

Hancock Forest Views



A Division of Hancock Timber Resource Group,
A Manulife Asset Management Company

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Issue 14 - January 2016

Welcome to Hancock Forest Views

Hancock Forest Views is a newsletter prepared by Hancock Forest Management New Zealand Limited (HFM) to keep our stakeholders informed of what is happening in our forests. This edition includes a range of topical articles from our forests in different parts of NZ. We hope you find the newsletter interesting and welcome your feedback.

Raukawa Totara Legacy Project in Kinleith Forest

In 2014 the Raukawa Charitable Trust staff first raised with HFM their aspiration to establish a resource of plantation grown Totara in the South Waikato for future cultural use by the Raukawa people. HFM and the directors of Taumata Plantations Ltd (owners of Kinleith forest) were supportive of the idea and HFM staff then worked with Raukawa to identify suitable areas. Two key sites were identified, including an area of land near the location of the old Te Whetu village within Kinleith. Known to Raukawa as 'Taranaki', the area had in the past been grazed and was overgrown with blackberry and willow.

With 3,000 seedlings to be planted, many hands made light work, with a large gathering of Raukawa Iwi including kaumatua, kuia and staff working alongside HFM staff, supporters from South Waikato District Council, Forest & Bird, Mighty River Power, Scion and children from local schools Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Te Hiringa and Te Wharekura o te Kaokaoroa o Patetere.



Raukawa kaumatua Hori Deane and Raukawa Charitable Trust Environmental Manager Grant Kettle welcoming everyone to the site. A newly erected carved Po to mark the site can be seen behind the van



Planting in full swing at the Taranaki site in spectacular weather conditions (above and below)

Much to the relief of all involved, the day of planting dawned fine and clear, which along with singing of the school children, certainly added to the wonderful atmosphere of the day.

After many months of planning, the physical work commenced with the clearance of weed species from the area in early 2015. In August, HFM and Raukawa gathered together, along with many friends and supporters to undertake the first planting on the site. Much like Radiata Pine, the form of a Totara tree is influenced by its stocking rate and surrounding vegetation. The advice from indigenous tree specialists at Scion was to first plant a nursery crop of native species, and then in later years underplant the area with Totara, so as to encourage the Totara trees to grow straight and tall. The first planting at the site was therefore the planting of manuka and pittosporum to form the nursery crop.





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Along with a Totara grove, the project vision includes restoration of an adjacent wetland area currently overgrown with willow, to return it to indigenous vegetation cover.

HFM forestry staff are keeping a close eye on the planted area to manage weeds and pests to ensure crop survival, with the next key step being the planting of the Totara crop in approximately three years time. The seedlings for this are being grown from seed sourced from Totara growing in the local area.

Longer term, it is hoped that the project will provide a sustainable source of Totara for uses such as waka building, carving and marae restoration.

The Totara Legacy Project is certainly one of HFM's and Raukawa's longest term stewardship projects, with Totara likely to take 120 years to be ready for harvest. It was noted on the day that it will likely be the grand children and great-grand children of the school children



HFM Environmental Planner Robin Black and enthusiastic helpers

present that will benefit from the resource. In the shorter term, it is hoped the area will become a special area to be enjoyed by all who visit.

Kokako Recovery in the South Waikato

HFM is very happy to be partnering with Department of Conservation and other local organisations to help protect a small population of kokako in the Mokaihaha Ecological Area in the South Waikato. Mokaihaha is a 2,000 hectare Department of Conservation reserve directly adjacent to Hancock's Kinleith Forest, and was known to have a small resident population of kokako.

DOC approached Hancock regarding the possibility of assisting with funding to reinstate pest control in the reserve that had ceased in 2006 due to funding constraints. As with many NZ birds, kokako are very vulnerable to predation, with pest control essential to improve chick survival and grow the population. The

total NZ kokako population got as low as an estimated 330 pairs in 1999, but is slowly recovering due to pest control efforts. The Mokaihaha population is considered particularly important as it is a resident population and therefore of genetics that are naturally occurring in the area, as opposed to having been reintroduced from elsewhere.

At the outset of the project the exact remaining population of kokako at the Mokaihaha was unknown, so the first step was to carry out a population survey. At the time it was hoped that at least 40 birds would be found, so it caused some excitement when the 2015 survey confirmed an estimated population of 108 birds.



The first pest control operations have been carried out last winter, with plans for ongoing trapping. It is hoped that with pest control the resident population occupying 850 hectares of the Mokaihaha reserve will grow and expand into suitable habitat, both within the DOC reserve and adjacent reserve in Kinleith forest. The long term vision includes developing public access to the area to enable members of the community an opportunity to hear and observe this rare and unique bird in the wild.

With funding assistance also from South Waikato District Council, Forest and Bird, Waikato Ecological Enhancement Trust, and Raukawa Charitable Trust, this is a great example of a range of organisations working together with DOC to help do our bit for species survival.



'Share the Road' road safety programme

2015 marked the seventh year of HFM's involvement in the 'Share the Road' programme, a road safety programme delivered to students in rural primary schools, aimed at improving safety on rural roads. The programme involves delivery of a purpose developed road safety training programme aimed at teaching children more about interacting with heavy traffic, and in particular, how they should behave when walking or cycling on roads used by large trucks, especially on rural roads where there is often no footpath.

The programme always includes a visit by a log truck and the children get to learn safety aspects of the log trucks while being able to climb in and get up close to them.

The programme was initially developed by HFM's Northern region, with Forestry Manager Peter Houston playing a key role in the development of the programme and delivery of the programme to schools. In recent years the programme has been taken up by the wider forest industry, with coordinated



Peter Houston from HFM showing children from Pakotai School around an AZTEC log truck.



Children from Te Horo School get to see the view from inside the driver's cab.

programmes in place, supported by a range of forestry companies and in some instances regional Wood Councils.

The Northland Share the Road programme is still administered by Peter Houston and is supported by the Northern Wood Council. It is planned to roll the programme out to 40 schools throughout Northland in the coming 18 months, with an estimated audience of 3,500 plus students.

The programme is also now being run in the Central North Island and the Eastern Bay of Plenty areas with funding support from NZTA and ACC, working alongside forest owners. Similarly, a programme is being run on the East Coast administered by the Eastern Wood Council. From small beginnings the programme is helping to improve road safety in many parts of the country.



The children of Te Horo School in Pipiwai wearing their new high visibility caps, with Peter Houston (centre) from HFM and truck driver Trevor Masters.



Inaugural HFM Board HSE Award

In 2015, the boards of HFM's forest owning clients (Taumata Plantations, Tiaki Plantations and Tasman Bay Forests) decided that they wished to introduce a Board HSE Award so as to promote our Health, Safety and Environmental objectives and recognise those demonstrating excellence in this area.

In the last issue of Hancock Forest Views we featured an article about advances in the mechanisation of harvesting in our operations, and the step change this is achieving to improve health and safety and productivity in the harvesting of trees in our operations.



Ross Wood receiving the inaugural Hancock Forest Management Board HSE Award from Hancock Timber Resources Group President Brent Keefer, with the Wood Contracting team. Left to right Simon Rayward, Brent Keefer, Janet Wood, Ross Wood and Hamish Matthews

The very worthy, first recipient of the Board HSE award was HFM's Nelson based contractor Ross Wood. As described in the previous issue, Ross has a passion for harvesting and has been a pioneer in developing equipment to enable mechanical harvesting of trees from steep slopes. From small beginnings in Nelson, the technology Ross helped develop is now being adopted not only by many others in the NZ forest sector, but is even now making its way into the US and further afield.

Our congratulations to Ross for the well deserved recognition.

Torpedo7 Day-Night Thriller in Kinleith Forest

In October, the Tokoroa Mountain Bike Club hosted the Torpedo7 Day-Night Thriller in Cougar Park near Tokoroa; the second time the event has been held in the park. The hard working members of the Tokoroa Mountain Bike Club have developed an extensive network of mountain bike trails within the mature pines of Kinleith Forest in an area bounding onto the Tokoroa sports grounds, making it a perfect venue for the event.

The event has gained in popularity with over 750 participants taking part in individual and team competitions, ranging from 3 to 12 hours. The winning individual competitor completed an unbelievable 34 laps of the 7km hilly course in the 12 hour race.

A number of HFM staff again competed in the event and came back buzzing from the experience. The Tokoroa Mountain Bike Club are already looking forward to hosting the event again in 2016.

