Picton Dawn Chorus
Restoring our native birdlife together.

A. PROPOSAL

Our central proposal is to enter a long-term partnership with Council by engaging in the planting and maintenance of native trees and plants throughout the community land in the Picton basin.

Assuming success, there may then be opportunity to expand this activity to other community land and volunteer groups elsewhere in the Marlborough province. We ourselves could cover Korimiko. With more distant locations, we could assist and advise neighbourhood planting groups to get started.

We ask Council as our proposed partner to commit to supplying us with appropriate plants that will:

(a) Provide nourishing food sources for the birdlife;
(b) Enhance the natural beauty of the local environment.

Our Ngahere Planting Group, one of the five operating groups of PDC, will provide all the labour. We believe that we can engage more than 50 volunteers in planting activity - not everyone at PDC enjoys trapping bird predators as an activity.

Over time, and subject of course to satisfactory performance, we would like PDC's Ngahere Planting Group to be the Council's preferred workforce for native planting throughout our rohe.

We would prefer this partnership to be entered into by way of a long term (5-10 years) agreement, and supported by a detailed planting and maintenance plan drawn up in conjunction with Parks & Open Spaces staff.

Our proposal is designed to conform and align closely with the strategic vision, objectives and policies of the 2021 Victoria Domain Reservation Management Plan ("VDRMP").

We acknowledge and respect the value of the land to the Te Atiawa iwi and their kaitiakitanga role. We are in contact with Sylvie Filipo, Environmental Manager at the Te Atiawa trust and Renee Love, Marae Coordinator. We will work closely with them,

B. BENEFITS

(a) Birdlife

The project will be designed to provide a year-round menu for native birds, by augmenting existing plant species with absent or poorly represented species. The desired outcome is to enable our birdlife to flourish with an improved diet.

(b) Aesthetics

Beautification of our natural environment will be a guiding factor in our planting scheme.

(c) Social Capital

As a well established organisation we already have a wealth of knowledge and a network of relationships (whānaungatanga) between our society and our community. We are no strangers to large-scale volunteer-based projects and will be able to utilise existing relationships in the community to accomplish the designated planting projects.

(d) Inclusion of our Elder Population

Although there are plenty of young legs in PDC, the majority of our volunteer base consists of retired older people. Our volunteers enjoy great physical and mental health benefits from being out in nature while checking our traplines and enjoying our other group activities. Our organisation provides our community with an opportunity to foster whanaungatanga (kinship) and friendships, while taking care of our natural environment.

(e) Education Benefits

Investment in the future generations.

(f) Financial Benefits

We believe that effective planting in designated areas will, over time, permanently reduce the costs of spraying weeds and mowing - all the endlessly repetitive 'Groundhog Day' stuff.

In the short run, supplying us with an adequate number of plants may marginally increase the Council's budget, but in the long run there will be a very worthwhile payoff.

C. COSTS

We seek sufficient funding to purchase some planting tools and an administrative allowance. A total of $5,000 would suffice for these purposes.

But the funds are not a deal-breaker.

We acknowledge that weather-related events have caused a huge amount of damage to infrastructure and roads in Marlborough, and that Council and its ratepayers face the heavy financial consequences of all the essential remedial work that needs to be done as their first priority.

Our project is not essential, but perhaps could be categorised as 'nice to do'. We acknowledge that there will necessarily be a limit to the amount of direct funding and indirect funding (via Parks and Open Spaces budget for plants) that Council could afford to support our proposal.

D. ALIGNMENT WITH THE VICTORIA DOMAIN RESERVES MANAGEMENT PLAN ("VDRMP")

We have studied, understand and accept the objectives and policies of the VDRMP (attached as Appendix A) in formulating our detailed planting and maintenance plan for planting on Victoria Domain, and acknowledge their applicability to other community land areas.

Biodiversity

The VDRMP section D highlights that *"ecosystems have been degraded by introduced plant and animal pests over a number of years"*.

Our existing activity has largely focussed to date on eliminating introduced animal pests. The proposed Ngahere project will address the need to restore native trees and plants, and will contribute to long-term carbon sequestration.

We applaud Council's intent in the Proposed Environment Plan to support through partnership and community involvement in the protection and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity. PDC Ngahere group is the perfect fit to advance that involvement.

We also acknowledge the VDRMP concern *"with planting of species not endemic to the area".*

Endemically sourced plants (with DNA adapted to local conditions) are more likely to grow well.

The VDRMP, under the section on Kaitiakitanga, also refers to loss of mahinga kai (the term relates to the traditional value of food resources and their ecosystems, as well as practices involved in producing, procuring, and protecting these resources).

Te Atiawa have traditionally gathered food from the Victoria Domain reserves and have an interest in maintaining the indigenous integrity from that point of view. We acknowledge and support Te Atiawa's interest, and to advance with close consultation and cooperation matauranga (Maori knowledge) in the reserves.

E. ELEMENTS OF A DETAILED PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

Victoria Domain planting projects will be developed and implemented with respectful consideration for the rights, history and culture of Te Atiawa iwi as occupiers of the rohe for many centuries. Te Atiawa protocols for "accidental" discovery of taonga and koiwi will be adhered to, and planting will be restricted to endemic species using locally sourced plants. On-going work will be reviewed regularly with the Te Atiawa Trust Environmental Manager (Sylvie Filipo), and participation of iwi in planting activities will be welcomed.

The planting group will keep in contact with Council's Parks and Open Spaces staff during the development of plans for new planting areas. Progress reports will be maintained for PDC records and reviews, and these will be shared with the Council.

Planning and reporting will cover maintenance of plants until they are established. It is intended that the GPS positions of new plants will be recorded to facilitate reviews of growth and maintenance. We intend to enter our tree and plant GPS positions and identity data into the Council's asset management system, as discussed with Parks and Open Spaces leader Jane Tito.

Tree species found in regrowth areas such as Victoria Domain represent a small sample of the diversity that made up the native forest that originally grew there. Similarly, the range of food for native birds provided by the regrowth species is limited.

PDC's Ngahere Planting Group has designed a project to prototype tree planting that will augment existing regrowth species to provide year-round food for native birds returning to areas where predator numbers have been reduced by trapping.

Prior to planting, a randomised survey will identify existing species and their densities. Species that provide bird food during months not covered by the re-growth species will be selected for planting.

A Species Selection Chart has been created that will simplify the process of identifying endemic species capable of filling the menu gaps. A draft version of the chart can be found in Appendix B.

It is envisaged that the project will provide a model for further planting of regrowth areas.

Areas within Victoria Domain that are not required for community activities but currently grassed will be given priority consideration for native planting. Examples are the grassed areas adjacent to Endeavour Park including the strip between the drainage channel and the fenceline of the subdivision to the northeast. Planting these areas will have the added benefit of eliminating the need for ongoing mowing.

Urban Waitohi Picton/Waikawa and the surrounding bush-covered land together encompass a variety of soil types and conditions, and settings which may preclude planting some species because of their dimensions or habits. Soil conditions, site exposure and appropriateness to the setting, are among parameters bearing upon selection of native species best suited for sub-areas of the wider region/rohe.

PDC sees value in commissioning the creation of a region-wide planting plan by a suitably qualified person or agency. The plan would enable all participants in native planting, including private property owners, to achieve a consistent and rewarding outcome for the community.

F. BACKGROUND

Picton Dawn Chorus is a community-led society fighting for our native birdlife, and for the restoration of their natural habitat.

Our vision is "Picton and its surrounds are a haven for native birds".

Our mission statement is "The community working together to restore our native birds by removing introduced predators". Thus we are all about protecting and restoring birdlife, and also enhancing their habitat and environment.

We won the 2023 Cawthron Marlborough Environment Award for Community Innovation.

The Cawthron judges said: “The skilled and energetic team at Picton Dawn Chorus have mobilised volunteers and households to trap pests and bring back native birds. They are constantly thinking of new ways to do things, encouraging and engaging with volunteers. The judges applauded Picton Dawn Chorus’s community-driven response to deal with a degraded environment and the results they’ve achieved.”

We operate under a 5-year operational plan that was created in 2020 by Andrew Macalister, of R&D Environmental Ltd, which encompasses a rohe measuring 4,815ha. The land owners in this area include MDC, DoC, Te Atiawa, Rangitane, Port Marlborough and private landowners.

Last year we were successful with our 2022 Annual Plan submission to Council, seeking funding for trapping on community land within our rohe.
This may be an opportune moment to offer some year-on-year comparisons to demonstrate our growth.

At the time of the 2022 submission we had 45 traplines, 2,352 traps and had removed 14,000+ pests. This year we now have 75 traplines, 2,764 traps (of these, 837 are set out in the key priority area of Victoria Domain) with nearly 16,000 pests being removed.

With your support we believe that we are making a significant difference and would like to take this opportunity to thank our Council for your ongoing support.

G. SUBMISSION AUTHORS

Bryn Evans, Board Chair
Ed Pitts, Board Member
James Wilson, Board Member
Dave Johnstone, Ngahere Planting Group Leader
Don McDonald, Ngahere Planting Group Leader
Pip Macfarlane, General Manager
Zoe Aitchison, Administrator

APPENDIX A

Objectives and Policies of the Victoria Domain Reserve Management Plan.

1. Te Whakaaro Tahi/Partnerships

Objective
1.1 The Council, Tangata Whenua Iwi and the community partnering in the management of the Reserves.

Policies
1.2 Support initiatives to maintain, protect and enhance values of the Reserves where these are feasible and consistent with the Plan's vision, objectives and policies.

1.4 Encourage and work with Tangata Whenua Iwi, the wider community and other volunteer groups who wish to work with the Council to:
(a) develop and maintain appropriate recreation resources and opportunities; and
(b) enhance biodiversity health and resilience.

2. Kaitiakitanga/Guardianship

Objective
2.1 Tangata Whenua Iwi are able to maintain ahi kā roa through exercising kaitiakitanga in the management of the Reserves and providing for their hauora (long term wellbeing).

Policies
2.2 Maintain and enhance the mauri/health of the Reserves.
2.5 Use Māori place names in conjunction with English names on signage and mapping.

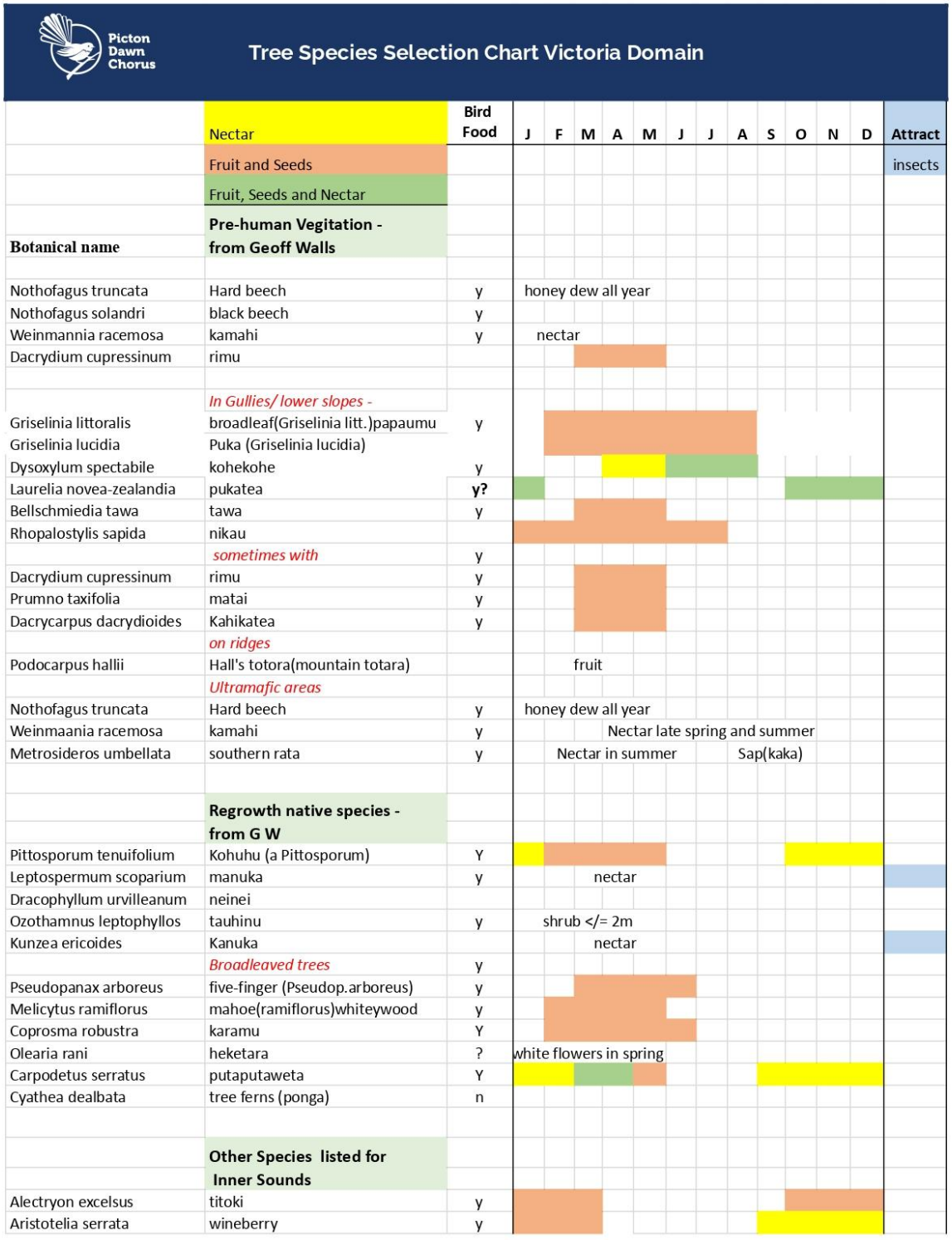
4. Te Taiao/The Natural World

Objectives
4.1 Indigenous biodiversity on the Reserves is improved in area, extent and state.
4.2 Enhanced mauri of Reserves through improved indigenous biodiversity.
4.3 Understand the area, extent and state of indigenous biodiversity in and adjacent to the Reserves to:

(a) enable the assessment of the impacts on biodiversity health from various recreational activities or other uses;
(b) determine the threats to indigenous biodiversity; and
(c) how the threats should be managed.

4.4 Prepare a restoration strategy to enhance indigenous biodiversity that will include planting opportunities and address pest species.
4.5 Provide opportunities to share information about the nature of indigenous biodiversity in the Reserves, including through partnerships, supporting and encouraging the efforts of communities and individuals and through interpretation panels.
4.7 Use of local genetic stock will be preferred where practicable, in the re-establishment or restoration of indigenous vegetation and habitats.
4.8 Support the development of riparian corridors of indigenous vegetation along Endeavour Stream and Hampden Street Stream (where these flow through the Reserves) to allow the
establishment of native ecosystems and to provide wildlife habitat and linkages to other areas of indigenous vegetation.
4.9 Progressively remove pest or exotic species (plant and animal), particularly where these are affecting the health of indigenous biodiversity or are causing a nuisance.

APPENDIX B


Picton Dawn Chorus
Tree Species Selection Chart Victoria Domain
Nectar
Fruit and Seeds
Fruit, Seeds and Nectar
Pre-human Vegitation - from Geoff Walls
Botanical name
Bird Food
J F M A M J J A S O N D
Attract
insects
Nothofagus truncata Hard beech y honey dew all year
Nothofagus solandri black beech y
Weinmannia racemosa kamahi y nectar
Dacrydium cupressinum rimu
In Gullies/ lower slopes -
Griselinia littoralis broadleaf(Griselinia litt.)papaumu y
Griselinia lucidia Puka (Griselinia lucidia)
Dysoxylum spectabile kohekohe y
Laurelia novea-zealandia pukatea y?
Bellschmiedia tawa tawa y
Rhopalostylis sapida nikau
sometimes with y
Dacrydium cupressinum rimu y
Prumno taxifolia matai y
Dacrycarpus dacrydioides Kahikatea y
on ridges
Podocarpus hallii Hall's totora(mountain totara) fruit
Ultramafic areas
Nothofagus truncata Hard beech y honey dew all year
Weinmaania racemosa kamahi y Nectar late spring and summer
Metrosideros umbellata southern rata y Nectar in summer Sap(kaka)
Regrowth native species - from G W
Pittosporum tenuifolium Kohuhu (a Pittosporum) Y
Leptospermum scoparium manuka y nectar
Dracophyllum urvilleanum neinei
Ozothamnus leptophyllos tauhinu y shrub </= 2m
Kunzea ericoides Kanuka nectar
Broadleaved trees y
Pseudopanax arboreus five-finger (Pseudop.arboreus) y
Melicytus ramiflorus mahoe(ramiflorus)whiteywood y
Coprosma robustra karamu Y
Olearia rani heketara ? white flowers in spring
Carpodetus serratus putaputaweta Y
Cyathea dealbata tree ferns (ponga) n
Other Species listed for Inner Sounds
Alectryon excelsus titoki y
Aristotelia serrata wineberry y

Coprosma linarifolia	mikimiki (yellow wood)	y	
Cordyline australis	ti kouka (cabbage tree)	y	
Cordyline indivisa	toi (mountain cabbage tree)	y	
Cordyline banksii	forest cabbage tree	Y	
Corynocarpos laevigatus	karaka	n	
Cyathea medullaris	mamaku, black tree fern (tallest)	n	
Dicksonia fibrosa	wheki-ponga (medium size)	n	
Dodonaea viscosa	akeake	n?	?
Elaeocarpus dentatus	hinau	y	
Elaeocarpus hookerianus	pokaka	y	? ? ?
Fuchsia excortitcata	kotukutuku (tree fushia)	y	
Hedycarya arborea	pigeonwood	y	
Knightia excelsa	rewarewa (NZ honeysuckle)	y	
Lophomyrtus obcordata	rohutu	y	? ?
Macropiper excelsum	kawakawa	n	
Melicope ternata	wharangi	y	
Myoporum laetum	ngaio	y	
Myrsine australis	mapou	y	
Myrsine salicina	toro	n	
Olearia paniculata	akiraho	n	
Olearia rani	heketara	y?	
Pennantia corymbosa	kaikomako	n	
Phyllocladus trichomanoides	tanekaha (cellery pine)	y?	
Pittosporum eugenioides	tarata (lemonwood)	y	
Pittosporum tenuifolium	kohuhu	Y	
Podocarpus totara	lowland totora	y	
Prumnopitys ferruginea	miro	y	
Pseudopanax crassifolius	lancewood	y	
Raukaua edgerleyi	raukawa	y	
Sophora chatamica	Coastal kowhai	y	
Sophora molloyl	Cook Strait kowhai	n	
Streblus heterophyllus	turepo (silver-leaved milk tree)	y	
Sysygium maire	swamp maire		
	Small trees 2 - 5m	n	
Ascarina lucidia	hutu	n	
Brachyglottis repanda	rangiora	y	
Coprosma robusta	karamu	Y	
Coprosma repens	taupata	y	
Coprosma grandiflora	raurekau,kanono	y	
Coprosma lucida	shining karamu(Coprosma lucida)	y	
Coprosma propinqua	mingimingi(Coprosma propinqua)	y	
Coprosma robustra	karamu	y	
Cordyline banksii	ti ngahere, forest cabbage tree	y	see above
Dicksonia fibrosa	wheki-ponga	n	
Dacophyllum filifolium	inaka	n	
Dacophyllum urvilleanum	neinei	n	
Hebe stricta	koromiko	Y?	flowers fruit and seeds
Leucopogon fasciculatus	soft mingimingi	y	flowers and fruit
Lophomyrtus bullata	ramarama	n	
Melicope simplex	poataniwha	n	
Olearia avicenifolia	grey tree daisy	y?	flowers fluffy seeds
Pseudowintera axillaris	lowland horopito	y	fruit
Pseudowintera colorata	horopito, pepperwood	y	
	Shrubs 1-2m	y	

Alseuosmia pusilla	horopito look-alike	n	?
Carmichaelia arborea	south Island broom	y	
Coprosma rahmnoides	scrub coprosma	y	?
Gaultheria antipoda	snowberry	n	
Hebe stenophylla	koromiko	n	
Helichrysum lanceolatum	niniao	n	
Leptecophylla juniperina	prickly mingimingi	y	fruit
Ozothamnus leptophyllus	tauhinu	n	
Plagianthus divaricatus	saltmarsh ribbonwood	n	
	On W about N list but		
	not on others		
Coprosma grandifolia	kanono	Y	
Hoheria augustifolia	narrow leaf lacebark	Y	nectar
Melicytus lanceolatus	mahoe-wao	y	
Schefflera digitata	pate	y	
	W about N also have:		
	climbers		
	herbaceous plants		
	ferns		
Phormium tenax	NZ flax		
	Mirama has also		
Ripogonum scandens	Kareao (Supplejack)	y	
Rubus australis	Tataramoa (Bush lawyer 2 species)	y	
Rubus cissoides	Tataramoa		
Dave Johnstone 230502			