

## Update on this winter's planting

This winter has been busy at Whangawehi with a total of 53 000 native trees established on three properties. These figures are above and beyond the group's initial goals and certainly a step up from last year. In 2014, 16 000 trees were established on the Taharoa Trust and Grandy Lake Forest. The restoration programme is now well advanced with a total of 69 000 trees and most of its course fenced off.



## Community work

The Whangawehi community organised a community planting week end on Pongaroa Station in June. Volunteers planted 4500 native trees in a day and a half. The dinner and night at the Marae were a great opportunity to get to know each other better and tighten the link between locals, batch



## School programme :

Te Mahia School students have been very busy during our winter programme and got the opportunity to do hands on activities including carving, weaving and clay modelling. They also built 13 nesting boxes for the smallest Penguin in the world. The Little Blue Penguin used to breed in the Whangawehi estuary until the 1980's. Te Mahia students intend to do their best to try bringing back the noisy but emblematic bird. In September, 13 nesting boxes were installed along the Whangawehi stream amongst a growing forest of flaxes and native trees. A netting fence protects the site from dogs and traps were laid in order to keep predators at bay. This initiative is certainly challenging but has the merit to raise awareness on a unique bird species that used to be very common in the area.



## Green Ribbon Award

In June, The Whangawehi Catchment management Group was privileged to be selected as a Finalist at the Green Ribbon Award organised by the Ministry for the Environment in Wellington. The group has made it to the Finals for the second year in a row but didn't win the Award in the "Caring for our water" category.

## Minister visits

On the 1st of September Nick Smith, Minister for the Environment, came to Mahia to celebrate the work completed by the Whangawehi Catchment Management Group and announce the group's success to the Community Environment Fund. Mr Smith explained that the collaborative approach developed by the WCMG was a successful template that other groups should take advantage of.

## New signing at Whangawehi

On Saturday the 19th of September, the Whangawehi Community gathered at Tuahuru Marae to celebrate a new Signing of the Whangawehi Catchment Management Group's Memorandum of Understanding. Three new landowners have decided to join and support the group's vision : M Fay owner of Pongaroa Station, Hannah and Richard Coop, owners of Okepuha Station and Kathie and Mark Bowen also local landowners. This ceremony is a milestone in the group's journey and with new supporters; the WCMG is in a stronger position to continue its conservation work. The community work has been outstanding with 69 000 trees planted over the last two years, a school programme and a pest control programme amongst other initiatives. HBRC Chairman, Fenton Wilson, was impressed by the work done and reiterated the fact that the collaborative approach used was unique and should be used by other groups as a template.





## Pest control

The pest control programme is also stepping up with over a hundred traps managed by four determined landowners. So far a number of pests have been caught including hedgehogs (large numbers), rats, feral cats and for the first time this winter our first weasel. These traps are maintained twice a month by the landowners and reports are sent to funders via the trap.org application.

## Water monitoring programme

Our water and fish monitoring programmes are underway until the end of the year with water sampling every second month on 6 sites. The impact of the restoration programme is already noticeable with improvements to water quality and significant increases in White Bait populations ...very encouraging.



## Crowd funding

The WCMG is fundraising via a website based organisation: the Million Meter Stream Project. Two projects are listed so if you wish to donate please go on to [www.millionmeterstreamproject.com](http://www.millionmeterstreamproject.com). Thank you for your generosity.



## Up and coming projects:

The WCMG plans to have a display at:

### Mahia Market 3rd and 10th January 2016

The WCMG is hoping to build a shelter along the Whangawehi stream, at Taharoa Trust, in order to offer some comfort to the volunteers and visitors wanting to have a closer look at the project. The WCMG group thanks the generosity of the O'Briens and local sponsors ...we will keep you posted.



Whangawehi Catchment Management Group Incorporated  
Tuahuru Marae  
457 East Coast Road  
Mahia Hawkes Bay

Contacts :  
Secretary: Rae Te Nahu  
Ph: 068375537 email : [rae.tenahu@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rae.tenahu@xtra.co.nz)  
Group Leader: Kathleen Mato  
Ph: 068375922  
email : [mato.kathleen@gmail.com](mailto:mato.kathleen@gmail.com)

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Management Group Incorporated