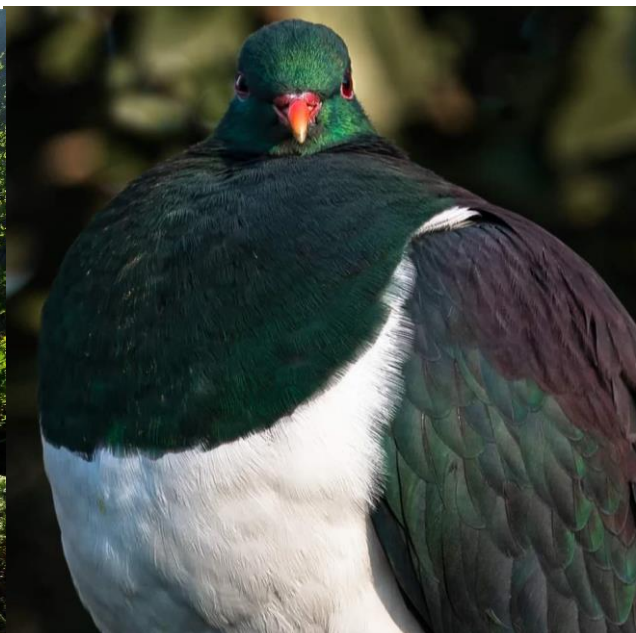


Wild Waikawa 8 May 2023 MDC Council Submission by Nige & Mish



Wild
Waikawa
NURTURING NATURE



Purpose of this paper:

We have three purposes for this submission:

1. Mish and Nigel would like to thank the Marlborough District Council for its support through the Significant Natural Area partnership, Jobs for Nature & Working for Nature/Mahi mō te Taiao grant.
2. To provide an update to the Council on Wild Waikawa at the submission hearings and finally
3. To encourage Council to do more in the environmental space

Background:

Wild Waikawa is located at 268 Boons Valley in Waikawa.

- The property is a 200-hectare Significant Natural Area in private ownership.
- The land contains Waitohi's two highest points on its title including the sacred mountain of Te Atiawa Marae Te Maunga o Piri Piri.
- There is much taonga/treasures on the land including two species of Pūpū-rangi (native carnivorous snail), Ngārara (Marlborough Sounds Green Gecko), Karearea (NZ native falcon), Karuwai (South Island robin) and a huge array of virgin podocarp birds, trees, and flowers.
- An extensive pest control programme involving 500 traps has removed more than 1300 predators from the land over the last 2.5 years.
- More than 14,600 wilding pines have been taken out and over 1000 wasp nests eradicated.



- A native nursery has been developed and 20,000 native plants have now been grown from seed source off the land and more than 4000 native plants including Rimu, Matai, Nikau, Kahikatea and Totara have been planted.



The landowners have invested considerable time, energy, and finances into this restoration mahi. Over the last two years, Council has provided support through its SNA partnership fund, Jobs for Nature programme and its Nature/Mahi mō te Taiao grant.

In addition to this support, Te Atiawa, Waikawa Marae, Department of Conservation, Picton Dawn Chorus, Tress that Count and Community

volunteers have all assisted in various ways over the last two years.

Mish and Nigel would like to express their gratitude to the Marlborough Council Biodiversity team who continue to do extraordinary work in our eyes. Their knowledge, expertise and motivation are critical to the environmental mahi across Marlborough.

Considerations:

In our current situation we are seeing more frequent climate change weather events, rising sea levels and watching a young generation hear an increasingly damning view on our planet's health. We acknowledge the Council has limited resources and is in a tricky spot between what it must do and what it would like to do. We also recognise that the real power and change will come from the people of the community and encouraging all of us to make changes to how we live and what we can do individually to help.



We would like to advocate for the Council to place more emphasis on Environmental work across Marlborough and respectively suggest several ideas for Council to consider going forward:



1. More investment in its own whenua. MDC is a significant landowner. Increasing Tree planting, weed and pest control on this land would be a significant leadership signal from Council and increase the connections between different natural habitats across Marlborough rural and urban landscapes by providing ecological corridors. Specifically, this is about tackling the pests and invasive weeds that threaten our native species.
2. Amplify the work of Mike Aviss and team by prioritising sites on private land and working with private landowners to do more to protect and restore areas of high value biodiversity.
3. Supporting greater community conservation by offering increased tools, resources, and funding support for those many current and future community groups.

Recommendations

We would like to recommend that Council prioritises developing an ambitious Biodiversity strategy that would stretch our community and Council to do significantly more in the environmental space. A strategy that considers Iwi and community suggestions and that leans in on the expertise of the many specialists in this field.

Such a strategy could help the Council understand the cost of stepping up its environmental mahi. It would help the Council prioritise the locations and type of mahi that needed and set some lofty goals so a significant and meaningful improvement can be made to the environmental health of Marlborough over the next few years.

As part of developing this idea further we would like to invite the full Council, key staff, and key partners to visit for a hui at Wild Waikawa in the Spring of 2023.

