



BROOK WAIMARAMA SANCTUARY TRUST

3rd AGM - 29 August 2007 - NMIT Student Centre

CHAIR'S REPORT – Dave Butler



Huge totara



Red-crowned parakeet

(Mark Walter photos)

Introduction

Our third year as a trust has been marked by three significant milestones - the opening of our entrance building, the signalling of major support from Nelson City Council, and the appointment of a full-time coordinator – and a gathering momentum. Significant progress has been made with fund-raising and tracking and trapping work within the site. The more we learn about the site, the more excited we are by what we find there.

It's been a great year and this next one is looking even better!

Trustees & Patron

This year marks the end of the 3-year term of five of our original **trustees**: myself, Earle Norriss, Bob Chittenden (NMIT), Rudy Tetteroo (DOC) and Derek Shaw. Rudy, Derek and I are making ourselves available for re-appointment for a further term, but Bob and Earle are standing down.

Earle Norriss was one of the originators of the sanctuary and sat on the initial steering committee before becoming a trustee. Happily we will not be losing Earle's enthusiasm and educational experience completely, as he expects to continue to show schools and other groups around the site.

Bob Chittenden was appointed as Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology's representative when the trust was formed. He must take most of the credit for NMIT developing a very significant partnership with the project. Its Carpentry School tutors and students assisted with construction of the entrance building; it has provided us with an office on the NMIT campus and use of other facilities for meetings and events; it is engaged with us in the development of an Education & training Centre; and also recently agreed to further educational support yet to be announced. We also look forward to Bob's continuing involvement with the sanctuary, hopefully out in the bush where his enthusiasm lies.

We were delighted that Hon Philip Woollaston agreed to be our **patron** in April bringing a wealth of experience to the role. Philip was MP for Nelson from 1981 to 1990, Minister of Conservation and Local Government in the 4th Labour government, Policy Advisor to the UN Environment programme 1990 to 1992 and Mayor of Nelson from 1992 to 1998.

Staff & Contractors

Ann Sheridan completed her contract as the Sanctuary's part-time coordinator in April, finishing on a high note with the opening of the entrance building. Ann was first involved with the project as a volunteer leading a 'publicity' working group that managed some of our initial events, before taking on the coordination role. She deserves much credit and thanks for helping to establish the Sanctuary's strong foundation that we are building on today.

Following the receipt of an Enterprising Communities grant administered by Work & Income, we were able to offer a full-time, two-year coordinator position and were delighted to receive a strong group of applicants. Rick Field was appointed to this role with a wide background including environmental education, facilities management and computing and began work on 18 June.

The Trust has engaged the services of two further contractors during the year, Judene Edgar to provide advice and support on fund-raising and Alistair Wiffen to finalise issues around the pest-proof fence including the resource consent and selection of fencing company.

Volunteers and Members

The list of volunteers who have helped across all areas of the project grows each year and is far too long to cover here. Special thanks to those of you who have helped with administration and the staffing of the entrance building. The teams active in the site go from strength to strength, from track development to monitoring and trapping and some of the results will be covered below.

Our members, whether active as volunteers or not, are the life-blood of the project and I thank you all for your continued support. Many of you have made donations in addition to your subscriptions which make a huge difference to us.

Entrance Building

The opening of our building on 1st April by Steve Chadwick, MP, representing the Minister of Conservation, marked quite an achievement. It represents our ‘stake in the ground’, shifting the perception of the project from a great idea towards a practical reality, and provides us with a great initial base.

Many people need to be thanked for the completion of this project and a full list is available within the building. I think we should particularly acknowledge:

- John Palmer, architect for donating his inspiring design
- Canterbury Community Trust and Baigent family trust for funding the building and the Tourism Facilities Fund for funding the displays
- NMIT carpentry school students and tutors for their initial work
- Dave Leadbetter, trustee, for overseeing most of the project
- Alistair Wiffen and the volunteer builders that helped him finish off the construction
- Local contractors and suppliers who discounted services or materials, particularly Tim Miller Plumbing and Nelson Alarms Security Systems
- Nelson Rotary for providing most of the funding for and constructing the deck
- Lynn Cadenhead for her work on landscaping and step/deck designs
- The artists and designers who supplied the internal displays: Signz and Graphix, Rick Edmonds, Dean Raybould and Richard de Hamel.
- All members and volunteers who contributed directly or through their membership fees.

The Opening of the building was a major event beginning with a dawn ceremony led by Rev Harvey Whakaruru and local iwi and an afternoon ceremony made particularly memorable by the musicians who donated their time: Hinemoana Baker, Richard Nunns and Christine White.

We now have a wonderful asset that has recently been short-listed for an architectural award. It is worth noting that one of the criteria for Tourism Facilities funding was ‘national significance to tourism’ so it is great to have had this recognised.

It was wonderful to be able to open the building seven days a week for a period in the autumn thanks to a roster of dedicated volunteers and we hope to soon return to this as the weather warms.

Fund-Raising

This has been an increasing focus during the year and we have appreciated the support and advice of local fund-raiser Judene Edgar contracted to assist us.

We began with the Coin Campaign, to help rid everyone of their soon-to-be-replaced coinage, coordinated by trustee David Marriott. We received good support from local businesses who accepted our collecting boxes, backed up by a great team of volunteers who took them around. Eva Pomeroy ran a successful programme in some local schools. This campaign raised almost \$10,000 and also focussed on raising our profile.

A major effort was then put into the Nelson City Council annual planning process in support of an application for \$1 million in funding over 4 years from 2008/09 (to allow time for securing resource consent). Thanks to the many submissions from members and the general public, the Sanctuary scored very highly with 53% ‘strongly agreeing’ with council accepting this request (only the School of Music scored higher). The Council thus agreed that ‘the proposal seeking \$250,000 per annum... will be included in the 2008/09 draft annual plan in

keeping with the timeline outlined by the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary.’ We need to deliver some more information and assurances, including a resource consent, and then we consider there is a very strong likelihood of this funding being confirmed. We will certainly use this commitment in our efforts to secure the remaining money we need over the next year. Recently we secured a major donation of \$200,000 from the local HC Cock Trust.

We are delighted by the initial response of members to our ‘Tree of Life’ concept which recognises donations of \$100, \$500 and \$1000 on a display in the entrance building. Draft designs produced by local artists and carver Brian Flintoff have been considered by the trustees and we are very close to final agreement so that the tree can take root.

We will shortly embark on a concerted fund-raising effort based on a new brochure targeting local businesses and individuals with the target of raising \$1 million through this. At the same time we will be developing further applications to trusts and other agencies, including major ones like Lottery Environment & Heritage which need to see significant funds already secured before they will contribute.

Resource Consent for Fence

In parallel to the fund-raising effort, we have put significant resources into speeding up the process to apply for a resource consent for the fence. The ever-enthusiastic Alastair Wiffen has been contracted to work on this using some of our Canterbury Community Trust grant and he has taken over the process from Resource and Environmental Management Ltd who we thank for their voluntary efforts to date. Key activities have been working out the precise, preferred route of the fence, the final design and associated earthworks and tree clearance requirements, and the visual impacts.

Alastair has spoken to many groups and individuals about the fence route and is preparing an options paper for circulation to members shortly. An initial public meeting is planned next month to invite further public comment. Alistair is developing a process to choose between the two potential suppliers, Excluder Pest Proof Fencing (who built our initial sample by the building) and Pest Proof Fences (who will build a sample there shortly). Pest Proof Fences visited in May and visited different parts of the site and prepared us a quote. Excluder will return to do the same shortly. Both designs have similar requirements for a clear ‘roadway’. Lynn Cadenhead has volunteered her time and expertise to report on the potential visual impacts of the fence, assessing which vantage points and mountain tops it will be visible from. We expect our application to be completed within the next few months.

Resource Consent for Loop Track

This consent has now reached the final stages and is with Council. Thanks go to Craig Welsh and Thomas Marchant of Resource and Environmental Management Ltd for donating their time to guiding this through and to several staff of MWH Ltd for work on the location and concept design for a bridge. We look forward to being able to pass much of this task along to our enthusiastic track building volunteers, assisted by Nelson Rotary, within the next few weeks. This will create disabled access through a beautiful piece of forest alongside the stream through to the original weir, and allow walkers to loop back on the existing track.

Pest Mammals and Birds

A growing band of enthusiastic volunteers have been very busy within the site this year, beginning the process of restoration. A network of over 50km of cut lines has been completed in the northern part of the site to allow placement of stoat/rat traps (purchased through our NCC operational grant) in the tunnels built last year. More recently funds from the Habitat Protection Fund administered by WWF were used to purchase large numbers of possum traps

and these were opened for the first time recently. Teams of over 50 trappers look after the different lines, checking and re-baiting traps. At the same time other teams are doing the monitoring to prove that our trapping is making a difference, running lines of tracking tunnels and possum wax tags within and outside the trapped area – some requiring a mountain-bike ride beyond Third House every month! All this effort has been coordinated by a small hard-working group led by Tom Brett, Peter Hay and Karen Driver under the guidance of trustee Dave Leadbetter.

The results of all this effort are significant. It's been a 'low' stoat year following negligible beech seeding and only about half a dozen have been caught. However this has been enough alongside natural processes to see no stoats detected in tracking tunnels around the site since May. The take of rats, overall probably the most significant pest, has been much greater at over 190. However the tracking results suggest that rats remain in quite high numbers and we are due to intensify our effort with additional rat traps shortly.

The 25-26 August weekend marked the start of the campaign against possums after a major effort training teams in the use of four different traps and setting these out. The results are dramatic with 18 animals caught in the first night and 40-50 to date and we expect monitoring to show that we have significantly lowered numbers within a month or so.

There have been exciting developments on the other side of the coin with the photographing of a rare **red-crowned parakeet** or kakariki by one of the monitoring teams in May. This species is almost extinct on the South Island mainland – Nelson being one of the last three areas it was thought to persist. There was talk that this first bird could have escaped from captivity but since then two more red-crowned's have been confirmed amongst the more common yellow-crowned parakeets. Our stoat trapping will benefit this species and we are also about to target some feral cats which have been seen near to the sightings.

We will shortly be doing bird counts to document the increases in numbers that we expect to result from this control.

Health & Safety, Search & Rescue, and Mapping

The field effort has been underpinned by major work on mapping the site involving Thorsten Kather (who has walked more of the site than anyone else) with his GPS and a small team coordinated by Bill Sinclair. A comprehensive Health & Safety Policy was developed by Tom Brett and a strong emphasis placed on the safe working of teams as parts of the site are challengingly steep with loose rock. Complementing this is a comprehensive Search and Rescue system, supported by radios and field kits largely supplied by Nelson Rotary and endorsed by Sherp Tucker, the Police S&R expert.

It's been rather a feature this year, how much unseen work has gone on behind the scenes to deliver the visible aspects of the Sanctuary's work. We have established an initial sub-committee structure with meetings in addition to the monthly Trustee ones.

Education/Training Centre

The educational side of the project is going ahead strongly with three initiatives. The first of these is an Education/Training Centre that we have been working on with our partners NMIT and DOC with landscaping planning support from Lynn Cadenhead. Nelson City Council have agreed to lease an area further back down Brook Street from the sanctuary (opposite one of the new subdivisions) for phase 1 of this development which will see NMIT establish classrooms and a workshop on site for the delivery of its Trainee Ranger and other courses. Phase 2 would see us build further facilities to provide space for more school and community groups, and small conferences, as funds allow. DOC proposes to use the site as one of three

training centres nationwide (others at Thames and Glenorchy) – another example of the sanctuary's national significance.

Educational booklet

A generous donation by Dick Roberts has allowed us to develop a small booklet introducing the project and the site and providing information to educate and inform the visitor. Jacquetta Bell has been contracted to write the text which is close to completion.

Education Fellowship

We are shortly to announce a 1-year teaching fellowship at the sanctuary funded by two local entities. This will provide someone to work with levels of education from primary to tertiary, developing programmes, supporting visits to the site and encouraging research projects. Already the site is used by a number of school groups and the entrance building was used by a residential school programme, so there is already a lot of interest to build on.

Thanks for the Support

We would like to acknowledge the continuing work of staff at several sections of NCC to assist us. Particular thanks to NMIT for providing an office on their campus, along with the other work mentioned in this report, and to DOC for ongoing technical advice. Local iwi have been wonderful supporters of all our events.

Your trustees have got through a power of work this year – all voluntary as I am sure you are aware – supported by our excellent coordinators, first Ann and now Rick. Particular mention should be made of the work of our Treasurer, Nick Dalgety and the assistance of Jane Solly with membership matters. This commitment is but the tip of the iceberg and beneath it lies all the voluntary efforts and support of our many members and supporters. We thank you all.

It has been a privilege for me to have helped steer this ship for the past three years.



Dr David Butler, Chair, Board of Trustees