

Welcome to the 19th edition of Hancock Forest Views, a newsletter prepared by Hancock Forest Management New Zealand Limited (HFM NZ) to keep our stakeholders informed of what is happening in our forests. We hope you find the newsletter interesting and welcome your feedback.

Raukawa Totara Legacy Project Planting Day

18 September 2018 marked a significant milestone for the Raukawa Totara Legacy Project in Kinleith Forest, with the first plantings of Totara taking place.

In 2014, the Raukawa Charitable Trust raised with HFM NZ its aspiration to establish a resource of plantation-grown Totara in the South Waikato, for future use such as for carving and marae development. HFM NZ staff identified a suitable site in Kinleith Forest and, following advice from Scion native tree specialists, the area was first planted with a nurse crop of manuka and pittosporum in 2015.

Totara seed was collected by Raukawa staff from suitable local trees and grown into seedlings in the Scion nursery. In September 2018, the Totara seedlings were ready to be planted and phase two of the project began.

Representatives from Raukawa Charitable Trust and Hancock Forest Management were once again joined by staff and students from Te Kura Kaupapa Maori O Te Hiringa, along with many volunteers from supporting organisations including South Waikato District Council, Scion and Department of Conservation.

Planting of the 2000 Totara seedlings took place



Raukawa Kaumatua Ruthana Begbie gifting a Totara seedling to a representative of each of the Raukawa affiliated marae as part of the celebrations on the planting day

without a hitch. Thanks to a massive collaborative effort, all trees were in the ground before lunch time. Follow up work will now be undertaken by HFM NZ and Raukawa Charitable Trust staff to ensure the seedlings have the best possible chance to survive and thrive.

The Totara trees will take at least 100 years to mature to harvest age, so chances are that not even the youngest planters will be around to enjoy the final fruits of their labour. In the mean time, we can look forward to seeing the trees grow and develop into a Totara plantation that can be enjoyed by all.



*A time capsule established at the site to record and commemorate commencement of the project
(all photos: Raukawa Charitable Trust)*



Raukawa Charitable Trust Environment Manager Grant Kettle assisting with planting



Forest Protection Services winner of primary industries 'Good Employer Award'

The inaugural Primary Industries Good Employer Awards were held on 27 November 2018. The awards, hosted by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and the Agricultural and Marketing Research Development Trust (AGMARDT), were introduced to recognise employers who are "committed to providing good employment conditions in their business or organisation, or have put in place new or innovative programmes, processes or practices to provide a great work place".

HFM NZ was delighted when our Northern Area forestry contractor Forest Protection Services (FPS) were announced as the winner of the 'Employee Development Award', and highly commended in the 'Safe and Healthy Work Environment Award'.

Kevin's commitment to both fire management and the forest industry is extensive. He is a founding Trustee on the Forest Industry Safety Council (FISC) and is a Forest Industry Contractors Association (FICA) board member. Until recently he was also the Principal Rural Fire Officer for the Northern Region. With the transfer of rural fire control from the Rural Fire Authorities to Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ), he is now the National Integration Advisor to FENZ to assist with the transfer process.

Kevin has been involved in many international fire deployments to Australia, USA and Canada, and FPS is currently hosting fire fighters from the Ontario Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources on a mutual exchange programme.

Kevin is passionate about safety and about developing his people. Over the years, he has been involved in a number of industry training initiatives. Most recently, FPS has partnered with Northtec and Te Matarau Education Trust on a new forestry training scheme 'Tupu Aku', offering 15 to 24 year olds tertiary qualifications and life skills while in paid employment with FPS. The 12 month scheme, supported by MBIE, is aimed at bringing people into the industry via an accessible pathway. FPS has already employed the first 10 trainees and hopes to take on another 20 in 2019.

Kevin is an inspiration to young people wanting to make a career out of forestry and FPS is undoubtedly a very worthy recipient of the Good Employer Award.



Kevin and Kylie Ihaka receiving the Good Employer 'Employee Development' award from Ray Smith, Director General of MPI

Kevin Ihaka, who leads FPS, has a strong connection with our Taumata Northern forests, having worked in the forests for most of his working life. Kevin started out as a 17 year old in forest establishment for the original forest owner, NZ Forest Products (NZFP). He soon set up a small forestry contracting business, Ihaka Contracting, undertaking weed spraying and land preparation for NZFP.

Over the years, with changes in forest ownership and commencement of harvest in the north, Kevin's business has grown significantly. His current business FPS was set up in 1999 and now employs over 40 staff based in Whangarei. FPS undertakes all of the HFM NZ silvicultural programme in our northern forests, along with contracts for rural fire control.



*Kevin Ihaka of Forest Protection Services on the job at a fire operation
(Photo credit: Northern Advocate)*



Cougar Park mountain bike park redevelopment

Over a number of years, the Tokoroa Mountain Bike Club has designed and built a fantastic mountain bike park in Kinleith Forest on the edge of Tokoroa. Known as 'Cougar Park', the bike park offers a mix of trails within 300 hectares of working pine forest.

2017 and 2018 were challenging years for the club, with over half of the park area being harvested. HFM NZ staff were acutely aware of the disruption this would cause to the bike park and the need to work closely with the mountain bike club to minimise down time and ensure the safety of all park users.

HFM NZ operational staff worked with the mountain bike club, planning how to best manage the harvest around the park operations. During harvest, the areas being harvested were closed off, with the whole of the park closed during work hours to ensure the safety of cyclists.

The mountain bike club saw the harvest as an opportunity to completely redevelop the park. The original trails had been built through an existing crop of trees but following harvest, new trails have been constructed in unplanted cutover, with the benefit of full visibility of the land contour. Substantial financial support from the South Waikato District Council, enabled an additional 5km of new trails to be designed and built by professional mountain bike trail builders greatly enhancing the overall trails on offer.

A key issue for the mountain bike club was their ability to hold the Tokoroa Day Night Thriller, a 12 hour individual and team mountain bike race which takes place in September each year. Sound forward

planning enabled the event to be held by working around the areas being harvested. Event promoters commented that the event was a huge success; "the event went off without a hitch with perfect riding conditions, a great atmosphere and plenty of smiling faces".



HFM NZ staff Steve Richards, Ian Jenkin, Karl Clark, Simon Papps and Brendan Morgan, the 'Radiata Racers' taking part in the Tokoroa Day Night Thriller in September

The popularity of the park increases each year with trail counters currently indicating over 5,000 individual visits to the park per annum.

As well as the Day Night Thriller, the club hosts a number of other race events, including the Mid-North Island Junior mountain bike series. Mountain bike club volunteers also host very popular juniors' nights, designed to encourage a new generation of young locals into mountain biking.

With 160 hectares of the park now harvested, light is appearing at the end of the tunnel, with only 90 hectares of the current rotation of trees remaining to be harvested in 2022.

Hats off to the Tokoroa Mountain Bike Club for their patience and hard work, managing the significant challenge created by the harvest and turning it into an opportunity to improve the park.

We look forward to seeing Cougar Park further develop during the next 28 year growing cycle of the new crop of trees.



Hard working volunteers trail building through recently harvested areas (Photo: Tokoroa Mountain Bike Club)



10 Years of 'Share the Road' safety campaign

2018 marks the ten year anniversary of HFM NZ's involvement with Share the Road programme, a road safety programme involving primary school students attending schools located in forestry areas.

Share the Road aims to teach children about how to behave safely when walking or cycling on roads used by log trucks and other heavy vehicles. The children learn about how heavy trucks operate, how long they take to stop and their blind spots.

The involvement of log truck drivers is a key ingredient in the success of the programme. A loaded truck is taken to the school and the children are able to get up



Aztec Driver Trevor Popplewell standing behind a loaded log truck

close to the truck. The children get to climb into the cab of the truck to get an understanding of what the driver can and can't see.

HFM NZ first developed the programme in Northland and now works with other forestry companies to deliver the programme to schools throughout the Central North Island and the Eastern Bay of Plenty.

The programme has been well received by the schools and our staff and truck drivers also get great enjoyment from taking part and meeting the kids.



Shane Smith from Mike Lambert Transport talking to children from Kaikohe East School in Northland.

HFM NZ takes over management of OTPP Forests

In October 2018, HFM NZ was appointed by Ontario Teachers Pension Plan Forest Investments (OTPP NZ) to manage its forest assets in New Zealand. OTPP NZ is a long time Hancock Natural Resource Group investment client, however, to date the day to day property management had been carried out by a third party forest manager. HFM NZ's appointment brings both investment and property management under the Hancock umbrella.

OTPP NZ's forests are located in the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Hawkes Bay regions and total approximately 31,000 ha. The OTPP forests are located on predominantly lease hold lands, originally established by Fletcher Challenge Forests.

Taking over management of the forests has been an exciting opportunity for HFM NZ staff and the Rotorua office has been a hive of activity as the management transition has progressed. Fifteen new staff have now joined the HFM NZ team to manage the additional area of forest.

The OTPP NZ contractor workforce has been largely retained with existing contractors continuing to work for OTPP NZ under the new property management structure.

HFM NZ staff are relishing the challenge of getting to know a great bunch of new contractors and familiarising ourselves with new forests.

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