



Project gives life to dying waterway

By Patrick O'Sullivan

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Former insurance agent John Scott has enjoyed fishing the Maraetotara Stream, one of Hawke's Bay's best trout streams, since the early 1970s. But 10 years ago it was no longer fun.

"I noticed it was being largely affected by trees dying and dropping into the river creating log jams. Also stock had access — it was dying.

"I mentioned it to people such as Fish and Game and Hastings Anglers and nothing was very forthcoming — no one put their hand up.

"I thought 'put your own bloody hand up — don't expect someone else to do it'."

But the issue was wider than about his trout catch.

"There are a lot of native birds that live in that particular valley and over the generations a lot of the bush had been cut down by farmers. They didn't know any better — that was just the way you did it.

"Of course the corridor to move from one remnant of native bush to another had disappeared.

"I thought if it was done properly and both sides of the river were fenced off and planted with natives, it would link the Mohi Bush all the way out to Cape Kidnappers."

He fundraised and set up a nursery and a trust for the 35km stream.

Getting the Hawke's Bay Regional Council on board "was the key thing". The river was identified as a priority, enabling a 90 per cent subsidy for fencing and tree planting but farmers would have to pay for the removal of willows — a deal breaker "because the farmers didn't want to spend the money".

He struck a canny deal with the council after costing the project.

"I said to them, 'we'll swap roles — you've got the machinery and the team, so you take the



willows out, and we'll grow the trees and plant them'. The cost worked out 50/50 and they were happy to do it."

But the early success of the project caught the fledgling trust unprepared. Help was at hand thanks to fellow conservationist Andy Lowe, who was planning what is now Cape Sanctuary on Cape Kidnappers. He donated \$15,000 "at a crucial time".

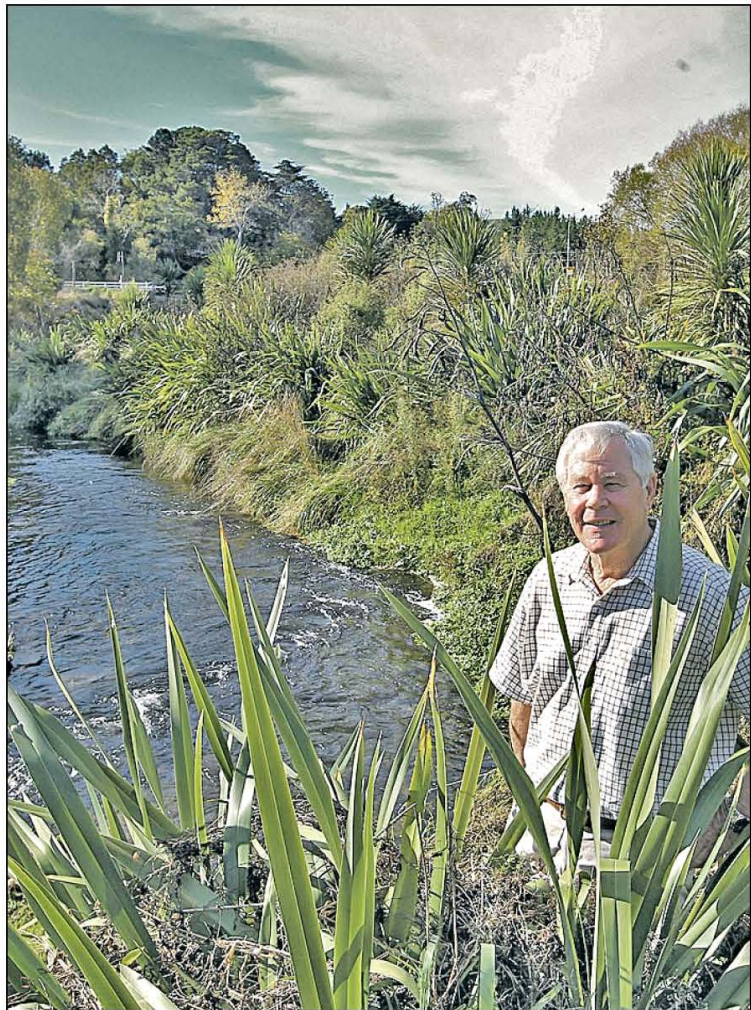
With the trust continuing to succeed with the vision of a bush-clad stream from headwaters to ocean, Mr Scott stood down as trust chairman to protect other Hawke's Bay waterways.

He refuses to take credit for his achievements, saying his main role has been persuading others to act.

"I used to play a lot of sport and I'm a team player. The Hawke's Bay Environmental Water Group and Friends of the Tukituki — I spend lot of time working with people behind the scenes getting them to work for the common good.

"I like people and I love the environment."

DEAL MAKER: One of Hawke's Bay's largest private environmental projects is making steady progress thanks to the initiative of fisherman John Scott 10 years ago. PHOTO/DUNCAN BROWN





Lindisfarne students weed Maraetotara river

Hawkes Bay Today
Tuesday 29 November 2011

Students weed out bad seeds

By Corey Charlton
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The Maraetotara Tree Trust received some much appreciated free labour this week when 55 Year 9 students from Lindisfarne College got stuck into weeding along the Maraetotara River.

Despite some rain concerns the day went ahead and the students helped clear grass and bushes from newly planted trees, providing them with the light and rain required to survive.

"We were very grateful to have them", Maraetotara Tree Trust chairwoman Raewyn Ricketts said.

The grass grew exceptionally quickly in the area, and it killed newly planted trees if they were not given room to breathe, a process called releasing.

"Just the labour helped. We are a charitable trust and to pay someone to do it would be a huge cost. The young men who have worked for us have been just wonderful," Ms Ricketts said.

A recipient of the council's Outstanding Contribution to the Environment Award, Kapa Toa, she said it was a great day.

"I think the trust is talking about contacting other schools and I think it's a good way for the youth to spend time out there and touch base with nature."

Barry Musson, the school's careers advisor and supervisor for the project, said the students found it hard work, but the reward came in the form of the trust's appreciation.



TREE TRUST:
Lindisfarne College's Sam Fell, 13, Jessy Francis, 14, and Sid Anderson, 14, releasing newly planted trees on the banks of the Maraetotara River.

PHOTO/GLENN
TAYLOR
HBT114468-02



Trust praises Max workers for river efforts

By Patrick O'Sullivan
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Community Max workers have been publicly thanked for their part in saving the Maraetotara Tree Trust's project to restore the Maraetotara River to its former glory.

The Maraetotara Tree Trust's aim is to restore ecological function to the river through an extensive riparian protection and planting programme, in partnership with the Hawke's Bay Regional Authority and landowners.

The project, launched in 2003, involves planting riparian strips on public and private covenanted land with eco-sourced native seedlings.

The aim is to return the entire 46km river corridor to indigenous vegetation to improve water quality, provide a native bird's corridor and sanctuary, and create a beautiful landscape and place for the people of Hawke's Bay.

The April storm that wreaked havoc throughout Hawke's Bay ravaged the trust's work, with plantings covered or missing and stock fences down.

Community Max workers came to the rescue and not only repaired the

damage but made great progress.

At the trust's annual open day, retired High Court Justice and MTT Trustee Sir Rodney Gallen thanked the workers and spoke about what communities working together across all backgrounds could achieve if they pulled together, and looked to the future.

Tukituki MP Craig Foss congratulated the Community Max workers on behalf of taxpayers and for all finding employment.

Six Community Max cadets were employed in May, with at least one day a week dedicated to practical training. Some had continued to work on the project in their own time. Before the Community Max Scheme the trust managed as best it could with one part time co-ordinator and volunteers.

Community Max schemes have received criticism this year, with accusations some schemes had dubious outcomes.

Trustee Pat Turley said there was no doubting the outcome of the trust's scheme and Hawke's Bay owed a debt to the workers. "Reinstating planting sites after the April storm would have been too overwhelming without their help."



LEFT: Community Max workers have been integral to the success of a project to reclaim the splendour of the Maraetotara River. Pictured are Kapa Toa (supervisor), Tawhiti Puna, William Wiparata, Aaron Kaimoana, Winston Taputoro and Moana Heke.

PHOTO/WARREN
BUCKLAND HBT114098-02



MTT Chairman Letter to Editor

Sunday News
Sunday 20 February 2011

Scheme employed to the Max

Some Community Max employment and training schemes have been severely criticised for failure to deliver successful outcomes. This is completely at odds with our experience where the Maraetotara Tree Trust employed a group of young unemployed people to help plant and manage trees in the Maraetotara River riparian zone. They worked willingly and thoughtfully and, at the end of the six-month scheme, several approached our co-ordinator and offered their time for free while they organised permanent employment for themselves.

We were grateful to Hastings District Council, which acted as paymasters for Winz, and what the people of Hawke's Bay received for the combined effort and cost is significantly more native trees successfully established along one of our beautiful local rivers. This means cleaner water, more birdlife and a positive rebalancing of the landscape.

These young folk have indeed gone on to permanent employment, armed with a better work ethic, more knowledge and confidence in their own abilities. They are also proud of what they achieved along the Maraetotara River. From our perspective, the Community Max scheme is a winner for everyone.

Alec Olsen
Chairman Maraetotara Tree Trust

LETTERS TO EDITOR





Workers see native job through for free

Hawkes Bay Today
Tuesday 20 April 2010

Workers see native job through for free

by Caitlin Nobes

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The money has stopped but some men from a government work training scheme are voluntarily helping with a native planting programme despite the scheme finishing two weeks ago.

Marcus and Kaiser Taukamo and Hori Greening have elected to stay on voluntarily at the Maraetotara Tree Trust, which works in partnership with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council to restore native plants along the Maraetotara River.

The trust received support from the Community Max programme which gives financial support to unemployed people who become involved in selected community projects.

Marcus said he preferred working outside and would stay until he found other work.

The workers had been weeding and preparing for planting which had only recently started.

"We wanted to see the job through," Kaiser said. "This is planting season."

They are planting primarily cabbage trees, flax and kanuka along the river as part of the project, which has been running since 2001.

Regional Council liaison Warwick Hesketh said they had been reliant on volunteers and prison inmates to help with the project until the Community Max scheme started.

The Community Max workers



FINISHING WHAT HE STARTED: Volunteer Marcus Taumako, from Whakatu, prepares to plant along the Maraetotara River as part of a scheme to replace weeds and willows with native plants. The government scheme he worked for ended this month.

PICTURE / PAUL TAYLOR HBT010290-01.

had helped keep on top of the weeds and he said it was a pity the programme had finished.

There is a four-week period before the workers are eligible for the unemployment benefit but Marcus, Kaiser and Hori hoped to find jobs. They said the pro-

gramme had improved their CVs. Part of the programme was training and the men learned skills to help them find work, including operating small machinery, trucks and chainsaws, first aid, pest control and Maori tourism.

Maraetotara plant co-ordinator

Kepa Toa said once the trust was approved for the programme he had to look for workers.

"I found these guys sitting outside during the day and I said 'Hey, you guys got jobs? You on the benefit?' They said no and I told them to come work here."

He was impressed with the workers who decided to stay without incentive.

"I'm really blown away. When they said they wanted to stay, I said 'Hey, you know you're not getting paid for this, right?' and here they are."

HN Intermediate students plant Maraetotara

Hawkes Bay Today
Saturday 16 June 2007

NATURE'S WAY:
Havelock North Intermediate pupils get their hands dirty planting trees around the Bay. From left, Brendon Dockary, Jess Sykes and back-ground from left, Lilly Lawson, and Raphael van Workum, all 12.

HBTODAY
PICTURE:
ANDREW LABETT



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Pupils help bring back Bay's flora and fauna

HELEN STIRLING

Budding horticulturists from Havelock North Intermediate are helping regenerate native flora and fauna around Hawke's Bay.

Leading the initiative is teacher Darryl Bryce and he's delighted at his pupils' achievements planting 500 trees along the Maraetotara stream this week.

"We live in this instant gratification era and to see children think about their future and what it will be like if we keep chopping trees is great," the environmental education teacher said.

"They have done the whole lot, they sow the seeds within our school nursery. When the seedlings

are ready they do the pricking out into root trays, (then) they're put into bigger bags so the roots can get more room to grow."

He said there were about 200 children showing interest in the process and work on different stages of the trees growth.

"There's not a lot of native bush in Hawke's Bay so once it is regenerated the bird life will start to come back."

Eco sourced seeds were provided by the Maraetotara Tree Trust.

Spokesperson Raewyn Ricketts said the seeds were gathered from nearby areas so they were known to grow successfully.



Trust ensures river's beauty won't be lost

A battle is being waged to rid the Maraetotara of invasive weed species and falling willows that block it



One of the most beautiful of the smaller rivers in Hawke's Bay is the Maraetotara, which runs to the sea at Te Awanga from its origins in springs that flow from Kahuraniki, the largest of the big three landforms on the south-eastern corner of our region.

As it bubbles and sparkles its way over rock ledges in waterfalls, through the dark green depths of deep pools, over small rocky rapids and through farmland, it creates an environment of cool air, crystal clear water and dappled shade.

The Maraetotara valley has always been a popular recreational area. Swimmers use the larger pools, walking paths take in the ruins of the historically significant electric power plant on the river bank and in the past, its waters have provided great trout fishing.

It flows through land that has been farmed for 120 years. Little has changed in the landscape in that time, except for the gradual invasion of weed species, garden escapees, river blockages and willows. Landslips, soil erosion and loss of biodiversity have created public concern. This loss, coupled with the pressure of subdivisions and new developments upstream has signalled the need for some positive action to develop conservation strategies that will guide the area's future. To this end, the Maraetotara Tree Trust has been established.

The Trust's Maraetotara Ecohabitat Project is focused on the full 37km catchment of the Maraetotara River, from its source to the sea, and aims to improve the river margins by eliminating willow trees, replacing them with indigenous planting, fencing out grazing animals and improving water quality. Additional wetlands and upland game habitat are being created and by protecting and enhancing indigenous bush areas, forming corridors for native birds.

Founded in 2000, it was initially driven by concerns raised by farmers and trout fishers who despaired at the degradation of the waterway as aged willows collapsed into the stream, creating log jams and causing flooding. The Hawke's Bay Regional Council is removing willows clogging much of the river and, with the trust, is negotiating with landowners to covenant river margins of their land in perpetuity for riparian rights of access. In exchange, farmers will be subsidised for 90 percent of fencing costs to keep animals out and native plants are supplied at no cost. Already farmers are seeing the benefits of willow removal during periods of high rainfall in the rapid escape of waterflows, virtually eliminating



NICE CATCH: In the past the waters of the Maraetotara have provided fantastic trout fishing.

flooding.

In order to supply the native plants, the trust has set up a tree nursery in Farmlet Road, Hastings, using locally-sourced seed which will provide the plants and trees to be used for the project.

Nursery manager Bruce MacMillan has an efficient operation there. He supervises the raising of a wide range of plants with labour supplied by volunteers. His DSIR background in ecological research and raising native plants has given him the almost unique skills to identify and collect seeds of native plants, knowing where the seed-bearing trees are, methods to ensure germination and how to raise seedlings in the nursery.

By involving Hawke's Bay's schools in the project, youngsters are learning in a living laboratory about the environmental issues that threaten our waterways. In the classroom, children are shown how to make seed balls and the balls are returned to the river verges where the seeds will eventually germinate. During the year they will also test water quality as part of their science curriculum.

The Biodiversity Council funds the wages of two part-time employees who tackle the weed problems which are almost a greater problem than the willows. The project is enthusiastically supported by volunteers from the lifestyle properties upstream, members of Forest and Bird and many others with a passion for saving the environment. The Maraetotara also flows through Maori land and, from the outset, the tangata whenua have been involved with the trust.

Last month, in recognition of the dedication of those involved, the trust received the Hawke's Bay Environment Community Award. Funding the project is an ongoing issue and donations and bequests are welcomed.



Trust restores Maraetotara beauty (p2 of 2)

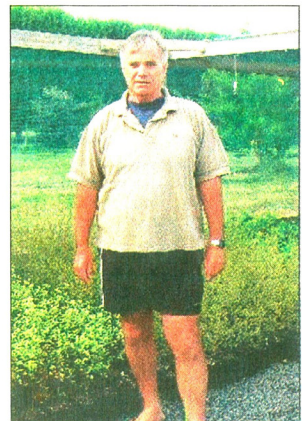
Hawkes Bay Today
Friday 24 November 2006



OFFENSIVE ACTION: Fencing keeps cattle from damaging the banks and polluting the water of the Maraetotara River.



LINDISFARNE students test water quality on the Maraetotara.



BRUCE MACMILLAN, the Maraetotara Tree Trust nursery manager with a selection of his seedlings.



PLENTY OF WORK: Maraetotara Tree Trust nurseryman Bruce MacMillan with volunteer Shane Love. Volunteers David Toop and Doug Heighway are in the background.

Long-term view vital for riverbank project

COMMUNITY: Maraetotara Tree Trust

The Maraetotara River is approximately 35km long.

"That's 70km of clearing and planting," says Martin A'Court, chairman of the Maraetotara Tree Trust.

The volunteer organisation was formed in 2003 to restore the river, which runs down the Maraetotara valley, from south of Kahuranaki to Te Awanga.

It aims to improve the water quality and make the river a wildlife corridor.

It might take 25 years, says Martin, but they are making progress.

Just planting each stretch of the river is a three-year process.

First the willows which clog the river are cleared and burnt. The next year they are sprayed again. Then a riparian strip of between five and 10m on either side of the river is fenced off and native trees are planted.

That takes a lot of co-operation and is not cheap.

The trust employs two co-ordinators to organise all this and a nurseryman, Bruce MacMillan.

With a hard-core of half a dozen volunteers, Bruce grows natives — karamu, kohuhu, cabbage tree, mountain flax, manuka, kanuka, and totara — to be planted on the banks of the river.

If funds permit, the trust will continue to plant 6,000 — 10,000 trees each year.



MTT climb Kahuranaki event

Havelock North Village Press
Thursday 20 October 2005

It's climb Kahuranaki time!

A one-off opportunity to take the family walking up Mount Kahuranaki – a well known icon to many locals will take place on Sunday November 6th.

The event is a fundraiser put on by the Maraetotara Tree Trust and will be an enjoyable day out in a part of Hawkes Bay not normally open to the public. Mount Kahuranaki is privately owned but the owners have consented to allow the public to walk its tracks for the one-day event. The Maraetotara Tree Trust are raising the funds for their long term project to conserve and restore the Maraetotara River margins and its wider catchment.

The Trust was formed three years ago to improve the state of the Maraetotara River by removing the willows and replacing them with indigenous species. Existing bush areas will be further protected while creating wildlife corridors and wetland areas. The area

is also a great opportunity for schools to monitor the changes taking place and use it as an outdoor environmental experiment while also helping to replant the river margins as they are cleared.

The Trust has planted 7000 trees to date on individual properties after the willows were cleared and the site prepared. All of the trees planted have been grown from ecosourced seed in the Trusts nursery. This is important to encourage only the original vegetation from plants already growing in the catchment be planted as a true representative of the past landscape.

The Hawke's Bay Regional Council supports the Trust along with many other organizations such as Forest & Bird, Department of Conservation and the Hastings' District Council. It is a large scale, long term project that needs as many supporters as possible and the end result will be a true asset to the region



Hard graft: Maraetotara nursery manager Bruce MacMillan nurtures the natives.

and a special place for all to enjoy.

The walk is planned for Sunday November 6th and walkers can start anytime from 8am – 12 noon. The walking track is roughly 5 km long on a well established benched track so sensible walking shoes/boots are essential. The owners estimate a 3 – 5 hour round trip and encourage walkers to bring a picnic and sit at the top and enjoy the panoramic views for their lunch stop.

By taking part in the fundraising event, walkers have the opportunity to win a prize of a weeks holiday at a private bach in the Coromandel. Adults pay \$10, children \$5, family \$25 and unwaged/students \$7.

The Trust have organized a sausage sizzle and hot chips to be available at the start/end of the track courtesy of the Havelock North Lions Club. No vehicles, bicycles or dogs are allowed on the track.



Chrysler Jeep donates 100 trees to Trust

The Hastings Leader
Thursday 24 February 2004



BRETT Aspden of DaimlerChrysler, left, and Martin A'Court from the Maraetotara Tree Trust, planting the first of the 100 trees Chrysler Jeep NZ is donating to the Maraetotara Valley conservation scheme.

Jeep plants first of 100 trees

Hawke's Bay was the setting for a record turnout by Jeep owners at the 2004 New Zealand Jeep Jamboree.

More than 340 people and about 140 vehicles came together for this year's event — 30 percent more than last year, Chrysler Jeep New Zealand general manager Brett Aspden says.

The event started with registration on

Friday, February 6, to the main event over the weekend — off-roading experiences around Hawke's Bay — and finished on Sunday with dinner at the Mission Estate.

During the event, a team from the Jeep Jamboree cleared trees blown into the Maraetotara stream after a storm, and planted a golden totara tree, the

first of 100 donated by Chrysler Jeep New Zealand to the Maraetotara Valley conservation project, south of Havelock North.

The Jeep Jamboree, now in its eighth year, is held in different locations around New Zealand each summer. Last year it was in Nelson and next year it will be the Bay of Plenty.