppressed seedlings already present among the grass were released from competition with the grass, and - two, seeds falling had an open site into which they could germinate. As the photograph shows, the trees - now a couple of years old - are doing well.

Both these simple techniques show how innovative techniques that draw on a good ecological knowledge of the species involved can simply and cheaply give nature a helping hand.

If you've got any more great tips that are Mother Nature's Little Helpers (apologies to Mick Jagger), send them into the Trust and we'll share them with everyone.

By Charlie Palmer

Obituaries

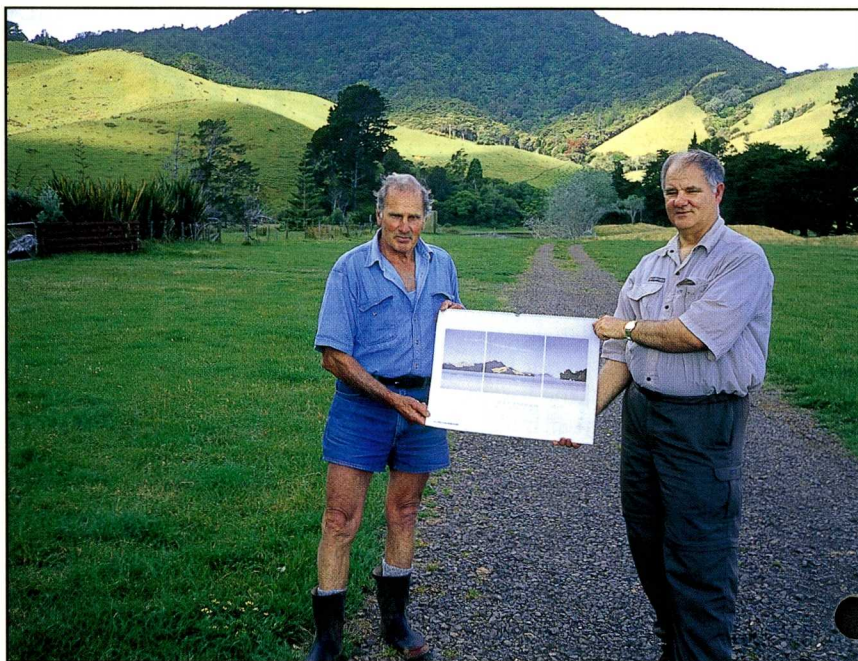
The Trust notes with sadness the recent deaths of Tony Veale of Westport and P.H.C. (Bing) Lucas of Wellington.

Tony Veale and his wife Betty covenanted the coastal dune forest on their Fairdown property in 1999 (see *Open Space* #49). The couple had lived on the coast for almost 50 years, and Tony was well respected for his efforts in controlling animal pests and preventing logging of trees within the covenant area.

Bing Lucas was the first Director of National Parks & Reserves and became Director General of Lands in the former Department of Lands & Survey. During the lead up to the establishment of the National Trust in 1976/77, he was the departmental officer who worked with Sir Thaddeus McCarthy and Gordon Stephenson in formulating the Trust legislation.

The Trust was also saddened to learn recently of Gwen Firth's death 15 months ago. Gwen and her late husband E.B. (Ted) Firth were conservationists ahead of their time. In 1959, they purchased large areas of forest on the slopes of Mt Pirongia that were under threat of logging, and added them to the Pirongia Forest Park. In the 1970s, they gifted over 5 hectares of forest to the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society; and the remaining 16ha of forest on their property was covenanted with the National Trust in 1990. In addition to conserving these areas of forest, the E.B. Firth Trust has, over the years, made generous financial donations to the work of the National Trust. The Trust extends its belated condolences to Mrs Firth's family.

Covenanted Coromandel landscape features on exclusive calendar



In December 2000, Bay of Plenty Regional Rep, Stephen Parr (on right) visited covenantor Peter Simpson at Wharekaho Beach, Mercury Bay, to present him with an upmarket corporate calendar that features the Simpson and Wells covenant areas.

The painting on the calendar is of the beautiful rural panorama at the northern end of the beach. Peter and Margaret Simpson covenanted the foreground flats and skyline forest in 1993. The covenant over the 9 hectares of coastal flats was put in place specifically to prevent subdivision and retain the landscape values of the area. This land had an extremely high potential value for subdivision, so the Simpsons showed incredible generosity in choosing to set it aside in this way. Ren Wells, of NA Wells Ltd, covenanted the pasture-covered hills to the right in 1995. This covenant was also put in place specifically to protect the landscape as seen from Wharekaho Beach. Ren was also presented with a calendar.

Congratulations to the artist – Brian Dahlberg – for his choice in subject, and thank you to Allen Calendars for donating the calendars.

Farewell to Charlie Palmer

Charlie Palmer, Covenant Management Advisor at the Trust's Wellington office for nearly three years, has moved on. Many of you will know Charlie best through his regular "Tips and Techniques" column in *Open Space*. Those who had the opportunity to meet him, however, especially in the Wellington and Horowhenua areas where he also acted as Regional Representative, will have enjoyed his company as well as learnt a lot about open space and its management. His expertise in ecology and covenant management, and his droll sense of humour, will be sorely missed.

Charlie's new job is as consultant ecologist at Boffa Miskell, Christchurch. We wish him well for his future.

COVENANTORS – Selling your property?

Please let the National Trust know.

Making contact with the new owner, and keeping in touch with you, is important to us.

Covenants Update

As at 7 March 2001, there were 1439 registered Open Space Covenants totalling 52176 hectares.

The breakdown by Land District (which differs from our Regional Representatives' boundaries) is as follows:

| Land District | No. Covenanted | Area Protected (ha) |
|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| North Auckland | 311 | 5562 |
| South Auckland | 310 | 9688 |
| Gisborne | 72 | 8932 |
| Hawkes Bay | 76 | 2116 |
| Taranaki | 90 | 2471 |
| Wellington | 240 | 11273 |
| Marlborough | 15 | 691 |
| Nelson | 74 | 2149 |
| Westland | 6 | 180 |
| Canterbury | 107 | 3246 |
| Otago | 53 | 4054 |
| Southland | 85 | 1814 |
| TOTAL | 1439 | 52176 |

TRUST BOARD ACTIVITIES

New Director to be Appointed by Minister

A vacancy has existed on the Trust Board since Maggie Bayfield left last year (after completing a maximum 9-year term). The vacancy is to be filled by appointment by the Minister of Conservation. We believe this appointment is now imminent. We hope to have more information by the next edition of Open Space.

Two Directors Re-elected by Membership

Congratulations to Geoff Walls and Bill Garland who have retained their places on the Trust Board following the election in March.

Board Meeting dates

The next meetings of the Trust Board are scheduled on 17th & 18th April, and 10th & 11th July 2001.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

MANAWAHE PRIVATE BUSH \$319,000

WHAKATANE

Over 8 acres of covenanted native bush surrounds this large centrally heated family home. New, country-style kitchen includes a gas hob, wall oven and coal range, with views to the Whakatane Heads. There are also excellent views to Mt. Maunganui and out to sea from the formal dining room and lounge. Rural tranquillity and privacy, with tui and wood pigeons for neighbours. 3.557ha total area.

Contact: Maurice Butler, The Professionals, Whakatane
Ph. 07 307 0165, 025 514 395 www.the-professionals.co.nz MREINZ

National Trust

Board of Directors

Sir Paul Reeves,
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Bill Garland; Geoff Walls;
Dick Ryan

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Tim Cossar

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Fenton Hamlin Tel: 09 402 8073

Central Northland

Nan Pullman Tel/Fax 09 4343 457

Auckland

Rex Smith Tel: 09 622 2303

Waikato & King Country

Gerry Kessels Tel: 07 825 9025

Bay of Plenty

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Gisborne

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www.converge.org.nz/ntsth

Aroha Ecological Centre

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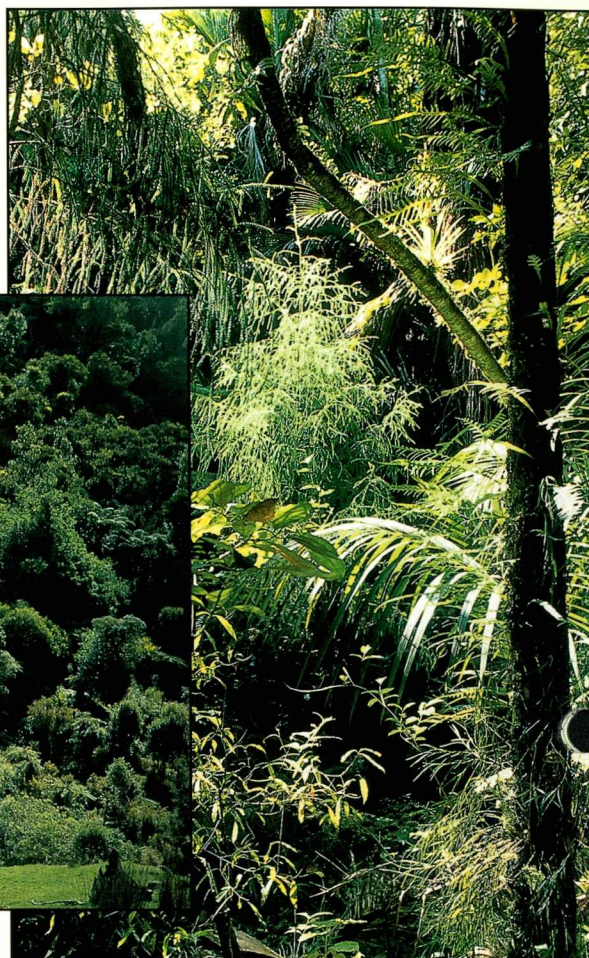
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Visitors welcome at Driver Whitehills Farm covenant.



Takou River and forest from a distance.



Forest interior.

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Selwyn and Dawn Driver and family are active members of a long established and respected farming family. Their well-run and attractive farm is next to State Highway 10, 10km south of Kaeo.

Over the years, Selwyn's family has contributed more than most to the conservation cause in the locality. In 1963, Selwyn's grandparents donated Lonsdale Park (recently approved for a covenant) – a 20-acre, schoolchildren's adventure camp – to the community. The family later gifted 6 ha of native forest to the Crown to add to a scenic reserve adjoining the Drivers' property.

In 1983, Selwyn & Dawn decided to protect more (42ha) of the native forest on their land. As the area they wanted to safeguard ran through the middle of their property, instead of gifting it to the Crown, they decided on an open space covenant. This meant that they could maintain control over public access, as people entering the protected area generally have to cross farmland to get to it. Adjoining this covenant is another covenanted area (19ha) belonging to Neil Driver (Selwyn's cousin) and his wife Marie.

After its registration in 1986, the covenant area was popular with school parties staying at Lonsdale Park and, in 1991, Riverview School

adopted the area for its school covenant project. It is still used by school parties staying at Lonsdale Park.

The protected forest includes a range of indigenous tree species, including rimu, tanekaha, taraire, rata, puriri, kauri, kahikatea, totara, punga, nikau and mahoe. It is a valuable bird habitat, and is home to kiwi, tui, kereru, and kingfisher, as well as more common forest birds. There is also a reasonable size river running through the two covenanted areas, and this gives it an added appeal for people visiting.

Visit Whitehills Farm!

Selwyn is keen to encourage public visitors, especially parties of schoolchildren, to visit the covenant area and share in his love of its natural values. If you are interested in visiting the area, please phone Mr & Mrs Driver for permission first on 09 407 8143.

**Help us protect New Zealand's natural landscape:
persuade a friend to join the National Trust.**

Subscriptions: Individual - \$30, Family - \$45, Corporate (non-profit) - \$50

Freephone 0508 732 878 for details