

MRHLG Inc COMMITTEE MEETING

2 June 2023, 5pm, at 1070b Wainui Road, Kaeo, & Zoom

1. Formalities:

- a. Attendance: Jen Ritchie-Campbell, Casey Campbell, Lynne Lucas, Dale Turkington, Maxine Dignan, Philip Shepherd, Jo Leather, Mary-Anne Schaab
Zoom: Lesley Baigent, Brian Putt, Lyndon Hurst
- b. Apologies. Doug Jane, Rebekah Hasloch (*Brian/Casey*)
- c. March minutes were confirmed as a true and correct record (*Lynne/Casey*)
- d. Correspondence ratified & received (*Philip/Jen*)

Lesley Baigent joined the meeting via zoom - Brian thanked Lesley for her work and invited her to speak to the group.

1. Changing the transmitters

Fred : as planned, we removed his transmitter, which he'd been wearing for 9yrs.

In the process of trying to find a replacement for Fred we found a young kiwi in the area below Jo's property.

This is a great example of breeding and chick survival, pat on the back for Lyndon & MRHLG work.

Lesley later found a replacement young kiwi, 1500gm, down below Dennis's place – which is now named Terry.

Unlikely to be nesting but valuable to monitor habitat/movements. So far he hasn't roamed far.

We also successfully changed the transmitter on Graham (around 2kg weight and in good breeding condition) a lovely bird to handle.

Brian thanked Lynne re info from Bridget in Rattler. Mindful of concerns about too many people handling the kiwi & not stressing them. Can share/publicise the concept of naming our kiwi and our success finding juvenile kiwi. Great to see them thriving in the local area – good PR.

2. Kiwi population survey – part of a new Save the Kiwi permit, which covers several locations. Survey aims to identify Kiwi age strata, density in Northland. Survey was started briefly at the Deer Farm. There were some signs of Kiwi, but no confirmation/sightings. Survey activity is now suspended because of the breeding season. It will restart again on 1 January and run until the end of March.

3. Pest control hui held by Kiwi Coast: Well supported – approx. 200 attendees. Presented DOC 250 and a new Ferret trap (F Bomb).

Jen – massive thanks to Lesley for all her work for us.

Jo thanks also re Know Your Dog workshop for BOI Vets. People very complimentary.

Jo – Carl Dowd is doing kiwi research – how can we contribute? Early stages of discussion. He has chick timers on birds that have been trans-located. Our historic population could be a very good control group– his concerns might be the level of ability within our group to do monitoring. Would need more than 2 birds with transmitters on. Carl query had a query re funding and wanted to be reassured about our group's technical abilities, access to approved kiwi handler (Lesley & Jo's work)

Lesley – chicks are trans/monitored from birth. Quite mobile from 2 weeks old and travel in any direction. Very difficult to monitor – need to be checked regularly – transmitters need to be changed – valuable info but costly in labour. Lesley would be happy to help us with this. Possibility of coming in under umbrella of Carl's work. Cameras would tell us about chicks leaving nest and survival rates.

End goal would be to find out about our area. Lesley very happy to help with that. Need to find lots more kiwi males (around 20) to get enough chicks to get a good sample. Valuable info but not always the result you want, eg, 1 out of 20 survived in one case. Possible 3yr project getting it all set up

Kiwi forum – pushing for more monitoring and information specifically in Northland, eg, how do they cope with massive weather event. Our group is only one in Northland with transmitters on kiwi. Need to word our permit renewal application to reflect DOC current focus, eg, climate change, and need support from Lesley.

Lesley – many people very keen to come to kiwi releases – this provides opportunities to promote what's needed – fall in love with kiwi and start by tying dogs up.

Brian - Jo to continue the work on the renewal of the permit.

Jo: Background briefing and discussion of Kiwi monitoring transmitters. Each transmitter has a different signal frequency, emits sonic beeps, transmits for a kilometre. Jen and Jo are doing weekly monitoring to locate each kiwi's signal. Having taken this over from Doug who did it for many years.

Terry and Graham located this week. Challenging to get series of 8 sonic beeps. If kiwi is out and active, this gives another parameter. TAXON¹ gives summary of activity over several days... Terry is more active on average out for about 10hrs each night, Graham for 8.5hrs (over last month). Both back in burrows between 3.30-430am. **Important info to get out to community, is that kiwi come out of their burrows at dusk. Timing coincides with people getting home from work and letting their dogs out.**

Leanne's place has been reliable to find the two kiwi from there. Difficulty in the terrain – sometimes blank periods. Whangarei Heads group finding that birds are out for 12hrs.

Jo re funding

DOC have postponed decision for a month.

STK funding applications. Lesley advised that only \$35,000 will be available for Northland, (compared with \$395,000 requested from all applicants). Lesley advised us to contact NRC for traps under their bio fund. This has been done and is likely to be successful.

Now that our kiwi are not on the 'threatened,' list, accessing funding is becoming more difficult.

2. TRAPPING REPORT March and April (Lyndon - see report already circulated)

Spoke to Whangarei trapper who's noticed influx of predators after Cyclone Gabrielle.

Discussion also noted that as soon as ferrets come into the territory we need to down tools and focus on them. Ferrets have white & black face & are the size of a cat. Discussed difference between stoat/weasel.

May: 12 weasels +stoat & feral cat. 1000 predators were added to trap NZ records.

Discussion about AT220 traps. Lyndon had a very helpful time with Bruce Shepherd across bush area, getting an overview of the extent of the bush. Tracking/chew cards – useful monitoring info over last week – to do again winter & spring – to identify which predators and where they are.

Casey/Phil received Lyndon's report

Right now is good time to do a **rat knockdown**.

Discussion about who to involve in a knockdown, 11 designated lines in bush, 2-3 cycles 7-10 days apart. Lyndon to do Haywards/Morse properties.

Background discussion on how a rat knockdown works: Doug or Jen coordinated the knockdown in the past. Locals/members do own 'lines'. Toxins placed on nails on trees can leach into ground and can be eaten by other species, so this approach is problematic. Need to keep toxins in bait stations. Discussion re home-made rat tubes (could talk to Bernie about bait stations and toxins)

Lesley – It might be useful to define a bait station network, monitoring and replenishment plan and to research toxin delivery technology. MRHLG may soon need to get a permit through NRC to use toxins (a Vertebrate Toxin Agreement (VTA)).

Discussion about how to trap. **Need someone to lead rat knockdown organisation.**

Philip – could concentrate on areas with no people.

3. Updates

- a. Permit status for transmitters – Existing permit is about to expire. Jen/Jo still in communication with DOC (since Feb). DOC has not responded with follow-up appointment. MRHLG needs specific approval from local DOC office for transmitter permit application.

Jen/Jo to draft an email for Brian to send to DOC as president, highlighting permit expiry date.

Brian willing to take part in appointment. Proposed that if DoC haven't responded **by end of June**, MRHLG should escalate. Don't want to go over the head of the local people or disturb positive relationships. Discussion.

Jen/Jo to draft an email for Brian to send to DOC as chair, highlighting permit expiry concerns.

- b. Kiwi Aversion training – Jen reported.

Following our March meeting, we organised for Lesley Baigent to run a Kiwi Avoidance Training

¹ Taxon plans translate the relevant goals, objectives and actions of the Kiwi Recovery Plan into a local context for individual taxa at a level of detail sufficient to guide operational plans. They are 'best advice' for all stakeholders regarding goals, objectives and actions, priorities and opportunities, for the management of individual taxa. As such, taxon plans are key documents for the implementation of the Kiwi Recovery Plan. (from DOC Taxon Plan for Western Brown Kiwi)

session in May. Unfortunately this had to be postponed due to the weather and is now rescheduled for 1 July. It is fully booked with 29 dogs being trained. Of those, 14 are from properties backing onto our kiwi zone.

- c. Kiwi listening survey – Jo update: Big thanks to 11 listeners who did on-the-ground listening in cold conditions, 4 nights in the bush. One was a brand new listener. Majority of listening done in window 1, still have Orua Bay to do. Mark keen to have listening on the deer farm. Cinzia from DOC came and gave a presentation/refreshers.
Recorders: 2 new test sites. 1 at Whangaihe captured loud kiwi call. Also Bruce Shepherd's 'camp site' on edge of DOC reserve. Very close calls, but noise of stream blocked more distant calls. Bruce & Jo to find a more suitable site.
Data shows differences in what kiwi are doing depending on their geographical location (core area vs wider area)
We still need to collate all the data, so it is too early to report any overall listening results. Jo shared kiwicall printouts/spectrogram. Often interference by other birds and sounds. Checks by listening to recordings. Location and wind direction are key (not necessarily placed in the areas that people physically listen from. Eg, listened from Richard's Bench – good info last year but less this year in more protected situation.
Laura suggests morning tea or lunch get-together to thank everyone and present laminated certificates, probably after 2nd window and data analysis. At Barracks or Jen & Casey's.
Jo has sent Rebekah the template for certificates to be presented.

Phil queried if ALL the data is going to be included in reports?. Two sites have been retired (access issues) Need to advise DOC.

Jo - test sites should be included. To decide about sites after data analysis. Mary-Anne helping Jo with data analysis and Rebekah is helping with organisation – huge thanks for her help from afar.

Casey – Need to include listening hours in volunteer data.

- d. Save The Kiwi Hui 7-9 June, New Plymouth. Brian to attend.

4. FINANCIAL

Treasurer's Report previously distributed, presented by Jen, suggests we reinvest term deposit. Brian affirms authorisation.

A new accountant, Sue Brown CA, has offered to do our annual performance report.

As part of the Save The Kiwi population survey Lesley was accompanied by Martin Schmidt in Deer Farm and DOC block areas. It was requested if we could give koha or payment for that effort – Approval to fund 9 hours of Martin's time. (Casey/Brian)

Report approved (Brian/Phil)

5. Communications & PR

Lynne finally got thru to Whispers. Something to be in the next publication. Another Rattler in the next couple of weeks.

Rattler to go to those outside membership

Road signs made – Brian to collect from Kiwi Coast. Jen to liaise with Phil re placement

No progress on leaflet drop re dogs - need to put on Facebook pages etc for local community

6. **Whakamānawa ā Taiao** – Environmental Awards – Jen thinks this could be worth applying for and will follow up

7. **Approve Revised Constitution** (distributed earlier)

Brian – DIA needs to be assisted with a map – extension to be a later decision

Philip shared original map to use as APPENDIX to constitution, ie, land from Tauranga Bay stream through to Mahinepua beach 'as defined in appendix'.

Maxine to confirm map with Phil and Brian

All suggested changes accepted

Moved that suggested amendments to Mahinepua Radar Hill Landcare Group Inc constitution are agreed and the document finalised with a map inserted to identify the DIA. (Brian/Phil, agreed)
Maxine to liaise with Brian to progress as required.

8. **Strategic Planning review** (document previously distributed)

Casey speaks to background and aims, including pros and cons of expansion.

Discussion re proposals for **Vision, Designated Impact Area (DIA), activities, expansion.**

Funders regard us as a small area – may have better access to funding if larger. Could also combine in some ways with other groups in the area for funding and admin.

Expansion of DIA: Phil – everything from Te Ngaere stream to Matauri Bay is private ownership already trapping and aligned with Kauri Cliffs. Benefits of moving further towards Whangaroa back to Pumanawa & Touwai (only a few land owners)

Jen – focus on creating continuous corridor. There are examples where individual groups make umbrella. In past Te Ngaere and Tauranga Bay cooperate with the group – work with trapper.

Phil – few owners between deer farm and Kauri Cliffs. If we move the boundary, it benefits us (the other area has many owners).

Dale – vision fantastic ... future benefit of common vision through the corridor (including Myers' trapping results). About inclusion. Strategic expansion. Worthwhile to talk to the people in those areas and gauge interest before going to next step.

Casey – would be worth finding out benefits of expansion in relation to funding.

Discussion around kiwi being off endangered list, but if the groups protecting the Kiwi are de-funded, they'll be endangered again. This for STK hui.

What can MRHLG do to better position itself for transitions to future environmental priorities and economic situations?

The drafted strategic vision document would support funding applications.

Phil – our historical success keeps us in the loop with national organisations. The kiwi have been the chequebook, fauna has benefitted, eg bush & pohutukawa. Objective should be to enlarge our geographic coverage without losing what we have.

Dale re difference made by significant re-planting of native trees.

Lynne – value in increasing our base and engaging younger people/generation.

Brian – huge difference between size of our group and others – area and staffing. Our success in trapping is a useful record of our value. STK organisation operates mainly through DOC nationally, not necessarily a help to organisations like us.

Extremely important document, brilliant job Casey, put on the shelf till next committee hui.
Strategic review received, leave on the table (Casey/Brian)

9. **Health & Safety report** presented by Casey (previously distributed)

Accepted (*Casey/Phil*)

Next meeting proposed Tues, 18 July

Brian thanks for attending, national hui report next time.

Meeting closed 7.30pm