



**THE FOREST  
BRIDGE TRUST**  
'protect. enhance. connect'

# IMPACT REPORT

2022 - 2023

Photo Credit: Cam Rathe

**PROTECT, ENHANCE, CONNECT**

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# HE KARAKIA HAUMANU TAIAO

Ko Ranginui e tū nei  
Ko Papatūānuku e takoto nei  
Kia haumanutia ko te taiao kia ora  
Kia kumanutia ko te taiao kia mau  
Kia tina! TINA  
Hui, ē; TĀIKI, E!

This is the force of the heavens above  
This is the force of the earth below  
May the environment be restored to total health  
May the environment be fostered to last  
forever Steadfast  
We all agree in unison!

Source: Te Haumanu Taiao 2023

This karakia is derived from the mihimihi with attribution to Nā Zaelene Maxwell-Butler,  
Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki; Gavin Anderson, Ngaati Whanaunga; Leon Blake, Kouna Ltd.  
and Ngā Kaitiaki o I&ES Mana Whenua Kaitiaki Forum (2021)

Ngā Iwi Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau encourage the use of the karakia for the purpose of restoration  
consistent with Te Haumanu Taiao: Restoring the natural environment in Tāmaki Makaurau.





# ABOUT US

Our roots are in rural Rodney, and being local, we understand the realities of living on the land. At The Forest Bridge Trust our approach is underpinned by collaboratively working with landowners and all members of the community. We strive to connect the best information, people and services to our communities so that they can make the right decisions for their land or area to enable the protection, enhancement and connection of forest remnants, wetlands and other landscape which provide safe habitat for indigenous wildlife.

The Forest Bridge Trust has a voluntary Board of Trustees, bringing a wealth of expertise and local knowledge to our organisation.

Our CEO and managers support a highly skilled and diverse staff team working together to achieve our goals and vision.

Our front line team member roles for staff and volunteers, include ecology, predator control, community liaison, fencing and riparian planting and education and are supported by our services team staff who provide administration, volunteer support, GIS and data analysis, information technology, human resources support and coms coordination.

## OUR VALUES

1

### Respect

We respect what makes people different, recognising and valuing the multiple and diverse perspectives of those we work with. We show this by taking a consultative approach to all areas we wish to work within, inviting contribution from communities on the best approach to achieve what they want to achieve.

2

### Integrity

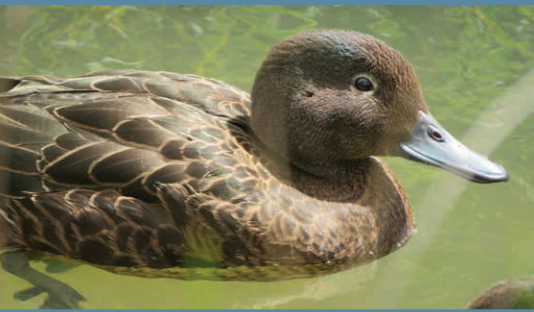
We act with integrity, openness and honesty at all times. We show this by doing what we say we are going to do, communicating clearly and being transparent with our activities and decision making.

3

### Empathy

We will always listen to the point of view of others and try to reach a common ground where possible. We show this by putting ourselves in other's shoes, understanding the environment and culture that they operate within.





## OUR VISION

*"Connected people and landscapes with healthy forest and flourishing indigenous wildlife from the Kaipara Harbour to the Pacific Coast."*



## OUR MISSION

We aim to inspire, support and resource people who own, occupy or manage land, to protect and enhance ecosystems and native species through fencing native forest, controlling invasive species, revegetating for connection and restoring waterways.

We will enable this work to grow to a landscape scale through our connection with local people, existing community conservation groups and networks which all have a critical role.

By inspiring and supporting a socio-ecological change movement we aim to encourage a voluntary and sustainable workforce committed to protecting and enhancing our surrounding ecosystems.







## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Firstly, a thank you to Craig Presland, outgoing CEO through part of this period, who's hard work and focus enabled growth and structure as the Trust developed its capacity at pace. Also a huge thank you to the wonderful Emma for holding the Team together throughout the recruitment period and the induction of our new CEO.

A warm welcome to Ana Christmas who joined us in August this year. We were very pleased Ana agreed to join us at this exciting but challenging time. The Forest Bridge Trust is now back to full operation, after the Covid years, and is making significant progress in delivering on its key objectives.

The past year has been very challenging for farmers and landowners with the floods and cyclones following in quick successions. We have seen great resilience amongst these communities in that they have rallied round each other helping to support those most in need. We are also pleased that the TFBT has been able to offer practical support and, in some cases resources, to help our communities rebuild and get back on to their feet. Sometimes just being there and listening is important, and our community liaison and predator control

teams have used their networks and relationships to try and help in the rebuild programme. This is one of the strengths of the Trust in not only helping to build community capacity, but also supporting it to become more sustainable.

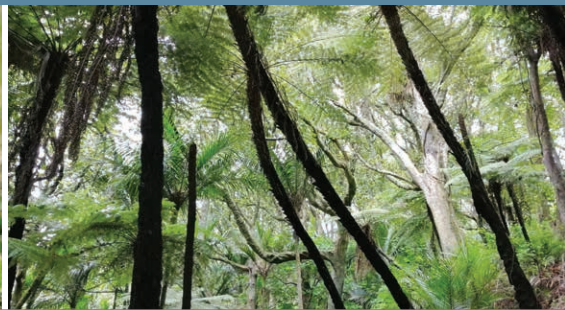
Since the last impact report, we have started to see some very encouraging signs of our success on the ground. With the translocation of kiwi to Tamahunga maunga, we have now seen the birth of new chicks in the first year and with more adults to be translocated soon, kiwi numbers are growing across our area. Not only this, recent sightings and acoustic recordings are telling us that kiwi numbers in places such as Mataia and Tāwharanui are increasing and are also 'on the move'. They have been heard and seen in Makarau, Waimaru bush, Kaipara Hills Road and in parts of the Takatu peninsular. These are exciting developments that show kiwi are returning to their natural habitat in our local area and remind us of the importance of the work the Trust is doing to protect our national icon.

The partnerships that are at the heart of the Trust are key to our success. None of this could be achieved without the involvement of local volunteers who spend hours checking traplines and helping return the local ecosystem back to its natural state. We are also grateful for the support from local and national organisations such as Auckland Council, Kaipara Moana Remediation and Save the Kiwi. A special thanks also to our contractors and hard working staff who along with local landowners, farmers and community groups help us have the impact that this report highlights.

Kevin Adshead, Chairperson







## FROM THE CEO

Tēnā koutou katoa

**Welcome to this celebration of the collective achievements made by The Forest Bridge Trust and all those who have supported its mission over the past 12 months, up until June 30th, 2023.**

As the current CEO of this incredible organization, I am honoured to be writing this opening letter, but I must give credit where credit is due. The leaders who came before me, including CEOs Tracy Tristram, Craig Presland, and the previous Operations Manager, Maj De Poorter, all played a vital role in laying the foundation for our success.

Our leadership team, with their strong and diverse skills in ecological, fiscal, field, and organizational development, have been instrumental in guiding us towards our mission of connecting people and landscapes with healthy forests and flourishing indigenous wildlife. Alongside them, has been a focused and committed Board, including our founders Gill & Kevin Adshead, who are an essential part of our success, navigating change and opportunity while staying true to our vision.

At the heart of The Forest Bridge Trust, relationships are key. The tens of thousands of hectares under mustelid control are a testament to the deep connections we have built with landowners, volunteers, supporters, and community groups. Our team is innovative, empathetic, and dedicated to ongoing learning and progress, tackling challenges head-on and working towards sustainable solutions. Despite the challenges we have faced, such as the impacts of cyclone Gabrielle and the 2023 floods, we have made significant gains, with kiwi and other species flourishing under our care. Our innovations in the data space, which align our focus and resources, with our ecologist defining key areas of ecological impact, is a key example of this.

We invite you to read outcomes contained in our report, which demonstrate the enormous impact that our team, Trustees, contractors, volunteers, supporters, landowners, and funders have made towards creating a biodiverse and sustainable landscape. We are grateful for our partnerships with Save the Kiwi, Auckland Council & Kaipara Moana Remediation, and our Job's for Nature funding, which have enabled us to achieve great gains.

As we move forward, our challenge is to continue building upon these strong foundations, drawing support to ensure that future generations will enjoy the same flourishing ecosystem we are collectively protecting and restoring.

Ana Christmas, CEO



*Kia haumanutia ko te taiao kia ora -  
May the environment be restored  
to total health.\**







# KEY OUTCOMES

- 10 new TFBT team members recruited and on board taking our team to 25
- 250 additional properties committed to being part of our pest control programme
- 3,604 new traps deployed by TFBT and the community
  - 15,728 additional hectares under mustelid control taking it to 32,364 hectares
- 946 TFBT Volunteer Hours donated to support our work
- 7,864 local resident hours donated to check their traps
- 15,020 pests captured and recorded across TrapNZ projects we maintain or are connected to in the community
  - 27 Community events held
- 19.7 new kilometres of fencing approved for completion
- 146 school age students participated in our education programmes.





## PREDATOR CONTROL



Our team grew to five over the year, helping us to install a record 2,182 new traps across key communities and high-value biodiversity areas, targeting mustelids, rats, and possums. An important component of our work this year was the continued deployment of traps to complete a 6000ha buffer zone around Mount Tamahunga, which plays a crucial role in supporting the kiwi reintroduced in early 2023. Our data team have streamlined our processes which now provides trapping and surveillance updates to our predator control team, so they are able to respond more quickly to reports of mustelid activity. Maintaining and monitoring these traps and trail cameras could not be done without the help of local residents, community groups and businesses, so a huge thank you from us to everyone involved. The momentum generated by this inspired and resourced network of people will allow us to identify and focus our work on the many other examples of our region's precious biodiversity.

15,728



Additional hectares under mustelid control

2,182



TFBT predator control traps deployed



15,020

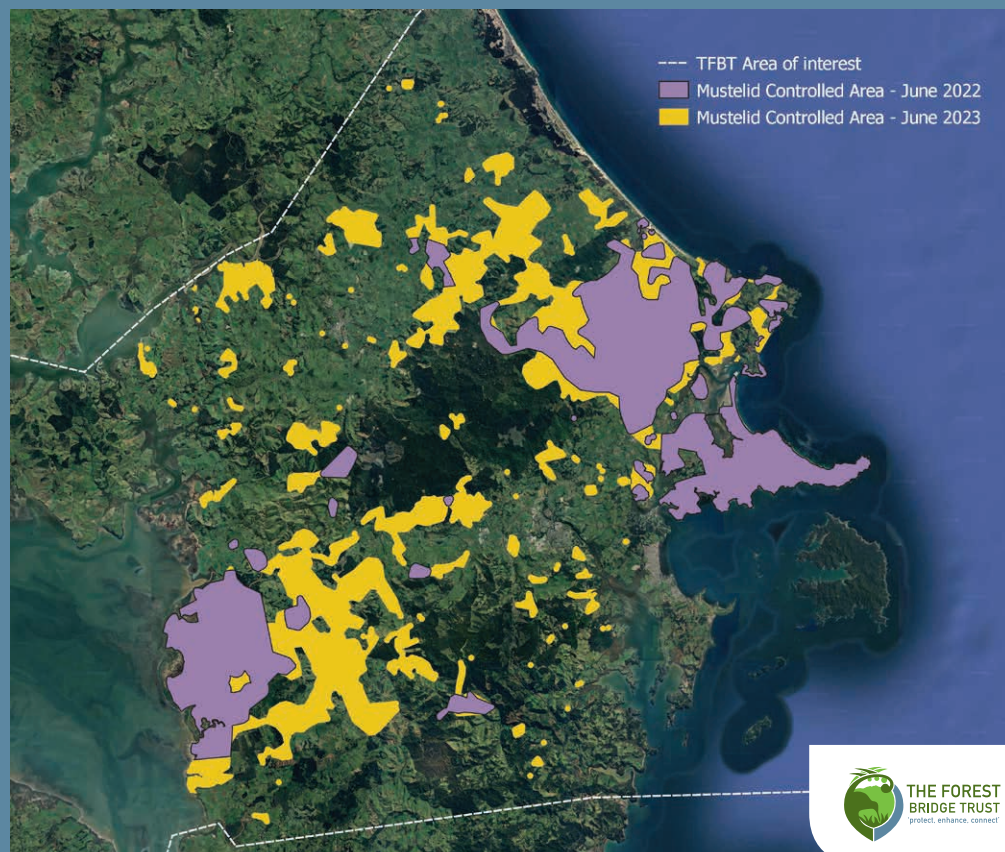


Total pests caught combined TFBT & community



## ECOLOGY

This period was marked by significant ecological achievements. A landscape-scale mustelid monitoring program, involving over a hundred trail cameras across approximately 10,000 hectares, showed promising results; stoat abundance was low, and neither weasels nor ferrets were detected in trapped areas. Ongoing kiwi monitoring in the Tāwharanui buffer zone provided some exciting outcomes. Our data indicated a kiwi population is established and growing outside the predator-proof fence, with 487 kiwi calls recorded at 8 of the 12 monitoring sites, including duet calls which suggests active breeding. Meanwhile the Mataia kiwi population established in 2013 is also thriving and spreading into the associated buffer zone. A sighting of kiwi on a monitoring trail camera in Makarau, 7km from Mataia, was a heartening sign of success, as well as affirming our original assumptions about the habitat corridors that kiwi would utilise when dispersing. Our goal of creating a safe habitat connection between the two kiwi populations seems one step closer.





6



New Community  
groups engaged

27



Community  
Events and  
Workshops held

250



Number of new landowners engaged

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



In the past year, we've significantly expanded our community engagement, hosting over 500 community members at a wide variety of events. Highlights include a kiwi listening evening at Mataia, an enlightening evening with Ruud Kleinpaste on ecosystem restoration and an exclusive screening of "Fight for The Wild" by award-winning documentary director Peter Young. Collaborating with Ecofest, our team provided educational bushwalks for families, and our National Volunteer Open Day in June showcased diverse local groups seeking volunteer support. Teaming up with Save The Kiwi, we delivered Kiwi Aversion and Know Your Dog workshops, educating and empowering our community in kiwi protection. As we celebrated with our incredible supporters at End of Year BBQs, we also witnessed the positive impacts of neighbourhood trapping hubs, with stories of the return of native species like kaka, kereru, bellbird, kiwi, bittern, tui, and fantail to local backyards. Excited about the future, we look forward to welcoming more community members into our TFBT family and exploring broader possibilities for community conservation in this region.

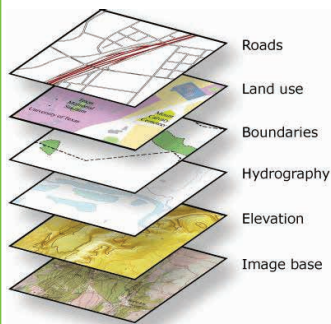




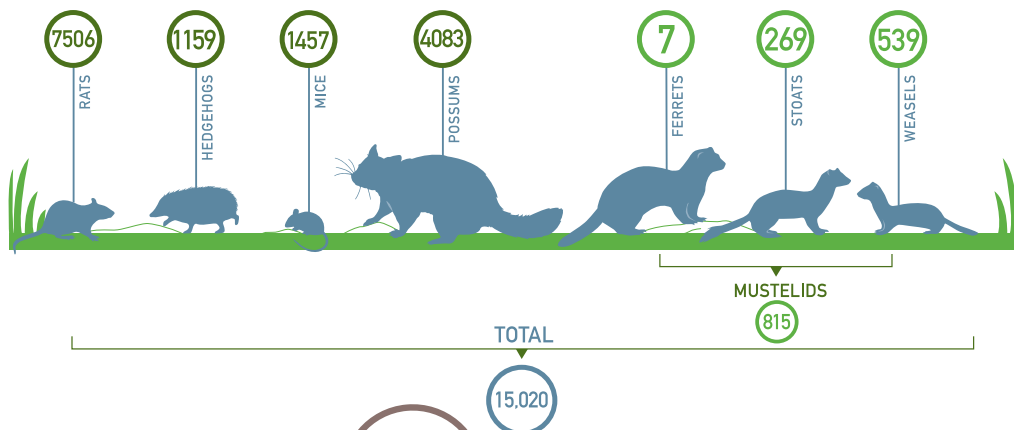


## TECHNICAL INNOVATION

Over the course of late 2022 and 2023, we have designed programmes to integrate our CRM with live feeds from TrapNZ and ArcGIS and to display data from our traps and trail cameras. This helps focus our resources on the area of greatest impact. Live dashboards show our team what species our 66 permanent trail cameras are picking up across all locations, and the trap-catch data by species in any given timeframe. Alerts are automated to our team for critical events, such as ferret sightings and catches in known kiwi habitat. Technical developments have also been a game-changer for community engagement, enabling our Community Liaison team to identify where their support and encouragement is most needed across the 780 residents/properties we are now connected to.



Recorded individual and community group trap catches across north Rodney July 2022 - June 2023



## FENCING & RIPARIAN PLANTING

We have strengthened our relationship with Kaipara Moana Remediation (KMR), having been involved in their development since 2020-2021. Although there have been immense challenges with Cyclones Hale and Gabrielle for the landowners we work with, we are pleased to have met our milestones for 2022/23. In addition to witnessing the degradation of the Kaipara Harbour's kai moana and the suffocation of snapper spawning grounds due to sediment, we observed the profound impacts the severe weather had both on landscapes and the well-being of the landowners we are connected to. Our field advisors, as programme partner's of KMR, pivoted to offer support and assistance with storm recovery applications for repair and/or replacement of damaged fencing and planting. KMR's Navigator Projects, initiated this year, explore innovative approaches to catchment protection. Landowners, long associated with TFBT were among those who embraced the opportunities to trial alternative methods.



19.7km



New kilometres of fencing



35,000

STEMS PLANTED



Riparian planting







## EDUCATION

We successfully delivered The Forest Bridge Defenders course to students from Leigh and Pakiri schools in July 2022, with an additional presentation to students at Wellsford School in May 2023. Students enthusiastically shared their knowledge about local native species and the threats they face from pests. Their participation sparked interest in community conservation, with some students and their parents volunteering to join a Family Community Trapline. The programme included a variety of hands-on experiences and games, using stuffed predators as educational tools, which all helped the children to better understand the threats to native species. Through play children experienced the challenges faced by native wildlife pursued by invasive predators, leading to exclamations of "It's not fair!". The impact of the Forest Bridge Trust defenders' program on students is significant, fostering well-informed and engaged young conservationists actively dedicating their time to trapping and recording catches within their school environment.



# 125

Students participated in Schools

## A New Education Programme For Young People at Springboard

Funding support from Auckland Council allowed The Forest Bridge Trust to partner with Springboard, to create a new 10-week conservation course for 21 young people outside of the mainstream education system. The course included practical skill-based workshops, as well as explaining the ecological foundations of good conservation practice. Springboard General Manager, Dan Gray explains,

**"This programme was specifically designed and delivered with this cohort in mind. As a primary trained teacher, it was one of the best proposed plans I've ever seen. It took our kids on a journey that challenged them, gave them new experiences and exposed them to a wider awareness of the world around them."**

We are grateful to everyone who assisted with our new venture; internally and from other organisations for the Springboard rangitahi. A short video of the Springboard project is available on our website videos.





711



Volunteer hours  
donated for trap  
checking



## VOLUNTEERING



Launched in July 2022 with one new team member, our Volunteer Programme made huge strides in the first few months. Beyond trapping roles, we also explored new options for volunteers as we know that many people wish to help us from time to time with their specialist skills. Having researched volunteer motivations and needs, we developed systems for recruitment, training, support, and safety for bringing new people into our team. Our new programme has flourished, doubling volunteers and projects across many areas of our organisation. With over 100 active volunteers contributing almost 1000 hours, our volunteer team now spans various activities, from trapping to bird monitoring, photography, trap box assembly, riparian planting, and office support. It is wonderful to hear volunteers express a greater connection to the natural world and to have found a sense of belonging in their community through their volunteering connections. Looking ahead, we anticipate growth to a team of two, deepening our community bonds in the coming year.

23



Volunteer hours  
donated for bird  
monitoring

212



Volunteer hours  
donated - Other

7,864



Landowner  
Volunteer Hours

780



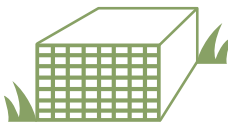
No. of landowners/  
properties engaged

34



No. of Community  
Groups Engaged

3,604



Traps added to  
TrapNZ by TFBT  
& community

## TANGATA WHENUA, COMMUNITY CONSERVATION GROUPS, BACKYARD TRAPPERS, LANDOWNERS AND LAND MANAGERS



Our gratitude extends to the incredible individuals and community conservation groups who've fervently supported or partnered with us—far too numerous to name individually yet deserving of a monumental thank you. Without them, our vision of connected people and landscapes with healthy forests and flourishing indigenous wildlife from the Kaipara Harbour to the Pacific Coast could not be the reality that it is. Their contributions, from initially embracing our mission to maintaining frequently checked traps whilst continually enhancing their skills and sharing their knowledge, are an ongoing source of generosity. It's the strengthening of biodiversity, community connection and commitment to ongoing learning, which is slowly but surely, gaining a flourishing environment for us all to co-exist in with our indigenous wildlife.





## MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION



What an incredible year. Alongside our CEO, Craig Presland, who led our team through the year, we welcomed 10 new team members, including two new positions within our Management and Administration team to support Finance, and Human Resources. By June, we had grown to a team of 25 people, so both roles have been kept very busy! With two new Senior Managers starting in July 2022, our team hit the ground running with invigorating enthusiasm, strengthening our new leadership team of five. Our growth in capacity and capability has been well supported by our invaluable team of Team and Field Administrators who make sure we stay connected and our operation runs smoothly.

We have been impressed but not surprised at our team's collective achievements due to their passion and skill in what they do - but it's not all been an internal focus by any means. Building on our connections, we have engaged with new people and business over the year who are excited to support our vision. A significant landmark has been to set the foundations for shared planning with tangata whenua, alongside Ngāti Manuhiri and Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara. Our team welcome to Te Aroha Pa marae by Ngāti Rongo in June was an unforgettable day, and one to be treasured.



## HIGHLIGHTS

### Kiwi Translocation

In mid-March, a collaborative effort involving Ngāti Manuhiri the mana whenua of the sacred Maunga Tamahunga, The Forest Bridge Trust, Tamahunga Trappers, and the Department of Conservation culminated in the successful translocation of ten kiwi from Motuora Island to Maunga Tamahunga.

Since joining the project in 2021, The Forest Bridge Trust has worked to establish a 6,000-hectare predator controlled buffer zone around Tamahunga. Ongoing volunteer support has facilitated trap infrastructure upgrades and the management of trail camera networks.

All ten birds are thriving in their new habitat. The future goal is to supplement the founder population and re-establish kiwi across the maunga, restore the natural balance of ecosystems and enhance biodiversity.

### A New Education Programme For Young People

Funding support from Auckland Council allowed The Forest Bridge Trust to partner with Springboard, to create a new 10 week conservation focussed course for 21 young people outside of the mainstream education system.

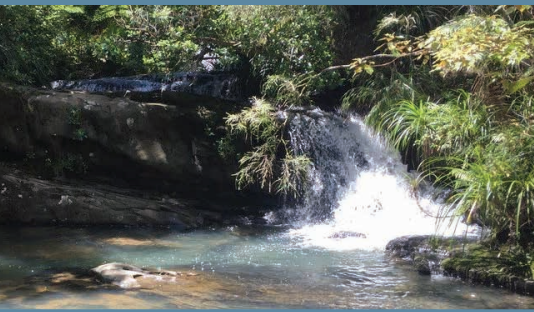
### Community Follow Up

A pilot aftercare programme was devised to trial in 2023, detailing specific touch points for new trappers and a re-engagement process for historically engaged landowners. The first half-year results are showing an impressive increase in the Trap Catch Frequency (TCF) data.

### Our Volunteering Programme

In July 2022 we launched our new Volunteer Programme which successfully doubled the number of volunteers and projects. By the end of June 2023, we had over 100 active volunteers who have contributed around 1000 hours of their precious and valued time.

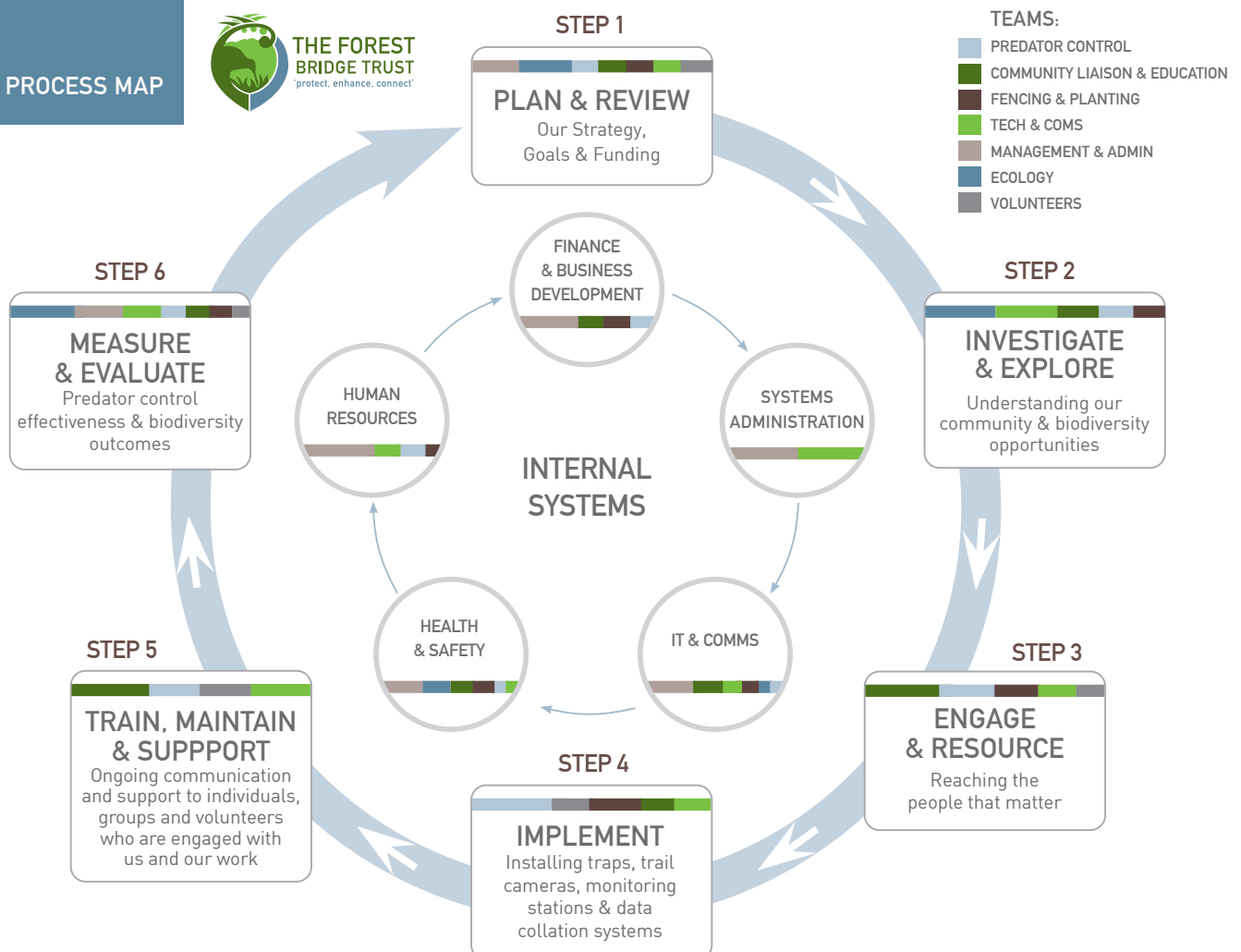




# OUR PEOPLE

Our team at TFBT work remotely from home when not at a field site, so it has been important for us to ensure that every team member's contribution is valued, and that we understand the different roles and input that combine to achieve our goals and vision. Through team workshops and consultation, we mapped the actions team members and volunteers regularly undertake and collated them into 6 process steps, supported by our Services Team and internal systems. This really affirmed for us that everyone has a part to play across the different stages of our work, no matter what our job descriptions or voluntary contribution may be. Communication and teamwork are key to our success, and we are proud to share this Process Map with you, as our stakeholders.

2023  
TFBT PROCESS MAP





# WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT US

"We first thought that the vision of having a corridor for kiwi to move freely and safely from the west coast to the east coast was the main goal, but quickly realised that the "corridor" meant so much more.... We named our family project the Mangatu Wilderness Project. We started an intensive trapping program and immediately asked if TFBT would be interested in helping. We have found that all the staff we have dealt with to be very helpful and friendly with a vast array of knowledge, especially going the extra mile when the cyclone hit to see if we were ok."

**Colin & Carol Beddow,**  
**The Mangatu Wilderness Project**

"The impact that the Forest Bridge Trust defenders programme has had on our students is immense. We now have students actively dedicating their own time to trapping and recording their catches within the school environment and they feel a real sense of purpose in their mahi."

**Kerrin Jamieson,**  
**Leigh School Principle**

"We could not have achieved what we have without The Forest Bridge's help and support. It honestly has been massive! The Forest Bridge Trust was checking in, seeing how we were going, and we were excited to update them every time. There was a true sense of purpose and achievement together. Fast forward a year and we have had banded rail, bittern, kaka and fairy tern sightings, and recently a kiwi footprint too! They are some of, if not the most endangered birds in our area."

**Paula Griffin,**  
**Tumanako Hope Farm**

"I first reached out to The Forest Bridge Trust in July last year... Cam and his team set up two traplines... Virginia set up biodiversity studies including e-DNA testing and bat monitoring - yes, we have bats!!! Karen recruited a volunteer group to monitor and maintain the traps and Michelle wrote a letter of support to the QEII National Trust.. None of this could have happened without the advice, support, aroha and plain hard work from all the amazing people at TFBT. Without fail they are each of them enthusiastic and excited about their work and, above all, kind, caring and empathetic. Alex has a pet eel up at the bush and has even found a rare plant! They have become part of our whanau."

**Lynley Hunter,**  
**Rata Bush**

"As a primary trained teacher, it was one of the best proposed plans I've ever seen. It took our kids on a journey that challenged them, gave them new experiences and exposed them to a wider awareness of the world around them. I believe that we need to expose our young people to a huge variety of meaningful experiences that widen their world and get them to think beyond familiar and comfortable pathways ..This programme did that.. we have invested something and on both sides of the fence, learned something about ourselves or the world around us... that's the gold that sits with this programme.."

**Dan Gray,**  
**General Manager, Springboard**





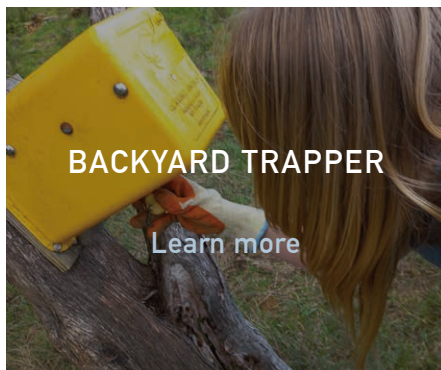


## HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you love our work, the way we work, and the gains we are making, then join us to create a lasting legacy, where our friends and family, and the generations to come, can enjoy the same flourishing ecosystem we are collectively protecting and restoring.

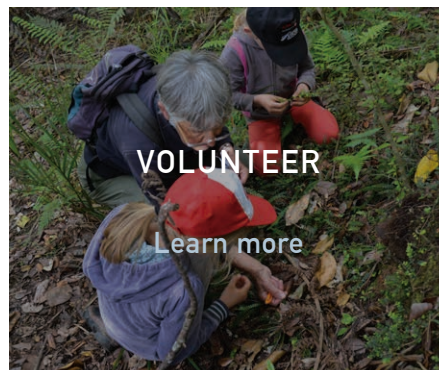
Contact us now to volunteer, trap, donate or sponsor! Your contribution makes a difference!

[admin@theforestbridgetrust.org.nz](mailto:admin@theforestbridgetrust.org.nz)



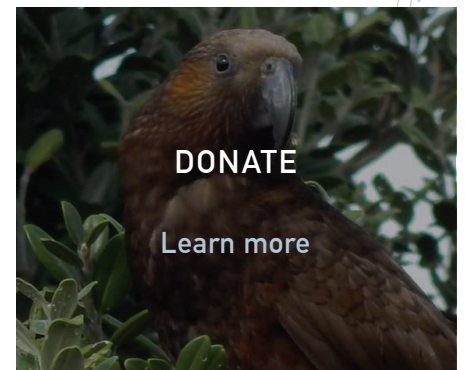
BACKYARD TRAPPER

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VOLUNTEER

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