ANNUAL REPORT 2019 – 2020

Share the mauri and the mana of the maunga
In early 2019, Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatūtari (SMM) began to align reporting of our outcomes to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) framework. SDG’s are the global and local blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future.

This new focus has expanded our understanding of our “why?” As inspired kaitiaki, we are here to share the mauri and mana of the maunga. Clearly, our core business of ecological and cultural restoration underpins all that we do. However, our impact is significantly greater than this.

Early in 2020, SMM was presented with an opportunity to be part of a movement to achieve a more environmentally sustainable, prosperous, and inclusive Waikato region by 2030. This movement is known as the Waikato Wellbeing Project, a regional movement that will, over the next ten years, deliver on a collective responsibility to achieve a better and more sustainable tomorrow.

The Waikato Wellbeing Project has embedded the UN SDG’s into its systems approach to foster change and collective impact.

As Aotearoa New Zealand’s most ambitious and inspirational restoration project, we are proud to report that the maunga continues to contribute to this collective impact by bringing success for kiwi, takahē, kokako and other indigenous fauna groups.

Again, this proved to be a huge draw card, with record visitor numbers to February 2020. This growth was attributed to increases in retail guided tour and inbound tour operator visitor numbers of 87% and 64% respectively. This translated into strong revenue streams derived from goods and services (tours, merchandise, and visitor self-guiding passes) and an increase in funding from grants.
In March 2020, visitors to Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari stopped. New Zealand and the rest of the world went into lockdown due to restrictions imposed, as we grappled with, the COVID-19 pandemic. This presented significant financial and operational challenges. As inspired kaitiaki, our team rallied and continued to provide the essential services necessary to safely maintain the integrity of the sanctuary. The government wages subsidy also enabled SMM to retain 100% of our team in full-time employment.

Although, 2020 will be indelibly etched in minds and hearts of our community, we are proud to report that despite these challenges, this has been another year of significant outcomes, delivered by the determination, skill, and dedication of our team of volunteers, contractors, partners and staff.

This report details the accomplishments of our community, the many individuals, partners, and groups who have contributed to our continued success. In 2020, these have included:

- Our dedicated volunteers;
- Waipā District Council;
- Waikato Regional Council;
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment;
- Lotteries Commission;
- Te Puni Kōkiri;
- Iwi partners: Ngāti Koroki Kahukura, Ngāti Hauā, Waikato Tainui and Raukawa;
- Landowners;
- Prolife Foods Ltd, Mother Earth;
- Our ‘family of funders’ – Trust Waikato, WEL Energy Trust, NZ Community Trust; and DV Bryant Trust;
- Manaaki Whenua-Landcare Research;
- The Department of Conservation;
- Kiwis for kiwi; and
- Supporters, families, and individuals

This support has enabled our organisation to maintain operational momentum and contribute to vital capital projects, including $627,000 funding, ($300,000 Trust Waikato and $327,000 Lotteries Environment and Heritage Fund), for the proposed education centre.

The Education Centre construction is due to start in late 2020 and will be built adjacent to the new carpark that was also completed in 2020 thanks to contributions from the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and Transpower.

With international tourism unlikely for the immediate future and domestic tourism working to re-establish itself, we are now in a time that requires collaboration, and strong leadership.

Newly formed partnerships are enabling exciting collaborative opportunities, including: Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology, the foundation partner in our new ranger apprenticeship programme; Kiwis for kiwi, who have significantly expanded the conservation programme of Western brown kiwi to include monitoring; Convex Innovative Packaging, who have committed to funding the planting of native trees on the maunga for the next 10 years; Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society, who are leading an exciting and bold collaboration to plant the Maungatautari to Pirongia ecological corridor; and a number of community aged care facilities who have contributed to the development of wellness programmes soon to be launched on the maunga.

Post COVID, opportunity is presented by a world that places emphasis on the importance of equality and peoples’ rights, whilst at the same time and equally, recognizing the rights of Planet Earth.

This opportunity translates into key areas of future action for SMM. We are fostering change and collective impact by contributing to a world where:

- Maungatautari is a sacred source of spiritual pride and prestige for Waikato Māori and the wider Waikato communities.
- Endangered native fauna, waterways and flora are thriving,
- Forest recreational activities enhance the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of children, adults, and older adults in our region.
- Mana whenua actively connect with and use their land for social, cultural, and economic wellbeing.
- Jobs are created and education and tourism contribute to the Waikato economy by telling our ecological and cultural story,
- Our tamariki understand the importance of their role as future kaitiaki.

2020 has been volatile, uncertain and at times complex and even ambiguous. Despite this, SMM continues to gain momentum by nurturing an organisational culture where change and continuous improvement are embraced and welcomed as the new norm.

Phil Lyons
Chief Executive Officer
We write this as part of the team of inspired kaitiaki who comprise our Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust board. We are very proud that we can report a solid year’s performance by our enterprise. This is particularly significant following the unprecedented disruption in New Zealand and around the world created by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this respect we in New Zealand are fortunate to operate within a space of visionary leadership founded on professional advice and dedicated public sector workers. We are grateful for the timely, targeted wage support provided by government when, like so many other businesses, our visitor business shut down during the lockdown. This solid performance is a true testament to the inspiring leadership provided by our management and our wonderful resilient team of staff and dedicated volunteers, our landowner partners, our mana whenua, our species recovery partners and our family of funding supporters and our sponsors. We really are an interconnected collaboration of many inspired kaitiaki.

We are inspired that Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari (SMM) has in the last year continued to build our national role in growing resilience for the biodiversity of Aotearoa New Zealand. In this report you will hear about some of our successes: kiwi call monitoring, kōkako counts and our contributions to takahē population growth, as well as the exciting possibilities that we can grow with our emerging partnership with the Kākāpo Recovery Group: all practical illustrations of the natural heritage value we contribute to Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. These strong environmental gains are a result of the steady well-planned biodiversity strategy which is guided by our Scientific and
Technical Advisory Panel and implemented by our people.

We view our enterprise as a shining beacon of optimism in a world where the global environmental agenda is taking centre stage. As humans we are observers, but more importantly we are contributors, to the rapid decline of mother nature: unprecedented in human history, accelerated by lifestyle, commercial and industrial activities across the globe. We have clear memories of the growing clarion calls this past year by global environmental leaders, spelling out the need for fundamental reorganisation across technological, economic, and social systems to act to reverse these threats to provide for world-wide sustainability.

Thought leaders, including youth, are imploring the global community to commit to change. They remind us that mounting evidence continues to identify nature as the most enduring, effective, and cost-efficient solution to many of the world’s emerging challenges.

Our board are very proud that Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, the largest secure inland pest free island in the world, constitutes a unique opportunity to exhibit strategic leadership, regionally and nationally, by turning our strategy to authentically deliver on many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals1 where everything that we do revolves around the betterment of the environment and people. Accordingly, our board is working to diversify our deliveries to include more green jobs to build resilience of our local communities and to foster the mental and physical wellbeing for our communities. The maunga provides a sense of place and belonging, while actively sequesters carbon, improves environmental quality while also growing our biodiversity halo ‘beyond our fence’. Further, we are determined to ensure that the unique cultural history of the maunga and the tikanga of our mana whenua can both be celebrated in our community and add value to the special experience of all who visit SMM.

Our intention is that growing our measurement of authentic delivery in these areas will support compelling rationale for new sources of revenue to grow the financial sustainability of our project. Our strategy over the past years has been to deliberately build and strengthen our capability and resilience so that our organisation continues to evolve. This year has seen Phil and our team continue to embed a structure of systems and processes to underpin our enterprises capacity. In the next two years our focus will continue this organisational development journey;

• 2021 Growing systems and processes to support this structure.
• 2022 Transformation into a high-performing organisation that continually demonstrates excellence.

We are also excited to report that we have now secured sufficient funding for our long-awaited facility to grow our education, natural heritage, research, and hosting opportunities.

Every year we are presented with challenges. However, inspiring teamwork this year continues to deliver improved performance and resilience on many fronts. Our CEO Phil Lyons, an inspired and transformational leader in his own right continues to play an integral role in this. Our people are vital to our performance.

Finally, we offer a huge thank you to all our supporters. You inspire us and give us the courage to achieve what we have for all New Zealanders. Your support remains critical in our ability to achieve what we do. You have helped to create the foundation which underpins our ability to improve the sustainability of New Zealand’s unique biodiversity and grow diverse deliveries from our enterprise for the benefit of all.

In closing we wish to thank our fellow board members for your contributions, skills, courage, and support. We look forward to another productive year working together as inspired kaitiaki of our unique sanctuary.

Nga manaakitanga

Poto Davies  
Co-Chair MEIT

Don Scarlet  
Co-Chair MEIT

1 https://sdgs.un.org/goals
MEIT VISION AND STRATEGIC GOALS 2018 – 2026

OUR VISION
Share the mauri and the mana of the maunga

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari is widely recognised as a world class conservation project.

By 2026 we will have:

• Improved our ability to keep the fenced reserve essentially free of pest mammals.
• Re-established breeding populations of native species historically present.
• Consistently monitored changes and facilitated research to improve our understanding of the maunga.
• Shared the ‘lessons from the maunga’ so others may benefit from our experiences.
• Contributed to the ‘halo’ of interconnected habitat across the Waikato landscape.
• Maintained a motivated and diversely skilled group of volunteers.
Maungatautari is an internationally recognised eco-tourism destination.

By 2026 we will have:

- Developed a set of guided and interpreted tours that evocatively weave the ancient story of Maungatautari.
- Encouraged and supported our hosts and guides in telling Maungatautari stories to consistently high standards so that they will be enjoyed and remembered long after visitors have departed.
- Facilitated and contributed to a Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari education programme to bring about an awareness in conservation and ecological restoration.
- Encouraged and facilitated regular visitation by local residents, ensuring their continued engagement in, and support for our project.
- Created necessary infrastructure and maintained it at a very high standard enabling visitors to get the best possible experiences, be safe, and leave having been entertained and well informed.
- Promoted Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari as a premier destination in the itineraries of inbound tourism operators.

Productive partnerships are a feature of our success.

By 2026 we will have:

- Consolidated Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari as a model of effective co-governance in which kawa and tikanga of mana whenua is reflected in all that we do.
- Maintained strong relationships with our neighbouring landowners, based on mutual understandings of shared interests.
- Nurtured skills and confidence of our volunteers as conservation professionals, recognising they are the lifeblood of our organisation and underpin the on-going success of Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari.
- Continued to encourage and facilitate inputs and support from our partners, ensuring that their interests are appropriately reflected in our directions and activities. Our family of partners and donors will have grown, reflecting recognition of the opportunities provided by Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, and the perceived value in partnering.

Sound financial management by the Trust and continued donor support, underpins increasing economic viability of the Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari project.

By 2026 we will have:

- Improved the financial viability of the project through continuing to meet the requirements of our current donors and encouraging further organisations to join our family of donors, contributing to our strategic goals.
- Grown the diversity of our revenue streams to support our sustainable, viable enterprise.
- Secured additional funds for key capital investments and maintenance, visitor facility development, education facility development, upgrading of tracks and other vital infrastructure.
- Consistently applied appropriate business practices and demonstrated transparency and accountability to our partners and stakeholders.
Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari is an outstanding example of restoration and one of the most biodiverse forest areas on mainland New Zealand. Indeed, the sheer quality and scale (1363 hectares) of the protected area and habitat, significantly increases the viability for rare populations of fauna and flora to become self-sustaining.

This year has been another successful year, with important conservation outcomes. The following provides narrative in relation to four key projects; the Kiwis for kiwi initiative; Takahē recovery programme; Hihi recovery plan; and Kōkako recovery plan.
HIHI/STITCHBIRD
(Notiomystis cincta)

Conservation status
Threatened – nationally vulnerable.

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, 2019/2020 the year that was

Translocations of hihi (Notiomystis cincta) to SMM occurred from 2009 to 2011 and the birds continue to be supported with supplementary sugar water feeding via four feeding stations on the ‘over the mountain’ track and three stations within the southern enclosure. This year, a collaboration between SMM, Waikato Regional Council and the University of Waikato funded a research intern from the University of Waikato during the summer months to monitor the feeder usage by hihi. The research intern found that manual recordings of hihi visits to the hihi were more accurate than the camera traps – mainly due to fast shutter speed, narrow field of view and time delay between recordings. She also found that the hihi visiting the mountain feeders are different to those visiting the southern enclosure feeders, important to know for our onsite management.

The hihi survey conducted by the Hihi Conservation Officer in spring 2019 had some fantastic results with an estimated total population of 132 birds – the highest ever recorded at Maungatautari. This was due to a bumper breeding season that year and we are hopeful these excellent results continue in 2020. We were delighted to learn that the Hihi Conservation Trust secured funding for the continuation of this position for three years via the DOC Community Fund in 2019, which means SMM will be one site to benefit from her amazing survey skills for the following three years.

We were thrilled to receive funding from the Milestone Foundation that enabled us to purchase six new hihi feeders which means we could upgrade all our feeding stations on the maunga. These are easier to clean, easier to catch birds, and provide improved visibility – for both hihi and observers.

47 birds in 2018/2019
increased to 132 birds in 2019/2020
违和感 

Conservation status
At risk – declining.

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari,
2019/2020 the year that was

It was another big year for brown kiwi (*Apteryx mantelli*), with the second breeding season for the SMM kōhanga project, meaning 73 additional kiwi chicks and juveniles were released to the maunga. Whilst COVID-19 halted many kiwi activities, we were lucky to reach Alert Level 2 in time to proceed with some important kiwi work at the very end of the season. This included 17 kiwi translocated from Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust (RSRT). This was a historic occasion with Rotokare celebrating the first transfer of kiwi out of their reserve after a decade of work. Maungatautari was one of two recipients and these important chicks contribute to the founding population on the maunga.

SWM supported the transfer by sending two species staff to assist with disease screening and upskilling their vet volunteer in kiwi blood sampling. The release was celebrated with powhiri for representatives from Rotokare local iwi Ngāti Tupaia, RSRT, and Taranaki Kiwi Trust, who were welcomed by Maungatautari mana whenua to bless the kiwi at their release. It was great to collaborate with another sanctuary and share skills and resources to help each other.

We also welcomed back kiwi dog handlers for a few days of kiwi search in the southern enclosure, as part of the original two year plan to find kiwi founders and their offspring from the southern enclosure and release them to the main mountain. The dog handlers found five more kiwi, including one important Waimarino founder ‘Pikiriki’. We predict there are now less than eight brown kiwi remaining in the southern enclosure, including one pair still on transmitters.

For the second year running we have posted acoustic recorders around the sanctuary at predetermined listening sites with our kiwi ranger utilising software to analyse the data. The average kiwi call count per hour almost tripled this year compared to the previous year. This year an average of 3.8 kiwi calls were recorded per hour compared to an average of 1.4 calls per hour the previous year.

WESTERN BROWN KIWI
(*Apteryx mantelli*) western taxon

**Conservation status**
At risk – declining.

**Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, 2019/2020 the year that was**

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This season, four new South Island takahē (Porphyrio hochstetteri) chicks were successfully raised by our two resident breeding pairs – a stellar effort by the takahē and our teams of caring staff and volunteers. The chicks were named at a ceremony in July with representatives from mana whenua Ngāti Koroki Kahukura, Ngāti Hauā and Raukawa, who all contributed names to the beautiful chicks.

This year’s chicks were named Wiripoai, Koha, Rangitatara and Māhina. The ceremony was brief, but it was wonderful to hear the background stories of the names, which now connect these chicks forevermore to the whakapapa of Maungatautari iwi. These four takahē chicks, along with last year’s chick ‘Rob’ are destined for the Burwood Bush rearing facility where they will learn further foraging skills before being sent to their future release sites.

The year ahead
We were delighted to learn from the takahē Recovery Group (TRG) that the takahē at SMM have some of the highest productivity in the country. To take full advantage of this, the TRG plan to swap out the two current males for higher genetic quality newcomers. With only 418 takahē left in the world the TRG carefully matches takahē pairs based on birds’ rarity and relatedness, to optimise genetic diversity and breeding productivity.
North Island kōkako (Callaeas wilsoni) were initially translocated to Maungatautari 2015-2016, with a total of 40 birds sourced from Mangatutu in the Pureora forest. The 2018 annual census showed an increase of kōkako settling into territories with 44 territorial birds including 19 pair. For the 2019/2020 season, we were unsuccessful in securing funding to perform the kōkako census and had to delay for a year. In early 2020 we applied for DOC Community Funding with our ‘Sovereign of the Sanctuary’ project, with the funding announcements occurring this July. Thankfully, we were successful for the first part of the bid, which was to fund the annual census in August 2020. As there will be two years of breeding since the last count, it is likely that we will surpass another kōkako milestone by reaching 25 pair.

The Kōkako Specialist Group (KSG) recommends that once 25 pair are established, survey effort can be reduced to every four years. Along with the numbers of pairs, we are also seeking to establish how many banded birds have bred – these are the known founders. With Maungatautari proposed to be a source site of kōkako for transfers to other sites in future, it is important that we have genetic diversity in the population: the KSG recommends 38-40 founders to establish healthy genetic diversity. Therefore, the census in 2020 will also help us determine the numbers of kōkako needed for a top-up translocation proposed in 2021 or 2022. It is exciting to think that in just a few years’ time the entire maunga will have pairs of kōkako, who are thriving in the ngahere.

Conservation status
At risk – recovering.

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, 2019/2020 the year that was

Funding secured for annual census
Should surpass 25 pair in next census
INVERTEBRATES

The SMM Restoration Plan outlines key goals for many species that reside on the maunga and invertebrates have not been forgotten. The following five species have been earmarked as ‘missing’ from the maunga and have potential for translocation. However, we need to survey to ensure they are not already present and rebounding with the restoration of the forest.

The five species are:

- Forest Ringlet (Dodonidia helmsii)
  At risk – relict
- Giraffe weevil (Lasiorhynchus barbicornis)
  Not threatened
- Stag beetle (Geodorcus auriculatus)
  At risk – relict
- Giant Stick Insect / Bristly Stick Insect (Argosarchus spp.)
- Velvet worms (Peripatus species)

Already with anecdotal observations by staff, volunteers and visitors, and formal research conducted by Waikato staff and students, we know that we have at least three of those species present – giraffe weevil, giant stick insect and velvet worms. We have some great research coming up in the next year that will shed further light on some of these fascinating invertebrates.

OTHER SPECIES

The rifleman translocation was postponed for a year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Surveys were completed for both planned capture sites (Pirongia and Pureora) with both sites having hundreds. Tautara (Sphenodon punctatus) are a certain sight at the Tautari Wetland Tuatarium and are breeding at our other release site, with more hatched eggs and live juveniles found this season. Volunteers that cleaned Artificial Cover Objects (ACOs) in the tuatarium last summer found six juveniles from approximately 9-13cm in length, as well as several skinks that we have yet to identify but are likely to be copper skinks (Oligosoma aeneum) or ornate skinks (O. ornatum). We have also been working with the lizard expert at Waikato Regional Council to create a monitoring plan for lizards in the southern enclosure. This has meant initiating a new volunteer team and a permanent survey plot will be set up in the southern enclosure in spring 2020. In the meantime, photographs from SMM staff of geckos on the fenceline have been confirmed to be forest gecko (Mokopirirakau granulatus) and elegant (green) gecko (Naultinus elegans).

Mahoenui giant wētā have been sighted every year in the past three years and are reported to MWLR. MWLR noted in mid-2019 that the sightings had tripled, which matched the expected establishment phase for Mahoenui giant wētā. Whilst two Mahoenui giant wētā have been found deceased in this time (one adult and one juvenile), the good news is that the presence of a juvenile means they are breeding onsite.

Giant kōkopu (Galaxias argenteus) and banded kōkopu (Galaxias fasciatus) were released to streams in the southern enclosure and Tautari Wetland pond in 2007. There have been no formal surveys and we are due to conduct surveys in 2021. There have been repeated sightings particularly in the wetland pond.
PEST MANAGEMENT

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, 2019/2020 the year that was:

There were 13 incursions of pest species to our sanctuaries in the 2019/2020 financial year including five incursions of mice, four incursions of rats, and four incursions of weasels.

Mice

In July 2019, a mouse was trapped in the Tautari Wetland ending an incursion that had begun there in June. In February 2020 mouse tracking was identified in the southern enclosure, and, in March 2020 mouse tracking also occurred in the northern enclosure, Tautari Wetland, and the QEII block. Incursion responses were established, and all enclosures are once again mouse free. In the northern enclosure slumping of a culvert pipe, and erosion of the road above looked to have been the point of entry for the mice. Similarly, in the QEII block mice appear to have entered through a culvert when a culvert screen became detached.

Rats

Rat tracking occurred in the QEII block in April 2020 and at Waterfall 23 in May 2020. Two Norway rats were trapped in the Gorsenet area (Fence 244a and 251a) in May 2020, and one ship rat was trapped on the south east fence line (Fence 126a) in June. Incursion responses for all rats were put in place, including the additional deployment of DOC traps, camera traps, and tracking cards, but no further tracking occurred, and no additional weasels were trapped. Following the 2019 captures three mustelid detection dog handlers were brought to the maunga. One handler reported a moderate indication for mustelid presence on the quad track, but no further evidence of weasels was found. With the assistance of Waikato Regional Council staff, samples were taken from all weasels captured and supplied to Eco Gene to undergo relatedness analysis. Although the potential for sibling relationships was reported between two pairs of the samples, no strong parent offspring relationship could be established.

Fence and Tracks

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, 2019/2020 the year that was:

Fence callouts

Staff attended a total of 90 call outs in the 2019/2020 financial year, an increase on the total of 77 call outs from the previous year. Most of these call outs were caused by vegetation impacting or becoming entangled in the surveillance wire atop the fence. Pre-emptive trimming of vegetation near the fence line, particularly of tree ferns, continues to be a focus for the Natural Heritage and Operations teams. In support of these efforts a hedge trimmer was brought to the maunga in May 2020 to clear vegetation near the fence in several areas. Arborists have also been contracted to identify trees that are likely to fall and impact the fence in the near future and the work to fell these trees continues, particularly along the northern fence line, where significant patches of dead Mangeao have been identified.

Fence damage

Only four sections of the sanctuaries Xcluder fence were destroyed in the 2019/2020 financial year which is a significant reduction from the nine sections destroyed in the previous year. However, there were four instances of damage to the fence hood, an increase from one in the previous financial year. The reduction in catastrophic damage to the fence is attributed to the proactive vegetation work which is being carried out across the sanctuary. The fact that there were no instances of damage to the fence between November 2019 and September 2020 appears to support this conclusion.

Track repairs and maintenance

Repair work to several areas of the sanctuaries access roads were conducted in the 2019/2020 financial year. In March 2020 approximately 100 tonnes of metal were lifted to a site near Maungatautari summit on the quad bike track and urgent work to maintain the quad bike track has been conducted in several places. Work on the perimeter road in the south east (approximately fence 104 to 126a) and in the south west (approximately fence 250 to 264) was conducted over the summer and this work will continue in the coming financial year.
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, 2019/2020 the year that was:

As in previous years, the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), has representatives from mana whenua, universities, DOC, Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, Hamilton Zoo and local councils and gives scientific and technical advice to the MEIT Board to inform their decisions about SMM management. The terms of reference for STAP were valuably updated in May 2020, and late in the year, retiring chair Alan Saunders (Waikato Regional Council) was replaced by John Innes (Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research).

STAP this year commented on the new draft Waipā District Council Reserve Management Plan and gave ongoing advice as the new maunga Restoration Plan was worked by MEIT staff into a summarised version and a new Monitoring Plan. STAP also advised on scope of the Biosecurity Plan review that commenced this year. Pest and species management and research are core STAP agenda items, including this year’s kōkako and takahē successes, possible kakāpō return, kiwi monitoring and management, GIS opportunities for pest and fence management, myrtle rust, and numerous other matters.

RESEARCH

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari, 2019/2020 the year that was:
The DOC Tier 1 Monitoring Team visited SMM twice in early 2020 to complete their monitoring as part of the nation-wide biodiversity monitoring that began in 2011, with SMM contributing operations support. All data is uploaded to the Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research National Vegetation Survey databank: www.landcareresearch.co.nz/tools-and-resources/databases/national-vegetation-survey-nvs-databank.

A recent publication from Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research confirms that tui have spilled over from the main mountain sanctuary to increase the population in the surrounding area – particularly up to 10km from the fence line, validating that sanctuaries have significant effects on the surrounding biodiversity (Fitzgerald N, Innes J, Mason NWH, 2019). Pest mammal eradication leads to landscape-scale spill over of tui (Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae) from a New Zealand mainland biodiversity sanctuary (Notornis 66(4): 181-191).

Ongoing and new research projects for Maungatautari in the past year have included:

- Tree phenology (University of Waikato)
- A comparison of manual observations and trail camera detection of hihi at supplementary feeders in the southern enclosure, Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari. (University of Waikato, Waikato Regional Council)
- Sexual selection in the New Zealand giraffe weevil (University of Waikato)
- Understanding predation dynamics of ugly bugs: do large jaws increase predation costs for New Zealand wētā? (University of Waikato)
- Novel discriminatory tests for E. coli to improve water quality assessments (Agresearch)
COVID-19 impact.

With the visitor centre closed for two full months, including the Easter school holidays, and based on trends until closure and comparisons from the previous two years we would suggest we lost around 4,100 visitors due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2019/2020 financial year.

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<th>Year-end summary</th>
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<td>Total visitors</td>
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<td>NZ Visitors</td>
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<td>International visitors</td>
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<td>Education programme</td>
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VISITOR SERVICES

Visitor numbers were tracking well for the 2019/2020 year with total visitors at end of February (11,835 YTD), 5% ahead of the same period in 2018/2019 (11,264 YTD).

Our retail guided tour numbers YTD at end of February 2020 were 1200 v 642 for the 2018/2019 year. This was an impressive 86.9% increase with Inbound Tour Operator (ITO) guided tours YTD 598 v 364 (2018/2019) a 64% increase. A significant portion of these reflects Overseas Adventure Travel adding their AZO (Australia/New Zealand) schedule to our existing NNZ (New Zealand only) schedule for the season.

It was at this time we began to feel the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, with international education and ITO groups from China, USA and Japan cancelling their bookings.

March was looking to become another record month for visitors until accelerating booking cancellations of; group visits, ITO tours, and education programmes proceeded and continued after the closure of Manu Tioriori Visitor Centre on Saturday, 21 March 2020.

At that stage (YTD 13,265) visitors were still less than 1% down on 2018/2019 (YTD 13,375).

We reopened the visitor centre on Wednesday, 20 May and guided tours recommenced on 23 May - weekends only with 22 people on tours over four days. We had an encouraging 615* visitors in June, which was a good re-start given the education programme was not running.

Guiding

This year the development of two new tour products has increased the regular schedule of tour offerings we have available. The first, a seasonal highlights tour provides a shorter introductory tour experience that focuses on seasonal features of either the southern enclosure or wetland. These tours provide an informative insight into the Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari project before visitors continue to self-guide and experience more within the southern enclosure. The second, a unique kiwi experience tour. Offered during the kiwi hatch and release season, visitors are invited to be part of a kiwi chick’s journey towards release on Maungatautari. This tour provides the opportunity for kiwi conservation advocacy as part of our partnership with Kiwis for kiwi as a Kōhanga kiwi site.

Our dedicated team of expert guides has also grown this year as we welcomed five new volunteer guides. Each new volunteer guide is working at their own pace through a mentored training programme and spending time gaining personal experiences of the sanctuary to prepare to share the mauri and mana of the maunga with our visitors.

*June numbers in 2019, excluding the school programme, were 440.
For six years our TripAdvisor status has been five-stars, giving a clear indication that our visitors are having experiences that exceed their expectations.

We receive feedback from visitors through Rezdy (booking programme) too, and this shows that 97.7% are very satisfied to extremely satisfied with their visit. 0% of people were not satisfied.

As part of this survey we also ask people to answer the question “How likely is it that you would recommend Sanctuary Mountain® to a friend or colleague?”. The result of this question provides the Net Promoter Score (NPS). The NPS measures customer experience and can predict business growth. This proven metric transformed the business world and now provides the core measurement for customer experience management programmes the world round. The score for Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari for 2019/2020 is 86, which is excellent considering the global benchmark for the year is 31.

Marketing highlights
- NZ Life & Leisure – Back full-page article
- Young Adventuress visit – Travel influencer with 201,000 followers on Instagram
- The Style Jungle visit – Travel influencer with 12,500 followers on Instagram
- Sunday TV Show – War of the Wild
- Air NZ Safety Video – Seen on YouTube 1.8 million times
- Mother Earth Partnership – product on supermarket shelves nationwide
- What Now – Our Kiwi Ranger taking a young host on a kiwi experience
- School Holiday specials – over 900 bookings and 400 people going through the enclosure over four days.
- Feature articles with Stuff – 2 x full page spreads in Sunday Star times and online
- Meditation on the Maunga – Two events sold out
- Christmas on the Maunga – Over 300 people visited in one day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media</th>
<th>30 June 2020</th>
<th>30 June 2019</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>7,250</td>
<td>6,396</td>
<td>854 new likes or 13.4% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>1,799</td>
<td>1,301</td>
<td>498 new likes or 37.3% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>75 new followers or 8.6% increase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>2019/2020</th>
<th>2019/2020</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total users</td>
<td>46,168</td>
<td>35,669</td>
<td>+10,499 or 29.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pageviews</td>
<td>204,992</td>
<td>174,451</td>
<td>+30,541 or 17.51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3

Partnerships

Productive
Waikato Regional Council recognises Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari as a regionally significant project. It has supported the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust in its management of the project since 2009. The Council continues its involvement with the Trust as a partner, providing funding to support the maintenance of the enclosed area as an essentially pest-free sanctuary. In addition to contributing to the development of this strategic plan Council staff also provide technical advice through appropriate forums, including the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel and the Maungatautari Reserve Committee.

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari (SMM), given the nature of the project, will make a significant long-term contribution to increase the population of New Zealand’s national bird, North Island Western brown kiwi. The Kiwis for kiwi (K4K) strategy is to reverse the estimated 2% annual decline in the kiwi population to a 2% increase, by releasing 500 kiwi chicks into the sanctuary by 2022. These chicks will be hatched from eggs lifted through Operation Nest Egg (ONE) from wild kiwi across Taranaki, Tongariro and Whanganui, which is the natural range of this kiwi species. Released onto predator-free SMM, they will grow and by three years old, find a mate and start breeding. They will remain on the maunga as a permanent breeding population.

Waipā District Council has clearly demonstrated its commitment to protecting and restoring the environs of Maungatautari and this year extended its financial support for an additional three years. Waipā remains committed to administering and managing the reserve and giving effect to the principles of the settlement between the Crown, NKK and stakeholder iwi and will continue to resource these endeavours.

Council has established an advisory committee to assist with this purpose. Maungatautari today remains a significant site of natural heritage and represents a very significant percentage (around 46%) of the remaining intact indigenous forest in the Waipā District. Waipā District Council remains committed to the protection and restoration of this ‘community asset’.

Department of Conservation (DOC) has provided technical advice and support to the Trust since its inception. In 2019, DOC awarded $92,000.00 towards fence maintenance by way of the community contestable fund. Over the years, the commitment from DOC has been significant in terms of staff time and internal resource allocation. This has included technical advice and support to the Scientific & Technical Advisory Panel and staff have also contributed significant time into both takahē and kōkako translocations.

Thank you to Mother Earth for their support of our education programme. Support from Mother Earth has helped enable the continued development of our programme and our ability to provide fully facilitated educational experiences.

A highlight this year has been the Kaitiaki Film Competition. Together with Mother Earth, SMM encouraged schools to send us a short film telling us about what they were doing to look after their local environment and why conservation is important to them. Congratulations to the two winning schools, Glenview Primary School and Point England School. Both winning schools have been invited to join us for a special kiwi release experience.
Our Volunteers

Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatapui (SMM) cannot function without the fantastic commitment from our volunteers who cover a broad range of activity from pest monitoring, weeding, and planting to visitor centre hosting.

This year, volunteer contributions were impacted by COVID-19. In 2019 SMM volunteer hours decreased by 50%.

Our goal for 2020 will be to recruit new volunteers and provide a skills-based volunteer programme which will enable more opportunities for involvement, social interaction, and learning.
The sincere passion of our wonderful volunteers rapidly advanced the Maungatautari project to cutting-edge status across the world. Today, after 12 years plus of dedicated service, most of these generous supporters are past retirement age and are now seeking less strenuous tasks to fill their days. This regrettably leaves fewer team-mates to continue the journey. On 30 June 2020 we had less than 300 regular volunteers, a decrease of 7% from 2019. Another contributing factor for the decline, has new prospects considering time and travel costs and then choosing to volunteer closer to home. We are aware of the need for a strong succession and recruitment plan and further acknowledge that health and safety protocols are high priority for the Trust. We are currently focussed on a Volunteer Plan that started last year when a Memorandum of Understanding was rewritten for volunteers by our volunteer team leaders. This plan is a work in progress requiring considerable effort from volunteers and staff alike.

An overall 50% decrease in annual volunteer hours can be attributed to other major shifts as well as travel costs and the global COVID-19 pandemic. The areas of most decline are administration, corporate groups, events, general light duties, natural heritage, trustees, visitor hosts and weed control. More staff and contractor input has reduced volunteer contributions for events and general light duties. Weeds have noticeably spread across the mountain, but access issues have restricted where the spray truck can operate safely. Our visitor host numbers have been dwindling for the last few years and the reduction of Trustees from 16 to nine has reduced meeting hours considerably.

Committee and work-team participation on the other hand, has increased a remarkable 320%. Tour guide hours has improved by 118% in under three years. Another area that has increased extensively is species related work. The establishment of another takahē pen has required more attention from their fantastic caretakers and a number of volunteers put in some long hours when fostering a couple of injured kākā over several weeks. We also undertook a couple of bird counts and surveys. Last year, we introduced the kiwi courier programme where volunteers travelled through to Rotorua or Taupō to pick up kiwi. Similarly, they have and will continue to be responsible for kiwi travel to other approved areas.

Te Awamutu College continue to include Sanctuary Mountain® Maungatautari as part of their Education Outside the Classroom programme and Puahue School remains a part of our southern enclosure pest monitoring programme. Last year, the Waikato Science Club replaced the Waikato Historical Society Group to monitor in the northern enclosure. Unfortunately, they had just started when public access from the end of Hicks Road was disputed.

As always, positive word-of-mouth guarantees continuance where no job is ever too tough. Although, many of our volunteers are aging, our Volunteer Plan will hopefully see lots of new recruits prosper and grow like those before them. And again, it will be this deep-rooted passion that keeps them coming back year after year.
SANCTUARY MOUNTAIN® IS DEPENDENT UPON MULTI STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

The main aspects of our funding drive include:

Revenues generated via eco-tourism visitor experience

With the introduction of the visitor services team leader, our focus has shifted to developing our visitor experience. Proactive marketing of authentic mana whenua cultural product is critical to the success of developing our domestic and international visitor market.

In May and June 2019, multi-year funding was secured from Trust Waikato and WEL Energy Trust respectively. This supports the appointment of a marketing person, education programme team leader and volunteer co-ordinator.

Relationships with local government

As a nationally and internationally significant conservation project, we are extremely grateful to both Waipa District and Waikato Regional Council’s for providing significant multi-year funding commitments. This commitment, re-enforced in 2019 by Waipa District Council’s renewal of support for an additional three years, reflecting a wider understanding and support of the conservation, economic and social outcomes Sanctuary Mountain® Maungataturi brings to the people of our region.

Central government

We are extremely grateful to the Department of Conservation for the funding received this year via the Community Conservation Partnerships Fund.

Corporate citizens

Business understands the importance of Sanctuary Mountain® Maungataturi and, as a good corporate citizens, has supported Sanctuary Mountain® Maungataturi in 2019. Of particular note was our newly formed partnership with Mother Earth. Support from Mother Earth has helped enable the continued development of our programme and our ability to provide fully facilitated educational experiences. It is hoped that these partnerships can be further developed into the future.

Community Trusts

Significant contributions have been made in 2019 by a number of Trusts. This support continues to be a vital source of funding for our project.
## Environmental factors

### Ecological habitat improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fence maintenance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of responses this year</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>13 ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectors of fence flattened</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-5 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of breach responses implemented</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of pests trapped (excl. mice)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive flora outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of plants planted around the maunga:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-38 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern enclosure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor centre</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-28 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTM</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorsenet</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>14 ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,567</td>
<td>1,786</td>
<td>-219 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total plants planted</td>
<td>2,117</td>
<td>2,388</td>
<td>-271 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive fauna outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total kiwi released on to main mountain since July 2012</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>74 ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of kiwi imported</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35 ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of kiwi exported</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-13 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi chicks hatched in Te Tui a Tane</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-14 ▼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Social factors

#### Community

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education visits (students only)</td>
<td>2,404</td>
<td>3,921</td>
<td>-1,517 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education visits (teachers and parents)</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>-257 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>-57 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer hours</td>
<td>8,277</td>
<td>14,456</td>
<td>-6,179 ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers full time equivalent (1664 hours per year)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>-3.6 ▼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Visitor experience

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people on guided tours</td>
<td>2,127</td>
<td>1,912</td>
<td>215 ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total visitor numbers (incl. guided tours/excluding education)</td>
<td>11,253</td>
<td>12,342</td>
<td>-1,089 ▼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Employees

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of staff employed</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1 ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender diversity</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>0.125% ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee turn over</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>-0.09% ▼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Health and safety

#### Accidents with absenteeism

<p>| | | | |</p>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Governance factors

#### Gender diversity

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16% ▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance committee</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An interesting end to the financial year with COVID-19 affecting our visitor revenue. The good news is that because most of our visitors are from New Zealand, recovery has been good, and numbers are ahead of last year for first quarter of the 2021 year. In summary:

- The Trust has recorded a surplus of $48K after depreciation
- This is mainly due to the funding received for capital projects
- Facilities fees (from visitors) were down 11% to $93K compared with $105K in 2019

Operating expenses are down around $33K compared with 2019:

- This is despite an extra $50K being spent on deferred track and fence maintenance
- A reshuffle of the contractors took place, and the savings are starting to show through in the total contractors/salaries/wages being paid.
**Cash Situation:**
- As at 30/06/2020, the trust had $535K in the bank including Term Deposits, compared with $30K the previous year.
- While most of this is tagged funding for the new Education Centre, there were still operating funds available of $59K.
- This is the strongest cash position the Trust has been in for a long time.
- The multi-year funding agreements in place and some commercial sponsorship agreements have put us in this position.
- It also helps that all bank loans were paid off during the 2020 financial year.
- The Finance, Audit and Risk committee continue to monitor the next six months cash-flow forecast at their monthly meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>As at 30/6/20</th>
<th>As at 30/6/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed assets</td>
<td>9,173,861</td>
<td>9,296,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank accounts</td>
<td>535,203</td>
<td>29,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other current assets</td>
<td>43,015</td>
<td>30,887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total current assets</td>
<td>578,218</td>
<td>60,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assets</td>
<td>9,752,079</td>
<td>9,365,740</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current liabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>105,251</td>
<td>63,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other current liabilities</td>
<td>367,066</td>
<td>94,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total current liabilities</td>
<td>472,317</td>
<td>158,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans</td>
<td>33,400</td>
<td>(0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities</td>
<td>505,717</td>
<td>158,343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total current assets less total current liabilities | 105,901 | (98,184) |
| Total assets less total liabilities | 9,246,362 | 9,198,397 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accumulated funds</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital contributed by owners or members</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated surpluses or (deficits)</td>
<td>9,246,312</td>
<td>9,198,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total accumulated funds</td>
<td>9,246,362</td>
<td>9,198,397</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We would like to acknowledge our current and retired trustees for the year 2019-2020

**Current Trustees**
Poto Davies (Co-chair)
Don Scarlet (Co-chair)
Aaron Barnsdall
Andrew Peckham
Graham Parker
Maryanne Sambells
Nico Mouton
Rahui Papa

**Retired Trustees**
Keri Thompson

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