

NEWSLETTER

2024

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - A YEAR OF RECOVERY AND GROWTH

Cyclone Gabrielle caused significant damage to our planting on the river. However, compared to many parts of Hawkes Bay we escaped relatively lightly. For that we are grateful.

We planted around 1500 trees to replace trees lost in the cyclone Gabrielle floods. Whilst we plant species that can handle flooding near the river, some plants had not had a chance to establish a root structure prior to the flood which resulted in losses.

We continue to be conscious of the need to maintain past planting to ensure that losses are minimised. As much as possible we ensure that fences are maintained, plantings are released and watered during dry years. We appreciate the assistance of local landowners particularly in keeping fences maintained and stock out of planted areas.

The local Te Awanga community got behind cleaning up weed growth that was threatening to overwhelm some of the plantings at the mouth of the Awa. This has resulted in more accessibility and the opportunity to allow schools and community groups to view our mahi and contribute to it.

Thank you to all our sponsors and supporters as well as the landowners who continue to work with us planting the awa.

Whatungarongaro te tangato toitu te whenua
As people disappear the land remains.

Richard Stone, Chairman



PLANTING REPORT

Another successful planting season is behind us, with a further 9,000 native trees and flaxes now looking forward to a good growing season ahead. The country is drying out, but we were fortunate that most of the plantings this past winter were in wetter parts of the river catchment.

It is increasingly apparent that our work with the Regional Council in clearing the willows from the riverbed and planting the banks with native species is bringing about a change in the river's flow pattern. The Maraetotara used to regularly flood a number of neighbouring farm properties, but the river is now running deeper, faster and cleaner and in future only a super flood like Gabrielle will cause it to over-top its banks. This has been an unexpected but welcome bonus from the river restoration project.

It has taken us 20 years, but we now have 33 kilometres of riverbank planted in native trees and flaxes, a total of 170,000 plants. So many people have contributed, and the tree-lined banks of the river are the legacy of a huge effort over that time. We are not finished though, and still have another 24 kilometres to plant before the river restoration project is complete. With the generous support of our sponsors and the community, we will get there in another ten to twelve years!

The Regional Council has progressively removed hundreds of willow trees from the riverbanks and waterway since the project began, to allow the banks to be fenced and planted. But the willows are persistent, and we are spending an increasing share of our budget on containing willow re-growth in the areas we have already planted. This is something we must accept as necessary maintenance of our plantings, until the native trees become dominant.

Alan Berry, Treasurer and project planner

UNISON AS PRINCIPAL SPONSOR

For six years, Unison has proudly served as the Principal Partner of the Maraetōtara Tree Trust, demonstrating a strong commitment to environmental care. Unison's vision is to enable its communities' sustainable energy future and Unison's partnership with the Trust mirrors this vision, by focusing on the protection and restoration of the Maraetōtara River.

By partnering with the Maraetōtara Tree Trust, Unison strengthens community ties, builds a positive reputation and raises awareness about the importance of sustainability.

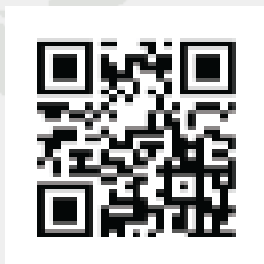
Personally, as a trustee of the Maraetōtara Tree Trust, I am proud to contribute to these efforts. My role involves overseeing the Trust's activities, ensuring that conservation goals are met, and engaging with the community to promote environmental stewardship. Volunteering as a trustee allows me to combine my professional experience with projects that are making a meaningful impact on the preservation of our natural resources.

Greg Morgan, Trustee



PLEASE HELP THE TRUST PLANT MORE TREES

The restoration of the Maraetōtara River corridor is dependent on support from our community. Please donate so we can continue improving the water quality and this beautiful habitat.



Scan the QR code to help.

SCHOOL VISITS

The MTT has been fortunate to have the support of the Nina Brathwaite Trust. My job as the educator on the Trust Board has been to liaise with schools and ensure some quality adventures that educate students about our river and its ecosystems.

This year we had a day where Mangateretere school came out and planted trees on the "island" at the river mouth. They were assisted by students from St. John's College Year 11 Horticulture class. The boys did all the heavy digging and the primary students planted the trees.

It was a very happy day and it was followed by a whole day for Haumoana school. Helen Howard from Biodiversity HB did river testing with a group while I looked at native plants with another group and then we swapped over. Nearly 100 students participated and it was held at my house which backs onto the Maraetōtara River. The students cycled from school and it was a wonderful programme with input from kaumatua from Matahiwi marae as well.

A special thanks to Mona Stewart, Principal of Mangateretere and to Helen Howard of Biodiversity HB who helped make this possible. The staff of Mangateretere and Haumoana are also outstanding in their support of these programmes.

Kia ora koutou katoa.

Lisl Prendergast, MTT Trustee and education liaison..






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