

JOBS | MAHI
FOR NATURE | MŌ TE TAIAO



Waipapa Pikiāriki Project Profile



Purpose of this review:

**To highlight the positive social,
environmental, and community benefits of
Waipapa Pikiāriki project**





Project summary

The Waipapa Pikiāriki Project is focused on environmentally friendly methods for controlling pests and weeds.

The project, managed by Kaitiaki Pest Control Solutions received \$760,000 of Jobs for Nature (J4N) programme funding to carry out effective pest management across 3,388 hectares in the Pikiāriki and Waipapa areas of Pureora.



What difference is the project making to people

Career upskilling and development

The project provided 13 employees with opportunities to upskill in a career they are passionate about with 13,175 total hours worked in nature. Five of these individuals maintained full time employment once the project ended.

The project created four field roles designed to upskill workers and provide them with practical qualifications for a career in pest management. By completing courses and attending wānanga, employees gained valuable skills that increase their employability and career prospects.

Region	Waikato
Recipient	Kaitiaki Pest Control Solutions Ltd
Start date	28/06/2021
End date	30/06/2023
Approved funding	\$760,000
Co-funding	\$160,000
Intent	Capability development, pest control animals, pest control plants
Funder	Department of Conservation

How is the project contributing to the wellbeing of Māori?

The project created meaningful relationships within the community and with other organisations supporting cultural and community wellbeing. Through wānanga with iwi kaumātua and presentations on the cultural importance of key sites, this has strengthened the connection of the community to their land and traditions.

The wānanga focused on the cultural importance of key sites, and Mātauranga Māori. Kaitiaki Pest Control Solutions gave presentations in partnership with Kura Taiao to local youth which highlighted the importance of pest control for our ecosystem, in hopes of raising awareness within our rangatahi.

The project supported individuals, particularly the 13 employees who whakapapa to the location, by empowering them to act as kaitiaki (guardians) of their whenua (land). This sense of belonging and the ability to care for their taonga (treasures) is deeply fulfilling and contributes to a strong sense of identity and purpose.

The exclusive employment of Maniapoto uri (descendants) has created positive outcomes for iwi, hapū, and whānau. Employees are supported in exercising their rights of kaitiakitanga and in accessing and supporting knowledge of Mātauranga Māori.

“Being the kaimahi on our own whenua reiterated our sense of belonging. The ability to be kaitiaki of our taonga was empowering”¹

J4N project recipient



Impacts on the environment

Increased protection for biodiversity

The installation of 627 pest animal traps and treatment of over 6,000 hectares for possums, rats, mustelids, and weeds contributes significantly to the control and reduction of invasive species. Invasive species often outcompete native flora and fauna, leading to a decline in biodiversity. By controlling these pests, the project supports the restoration of native habitats and helps the indigenous species to thrive.

Protection of endangered species

The project is crucial for protecting several threatened native species, including the North Island kōkako and whio (blue duck), in the Pureora Forest Park.²

Both the North Island kōkako and the whio play unique roles in their respective ecosystems. The kōkako, with its ability to disperse seeds, contributes to the regeneration and health of native forests³

The whio, being a “white-water specialist,” indicates the health of New Zealand’s river ecosystems. Its presence signifies clean, fast-flowing rivers, as it feeds on aquatic invertebrates found in such environments.⁴

In the late 1990s who numbers were critically low with only 330 breeding pairs. As of 2011, the breeding population of who was estimated to be unlikely more than 1,000 pairs.⁵ The who is classified as “Nationally Vulnerable” due to its specialised habitat requirements and threats from introduced mammalian predators.⁶

In the early 1900s the kōkako was common in forests throughout New Zealand. For the North Island kōkako, the species declined to a low in the 1990s of fewer than 400. Management reversed that trend in many areas to the point that the number of kōkako pairs surpassed 2000 in 2020. Overall, the North Island kōkako population reached approximately 2,300 pairs by 2021. This is a testament to the success of the conservation strategies employed.⁷

Importance of protecting these species

Protecting species like the kōkako and who is crucial for keeping New Zealand’s unique natural heritage alive. These birds are only found in New Zealand, making them special contributors to the world’s variety of birds and ecosystems.

By ensuring their survival, we’re helping maintain the richness of life on Earth. Efforts to save these birds also help other native plants and animals by improving their living spaces and reducing threats from predators.



References

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