

Associate-minister visits Whangawehi

SHARING the news of the local conservation projects was the aim of the Whangawehi Catchment Management Group in a presentation made to Department of Conservation associate-minister Nicky Wagner and conservation board members.

Group chairman Jamie Cox made the presentation which included the history of the group and what they were about.

He detailed their previous conservation projects which included planting native trees on farmland to encourage clean water in local rivers and streams.

The group is an incorporated society which includes the partnership of Tangata Whenua, landowners and other agencies.

It runs as an official structure providing paid employment and has a wealth of loyal and committed volunteers.

The aim of the presentation was to give Ms Wagner and the conservation board members something to take away with them and potentially recreate a similar model for other parts of the country.

"When looking at nationwide environmental issues around the country, could this model work somewhere else?"

It was a long process for the group to get to where it is today.

It involved nine hui to produce a Memorandum of Understanding in 2010/2011 followed by hui to officialise the group and its projects.

The presentation displayed the challenges the group face which included operational funding, pest strategy and the



Members from the Whangawehi Catchment Management Group and East Coast/Hawke's Bay Conservation Board gathered together at the group's planting areas in Mahia for a planting session following a presentation to the board members about their conservation work throughout the district.

need for more community involvement.

The group do a lot of work to create succession for generations to come.

Project co-ordinator Nicolas-Caviale Delzecaux was acknowledged and group members commended his work with the group, saying it would be nothing without him.

DOC's Hawke's Bay Partnerships ranger Malcolm Smith said it was good for them all to be talking with each other and said it was a sign of everything working.

Ms Wagner thanked the group for

their presentation and welcome to the area.

"It has been lovely to see the wonderful work you are doing here.

"When people who care come together, it makes a big difference for us and future generations," she said.

Ms Wagner said they needed to be looking to the young ones and inspiring them to get involved and take part in conservation cadetships.

Following the presentation the group made their way to the planting area to show the visiting board members an

example of the work they are doing.

The East Coast/Hawke's Bay Te Tairāwhiti ki Te Matau-a-Māui Conservation Board also held their quarterly meeting at Wairoa Yacht Club during their visit to Wairoa to address local and regional concerns.

A public forum was held during the meeting which allowed members of the Wairoa and greater Hawke's Bay community to present issues for consideration by the Board.

Topics such as wetlands, freshwater management and the approval of the Maori translation of the board were discussed between the board members leaving them with decisions to be made.

East Coast/Hawke's Te Tairāwhiti ki Te Matau-a-Māui Conservation Board chairman John Wauchop said the seven members of the board were very appreciative of the associate-minister's efforts to get the region to observe first-hand the inspirational efforts by the Whangawehi Trust.

"This presentation revealed the considerable success being achieved on so many valuable fronts — all extremely important nationally, if susceptible environments like the Whangawehi catchment and people, are to be sustained," he said.

Mr Wauchop said the board had a policy of spreading its meetings over the region so efforts like this were seen and the people involved had a chance to present conservation to a wider audience.