

Project Manager's Annual Report 2021-2022

Tena koutou katoa.

As many of you will be aware 2021-2022 has been yet another busy and productive year.

And even though COVID slowed things down at times our volunteer hours were up on last year at around 5160 (that we know of), and 6050 native plants went into the ground. Planting, plant propagation, weed control, mulching, rubbish removal etc. was undertaken by members of the local community; as well as a range of community organisations, educational institutions and businesses – some regular and some new, including:

- Collectively Kids Early Childhood Education Centre
- St Judes Scouts
- Auckland A Rocha Christian Community
- Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood
- Powell Street Sustainable Neighbourhood
- Oakley Loop Group (Methuen Road)
- Pt Chevalier Girl Guides
- St Peters College
- St Kentigern College
- Dilworth College
- Reach
- Stantec
- And more

We continued to hold regular, monthly working bees, with planting in the winter months, and weeding, mulching etc. for the other months. Regular Friday Working Bees are great for helping to keep up with the never-ending tasks that need doing. And, more recently, with Sandra Maclean joining the team as our Outreach Co-ordinator, we now have regular Tuesday working Bees at the Waterview Heritage 'quarry and rock forest area' (more to come), and new groups joining us to help out along the creek e.g. the Mt Roskill Police on the Stoddard Road Tributary.

Our monitoring and pest control programme has been running since 2009. We now have predator control happening along the Oakley Creek Walkway, as well as in Phyllis Reserve, Harbutt Reserve, Howlett Reserve, Heron Park, along the Rainbow Cycleway Path. And just last week - the Waterview Heritage Area.

The overall trap catches for the year were – 73 possums (70), 93 rats (44), 4 rabbits (9), 4 mice (3) and 12 hedgehogs (2). The catches do not include predators that would have been taken out with our quarterly baiting regime – nor do they include the rabbits controlled by Auckland Council contractors. And the catches indicate that we cannot rest on our laurels or ease up any time soon.

We carried out our annual bird survey in 2021. As always, the results are weather dependent, but the numbers and range of bird species continues to reflect a healthy environment; as do the increased number of weta in our weta motels, kereru sightings and ruru calls.

Our water quality monitoring teams continue with their quarterly visits to the seven sites across the catchment. Thanks to all our wonderful volunteers – Jill Pierce & Eric Pedersen, Jagjeeta Kaur, Helen Mellsop, Clare Brown & whanau, Sarah Bishop, Rutu Jani and Lynda Burnside. Also, Watercare installed a water sensor downstream of the waterfall earlier in the year, as part

of their region-wide monitoring programme. (We have yet to see data from this.)

The ongoing efforts of Conservation Volunteers (CVNZ) and their Community Work Skills teams have, yet again, been a great help in supporting our project.

With the changes happening in the Wairaka Precinct (ex Unitec) we have moved our nursery over to Waterview Primary School (thanks to the school and the Whau & Albert Eden Local Boards), and we are slowly getting it set up. So, we continue to grow some of our own plants - approx 3250 this year. As per in the past, this provides us with greater flexibility with regards to accommodate volunteer groups at short notice, to be able to gift plants to 'neighbours' who are restoring land along the creek, and to grow a range of diversity species.

Recently, committee member, Chris Brown initiated a new project that will see a mural depicting the creek and our work on the wooden fence along the Waterview Shared Path, up along the rail corridor – watch the space.

Infrastructure works along the creek have included the completion of Stage 1 of the path renewals – thanks to Auckland Council and the Albert Eden Local Board.

Our involvement continues with a network of community organisations that is working in collaboration with Auckland Council and Watercare to improve the water quality across the western isthmus. We also continue to attend Unitec Ngā Kaitiaki rōpū hui to ensure protection of the Wairaka Stream and natural environment across the precinct are maintained as a key focus.

As is the norm, there is a constant stream of developments happening in the catchment that require us to be ever vigilant and have input into, where possible. These include the extensive works that Kainga Ora is doing across the catchment – including the upgrade of Freeland Reserve, which is almost finished; and the proposed developments across the Wairaka Precinct, which has started with some early stormwater works, including daylighting part of the Wairaka Stream.

As always, much time and energy has gone into the co-ordination of activities, networking and liaising with other stakeholders and interested parties e.g. Auckland Council, Local Boards, contractors, educational institutions, community organisations and individuals.

Ongoing funding from Foundation North, The Trusts Community Fund, the Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS), Auckland Council and the local boards – Albert Eden, Puketapapa and Whau, has been crucial for ensuring the sustainability of the project. Thanks to David Bowden, for all of his great work as our fundraiser.

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to the following, but not exclusive list of people and organisations for their wonderful efforts and support:

- John Stevenson, David Bowden, Rosemary Phillips, Wayne Forsyth, Chris Brown, Chris Judd, Crispin Balfour, Gavin Thompson, Miriam Ludbrook, Felicity Moore, Carole French, David Blackall, Trina Hurrell & whanau, Gary Chambers, Craig Sutherland, Chris Scott-Dye & Megan Lee, Helen Mellsop and Marianne van der Haas – for their contribution to the predator control.
- St Judes Scouts for continuing to restore a section of the creek adjacent to their 'den', including the neighbouring Kainga Ora land.
- A Rocha and the Haven community, who continue to contribute to the restoration of the creek around the Cradock Street Bridge / Harbutt Reserve area.
- Our wonderful 'neighbourhood groups' – Powell Street, Cradock Street and Oakley Loop (Methuen Road), and individuals who are looking after and restoring land around the creek in their local neighbourhoods.
- Our 'weedbusters' team – Jean Barton, Keith Ayton and David Smith, for the great work they do of removing some of our nastier weeds, especially moth plant and woolly nightshade in and around the creek – and wider area.

- Auckland Council personnel including:
 - Jason Davis, Regional Arborists and Ecological Manager
 - Sarah Gibbs, Senior Ecological Advisor
 - Huw Hill-Male, Parks Volunteer and Biodiversity Co-ordinator
 - Tegan Illingworth, John McFadzean Claire Cassany et al, Healthy Waters
 - Ahsan Kamal, Senior Project Manager
 - Bianca Lilley, Wai Care / Wai Ora, Healthy Waters
 - Justin Cash, Community Facilities Manager
 - Ross Cowie, Conservation Advisor
- Brent Druskovich, our 'resident archaeologist', who surveys our planting sites each year and acts as an advisor on things related to archaeology.
- Treescape Environmental for weed control, and for their 'two men and a chainsaw' team, who are helping us to remove more tree privet.
- Te Ngahere – who continue to do site preparation and weed control for our plantings, and some planting.
- Fulton Hogan – for helping to keep our creek clear of blockages and rubbish.
- AIM Services / Programmed – Mumtaz Ali and team for weed control, planting and rubbish removal etc.
- Our regular volunteers including Tristan Mulgrew & Martin Brown and whanau, Chris Calvert, Pat Scriven, Glen Smyth, David Smith, Crispin Balfour, Ka Meechan, Gina Hefferan, Bev Crosby, Prue Cruickshank, Allan Woolf and members of the wider community for their continued support, enthusiasm and efforts to assist in growing our vision for Te Auaunga.
- Chris Calvert and Lynley Rivers – for baking to help nourish our volunteers.
- And last but not least, Cate with support from Marin and Linley for our wonderful newsletters.

Finally, I would like to say a special thank you to all our committee members for their continued support.

So, all in all, 2021-2022 has been another exciting and rewarding year on the awa.

And, as you will know, the protection and restoration of Te Auaunga will continue to be a 'work in progress' well into the foreseeable future. So, we hope you will continue to be involved and support the project in the coming year.

Many thanks.

Wendy John
Project Manager
13 June 2022