

# Annual Review 2016



The Forest  
Bridge Trust  
'protect, enhance, connect'

## Who we are

The Forest Bridge Trust (TFBT) is a farmer-initiated environment trust that supports outstanding land stewardship across the narrowest part of the tail of Maui's fish (the North Island) – from west to east as a bridge of green from the Kaipara to the Pacific Coast.

The Trust's mission is to support farmers and other land owners in the ongoing restoration of their native forests and wildlife, and to protect their rivers, streams and wetlands, all within a productive, profitable and sustainable farming landscape. This is done for the benefit of the wider Auckland and New Zealand communities.

## Vision of The Forest Bridge Trust

A connected landscape on productive land with healthy forest and flourishing indigenous wildlife from the Kaipara Harbour to the Pacific coast.

## Mission of The Forest Bridge Trust

Through practical landowner-centred support, to protect, enhance and connect existing forest remnants and wetlands by enabling fencing, planting, weed management and pest control.

## Contact details

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## FOREWORD

### 2016 Summary

This was the second full year of operation for The Forest Bridge Trust. We accomplished all of our important goals and set the stage for future growth and development.

#### **What we achieved in 2016:**

- The CatchIT programme has been expanded to a further 4 schools
- 3 workshops were held targeting parents of the CatchIT school participants.
- A new online CatchIT Trapping game has been developed and trialled in association with the University of Auckland
- 6 CatchIT community workshops were delivered across the target area.
- A workshop was held with farmers/landowners to report back on the progress of the Trust and prioritise areas for fencing
- 6 sites have been identified for fencing and funding has been secured
- One site has been fenced, an ecological plan produced and pest control initiated
- Two pest control advisors have been contracted to provide one on one support and advice
- A communications strategy has been drafted
- Administrative support has been contracted to help with funding applications, website maintenance and communications.
- Funding applications have been very successful - \$184 000 has been secured to fund the 2017 work programme.
- Health and Safety policies and procedures drafted
- A workshop was held to identify ecological priorities and options for developing a monitoring plan to measure the achievement of ecological outcomes relating to the Trust's programmes and projects
- Trust representatives attended the joint NZ Ecological Society and Society for Ecological Restoration conference in Hamilton and presented FBT achievements.

#### **What we want to do in 2017**

##### *Community Initiatives*

- Engage with nearby local environmental programmes and groups to involve them in our landscape-wide initiative and encourage networking opportunities
- Engage a further 3 schools in CatchIT
- Launch the online CatchIT trapping game
- Deliver 10 community workshops
- Determine engagement with Walk the Line software and resolve recording issues
- Contract the services of an educator support person
- Engage with initiatives similar to ours, to learn and share information eg Cape to City

##### *Landowner Initiatives*

- Fence a further 4 sites

- Management methods will be explored for high value habitats recently protected through fencing. Tasks for 2017 will include:
  - An environmental plan (an assessment of plant and pest risk) will be completed for one site
  - Pest control plans will be developed for the two recently fenced sites
  - Tradescantia control will be explored in the target catchment
  - A monitoring programme will be identified for fenced sites
 We will contract and partner with organisations to help us deliver this work in a manner consistent with our objective of supporting farmers.
- Explore potential opportunities for maximising gains through covenants
- Host a workshop with farmers/landowners to report back on progress and explore priorities

#### *Governance and operations*

- Stay true to our strategy
- Explore opportunities for partnerships
- Finalise the communications strategy
- Develop an MOU with the landowners on whose land we are working
- Proactively seek funding from new funding sources

I would like to thank all the Trustees and the members of the steering committee for their valuable efforts and wonderful commitment and dedication in making The Forest Bridge Trust a reality operating in the community.

#### **Thanks also go to :**

Auckland Council and staff  
 Rodney Local Board  
 University of Auckland - Rachel Frewster and staff  
 Gotcha Traps – Warren Agnew  
 Thomas Civil Environmental Consultants  
 Farmlands  
 WWF  
 MBIE  
 Fonterra  
 Reconnecting Northland  
 GBS  
 Shane Pienar  
 Department of Conservation  
 Whitebait Connection  
 Sustainable Business Network - Million Meters Stream project  
 Living Waters  
 and the wonderful schools, landowners and communities in northern Rodney who have jumped on board CatchIT Schools and CatchIT Communities.



**Kevin Adshead**  
 Chairperson  
 The Forest Bridge Trust

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

This section describes the 2016 Trust activities in more detail. It also includes planned activities for 2017. The Trust has two strategic focus areas: community initiatives and landowner initiatives.

### COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

#### *Purpose*

Community initiatives are designed to:

Create broad community support, understanding and interest in the overall programme

Develop projects that have high ecological impact across a landscape scale that many local residents and a wide range of the community can engage with.

Advance the vision, principles and practices of The Forest Bridge Trust through advocacy, communication and capacity development.

#### *Desired outcome by 2018*

The two focus areas (Tomarata and southern Hoteo) will have a scientifically-designed landscape-wide integrated animal and weed pest control programme.

#### *Outcomes for 2016*

- ✓ The CatchIT programme has been expanded to a further 3 schools
- ✓ 163 students have joined the children from previous years to become hands-on trappers and now understand what a pest is and the threats to native wildlife. See this link for results <http://crimdev.stat.auckland.ac.nz/shiny/schools/>
- ✓ At least one child in each school has been inspired to take their pest control efforts further (see the website article about Ahuroa student, Dylan Hunt <https://theforestbridgetrust.org.nz/2016/10/10/ahuroa-school-student-takes-catchit-school-s-to-red-beach-11-october-2016/> )
- ✓ 46 families attended 4 workshops targeting parents of the CatchIT school participants. They and many more whanau, have been supporting their children to trap pests.
- ✓ There is evidence that some of the community have been kick-started to do more pest control beyond the CatchIT programme
- ✓ 6 CatchIT community workshops were delivered across the target area. Attendance at these workshops has been growing.
- ✓ The online CatchIT trapping game is available for any student to learn about pests, their effect and how to experiment like a real scientist, see <http://crimdev.stat.auckland.ac.nz/shiny/game/>

*"There were so many people at the Leigh workshop we had to cut the sandwiches in half to feed everyone!"*

- ✓ Around 1075 traps (divided evenly between DOC200 and Timms traps) are now being used in the community, catching at least 429 pests in just 3 weeks.

#### *Focus for 2017*

- Seek expert advice about weed control in our fenced off areas
- Engage a further 3 schools in CatchIT
- Deliver 10 CatchIT community workshops
- Launch the online CatchIT trapping game
- Engage with nearby local environmental programmes and groups to involve them in our landscape-wide initiative and encourage networking opportunities
- Contract the services of an educator support person
- Engage with initiatives similar to ours, to learn and share information eg Cape to City
- Stay focused on our strategic objectives
- Evaluate the impact and effectiveness of our programmes at the end of 2017
- Work with community members to ensure trap positions are recorded on GPS/Walk the Line software.

### **LANDOWNER INITIATIVES**

#### *Purpose*

Landowner initiatives are designed to:

Link sites with other forests and wetlands to build a bridge of enhanced natural habitat across the catchment.

Protect specific high value habitats on private land based on rigorous ecological assessment

Support individual farmers and landowners to make decisions and implement changes to enhance natural habitat on their land.

#### *Desired outcome by 2018*

At least six indigenous forest or wetland areas of high ecological value have been identified, fenced and have weed and predator control.

#### *Outcomes for 2016*

- ✓ A workshop was held with farmers/landowners to report back on the progress of the Trust and prioritise areas for fencing
- ✓ 4 sites have been identified for fencing
- ✓ Funding has been secured for all 4 sites
- ✓ One site has been fenced, an ecological plan produced and pest control initiated
- ✓ Farmer feedback has been positive and trust is being gained

*“It’s a pleasure to see it looking so nice”*

*“The Forest Bridge Trust have a practical, ‘no nonsense’ approach.  
Their communication with farmers is outstanding.”*

- ✓ Two pest control advisors have been contracted to provide one on one support and advice
- ✓ 35 landowners have been visited and assisted with setting up their pest control programmes. 73 traps (33 rat and mouse traps, 40 timms and DOC200 traps) given out and logged with GPS.

#### *Focus for 2017*

- Management methods will be explored for high value habitats recently protected through fencing. Tasks for 2017 will include:
  - An environmental plan (an assessment of plant and pest risk) will be completed for one site
  - Pest control plans will be developed for the two recently fenced sites
  - Tradesantia control will be explored in the target catchment
  - A monitoring programme will be identified for fenced sites
  - We will contract and partner with organisations to help us deliver this work in a manner consistent with our objective of supporting farmers.
- Fence 4 sites
- Explore potential opportunities for maximising gains through covenants
- A workshop will be held with farmers/landowners to report back on progress and explore priorities

## **GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS**

#### *Outcomes for 2016*

The focus for 2016 was to continue building capacity and growing the Trust - yet being mindful that capacity should not be outstripped by opportunity.

Achievements included:

- ✓ Completing the strategic plan
- ✓ Accounts were prepared by the Trust’s accountant to the new Charities Commission standards
- ✓ A communications strategy has been drafted
- ✓ Liz Maire is now a trustee
- ✓ Administrative support has been contracted to help with funding applications, website maintenance and communications.
- ✓ Funding applications have been very successful - \$184 000 has been secured to fund the 2017 work programme
- ✓ Health and Safety policies and procedures drafted
- ✓ A workshop was held to identify ecological priorities and options for developing a monitoring plan to measure the achievement of ecological outcomes relating to the Trust’s programmes and projects

- ✓ Trust representatives attended the joint NZ Ecological Society and Society for Ecological Restoration conference in Hamilton and presented FBT achievements.

#### Risks

Financial and social pressure on farmers to protect the environment is increasing. The Trust has proved to be well-aligned with potential funders. Programmes such as CatchIT Schools and Communities have proven to be very popular. All these factors have meant the Trust has had many opportunities to expand and grow - often sooner and quicker than ever imagined. As a result there were points in 2016 where the Trust was in danger of growing beyond our strategy and capabilities.

We do not own the land on which our projects take place and so cannot guarantee the protection of the assets we are creating. Potential funders see this as a risk.

Delivery of the CatchIT programme is heavily reliant on one person - Environmental Educator, Liz Maire. Should she become unavailable for any reason the programme would be severely impacted.

#### *The focus of the trust for 2017*

1. Stay true to our strategy
2. Explore opportunities for formal partnerships with 'public good' organisations.
3. Finalise the communications strategy
4. Finalise health and safety policies and procedures
5. Develop an MOU with the landowners on whose land we are working
6. Identify and train one other Educator to provide support to the current Environmental Educator. Contract a CatchIT support person to share knowledge and responsibilities of the programme.
7. Develop criteria for measuring the achievement of ecological outcomes relating to the Trust's programmes and projects.
8. Proactively seek funding from new funding sources

## **FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Auckland Council  
Rodney Local Board  
WWF  
MBIE  
Fonterra  
Reconnecting Northland  
Farmlands  
Farm and Lifestyle Centre - Warkworth

# FINANCIALS

## Operations Report For The Forest Bridge Trust

<b>Opening Bank Balance</b>		<b>2925.85</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Subscriptions	43.48	
Donations	11841.57	
Grants	115600.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>127485.05</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Administration	(1778.51)	
Pest Control	(27232.87)	
Contractors	(44340.50)	
Fencing	(23087.64)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(96439.52)</b>	
<b>Other</b>		
Capital	(375.00)	
Bank Transfer*	(500.00)	
<b>GST</b>		
Net GST	(1965.85)	
<b>Closing Bank Balance</b>		<b>31130.53</b>

\* bank transfer of \$500 is to an interest bearing account