

APRIL 2021 ~ MARCH 2022

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22



**RUAMAHANGA**  
RESTORATION TRUST



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**Ruamahanga Restoration Trust**  
**Registered Charity CC56547**

## MESSAGE FROM TRUSTEES

2021 not only saw increased engagement with local schools and community groups but also a wider social presence through our engagement on social media. As a result, the Ruamahanga Restoration Trust is truly established with a name and reputation that is now well-known and respected within the local community.

2021 was the second year of our signature SCHOOLS BEHIND OUR RIVER project designed to engage local school students in the restoration and protection of bio-diverse ecosystems within the wider catchment. The project, which is unique to the Ruamahanga Restoration Trust, encourages teachers and students to get embrace environmental conservation efforts and our activities included a class-based restoration planting at Rathkeale College, rural riparian plantings in support of a local farmers, along with support for school plantings onsite at Mauriceville School, Opaki, Solway Primary, Gladstone School, Douglas Park School, Kahutara Primary, and Carterton South End School. We are pleased to report that we've increased participation from eight schools in 2021 to 18 in the 2022 calendar year.

In addition, the Trust successfully initiated and assembled a Predator Tracking and Trapping Kit programme coordinated in collaboration with EnviroSchools Wairarapa and Pukaka National Wildlife Centre. We also invested in the purchase of eDNA water testing kits from WilderLabs, which are shared with participating schools.

Our fundraising efforts also increased significantly, thanks largely to the support received from Masterton Trust House, One Foundation, Eastern & Central Community Trust, Macarthy Trust, and the Lloyd Morrison Trust.

As trustees, we recognise there is still a long way to go and that we have only just begun our journey both upstream and downstream. We are excited about the possibilities and look forward to introducing new initiatives and engaging more students, landowners, and community groups in our restoration activities.

Michael R. Birch  
Campbell H.C. McLean  
Christopher J. Morrison  
Melissa Clark-Reynolds.







## MISSION

The purpose of the Trust is to promote the restoration and protection of waterways and bio-diverse ecosystems that support indigenous flora and fauna within the Ruamahanga River catchment.

The Trust also offers support to schools and teachers across the Wairarapa by providing activities and resources that encourage students to respect and protect their environmental heritage for themselves and future generations.

Our aim is to work with students, teachers, landowners, community groups, and local government to reverse the decline of natural wilderness and wetlands within the Wairarapa and to encourage the protection and return of endangered fauna and flora, and to address and mitigate the effects of climate change.

## 2021 DELIVERABLES

In 2021, our funding support helped the Trust achieve the following deliverables:

- provided 9 schools with native plants
- sponsored one Water Analysis Kit
- distributed 20 copies of Nature Heroes
- assembled 6 predator kits for schools
- purchased 108 eDNA test kits for schools
- supported riparian plantings on 2 farms
- supported a Mokonoko field trip
- contributed 342 volunteer man-hours



## WHAT WE DO

For our part, the Trust contributes and coordinates manpower, equipment resources, and product support to schools that have teachers and classrooms willing to get involved. We also support and engage local contractors and environmental consultants who advise us on flora and fauna, predator trapping, restoration planting sites, and early Maori history.

Funding supports the purchase of monitoring equipment, predator traps, native seedlings, local transport, outdoor tools, school science kits, and smart technologies that help engage students in with monitoring, trapping, plantings, data collection, and media communications.



## LONG TERM VISION

Our scope of work is aimed at benefiting all schools and communities within the wider district, reaching rivers, creeks, and nearby wetlands, linking farms and local schools.

As a not-for-profit charity, our funding also supports local contractors, schools, small businesses, and local iwi within the Wairarapa with the goal to create new jobs and career opportunities in conservation, water management, predator control, restoration plantings, environmental sciences, and regenerative farming.

One long-term goal is to create a corridor of native bush running the length of the Ruamahanga River as a flightpath for birds to and from the Tararuas. Ultimately, this requires inspiration, leadership, and engagement to help farmers, our community, and future generations.



# MEET OUR 2021 PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Many thousands of new trees and plants in the ground: many hundreds of new followers and young environmentalists on a pathway for change.



MAURICEVILLE



KAHUTARA



KURA KAUPA O WAIRARAPA



CARTERTON EARTH SCHOOL



DOUGLAS PARK



GLADSTONE



SOLWAY PRIMARY



RATHKEALE COLLEGE



MĀKOURA COLLEGE

# FINANCIALS: 2021-22

## Statement of Service Performance

What key activities did the charity do during the year?

Description of outputs (key activities)

Description of outputs (key activities)	Quantity of outputs	
	Current year	Last year
Class-based Restoration Plantings	\$10,402.00	2 days
Assembly and distribution of Predator Monitoring & Trapping Kits	\$9,063.00	\$2,438.29
Grants	0	\$2,875.00

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### Statement of receipts and payments

	Current year	Last year
<b>Operating receipts (money deposited into the bank account)</b>		
Donations, fundraising and grants	100365	10100
Fees and other receipts from members	0	0
Receipts from selling goods or providing services	0	0
Bank account interest and other investment income	16	0
Other receipts	300	2
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>\$100,681.00</b>	<b>\$10,102.00</b>
<b>Less operating payments (money withdrawn from you bank account)</b>		
Fundraising costs	1553	0
Payments to employees and volunteers	1190	0
Payments related to providing goods or services	30022	13151
Grants and donations paid	0	2875
Other payments	358	236
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>\$33,123.00</b>	<b>\$16,262.00</b>
Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year	67558	-6160
Plus opening total of all bank accounts and cash on hand	-229	5931
<b>Closing total of all bank account balances and cash on hand</b>	<b>67329</b>	<b>-229</b>

### Statement of resources and commitments

#### Schedule of Resources

Other than amounts in the bank and on hand, what other significant resources (things you own) does the entity have? This includes any things it owns, such as land, buildings, vehicles or other equipment. You are only required to list **significant** resources. You are also required to report their value but only **if** it is practicable to obtain.

Description of significant resource	Source of value (if applicable)	This year	Last year
20 Planting spades	Levin Sawmakers, Invoice 353067	\$2,277.00	0

#### Notes

Basis of preparation

This Performance Report is prepared on a cash-basis in accordance with XRB's Tier 4 Simple Format Reporting Requirements. The charity is eligible to apply these requirements and has elected to do so.

Treatment of GST

All amounts are recorded on a GST inclusive basis



## PROJECT PLAN:

Local teachers, contractors, iwi, government agencies, and environmentalists all agree on the need to develop and manage activities that support teachers, students, and community volunteers.

To address this need, the Trust has created an **Eight-Step Plan**

### 1. CONSERVATION AWARD TROPHY

The Trust has initiated a scheme to provide participating schools—primary and secondary—with a unique hand-made Environmental Restoration Award Trophy that each school can award to a senior student who best demonstrates commitment and leadership around environmental conservation, restoration, or innovation.

The award will acknowledge a student's work and service in several areas including media communications, data collection, trapping, planting, product design, or general volunteering work. The award will be retained by the school and awarded at each prize giving, with the trophy winners from each school acknowledged in a media release issued by the Trust at the end of each school year.

The award will inspire students—particularly environment prefects—around workable goals and activities, both curricular and non-curricular. The aim being to offer practical solutions that engage students and equip them with the knowledge required for sharing their know-how and enthusiasm with other students, and to help inspire career path opportunities.



## 2. SCIENCE-BASED TESTING KITS

The Trust will continue to support and encourage the use of scientific methodology and analytical processes within schools to help encourage student curiosity and interest around challenges related to monitoring and recording local flora and fauna, including freshwater quality, soil health, biodiversity, and other farming-related data related to climate change and sustainable farming practices.

We believe that encouraging students to embrace the sciences will help prepare them for future challenges and new opportunities in agriculture and environment-related careers.

By sponsoring the **House of Science Water Analysis Kits** and by purchasing and distributing **WilderLab eDNA Multi-species Kits**, the Trust will gain better access to the teachers and students, making them more aware of our role in helping them develop a passion and reason for working together on conservation and restoration for the greater good of our community and environment.

In addition to providing direct access to students about their own relevant needs and concerns, our sponsorship also aims to encourage schools and users to upload water testing data from streams and rivers across the Wairarapa for sharing across the wider public network, including DOC and the Greater Wellington District Council.





### 3. TRACKING AND TRAPPING KITS

In 2021, the Trust purchased materials and supplies for six Predator Tracking and Trapping kits for distribution to local schools.

Valued at \$1000 each, each kit includes a set of safety instructions and manuals prepared by the **Pukaha Wildlife Centre** and **EnviroSchools Wairarapa**, who together provide workshop induction training and distribution.

By creating our own tracking and trapping kits for schools, we not only hope to raise awareness around the need for pest control and predator trapping but also to help monitor and measure the presence of native birds and other endangered species, including lizards. Seeing what's out there with the help of pre-inked tracking cards, chew cards, and trail cameras always ignites the student's enthusiasm.

In this regard, the Trust hopes to supply as many schools as possible with the resources needed to fund and implement monitoring and trapping programs. These activities are all conducted as part of the school curriculum and offer a holistic approach to study, addressing the need for data analysis, documentation, pest eradication and wildlife protection.





## 4. RESTORATION PLANTINGS

Our restoration planting work in 2022 will continue to support local schools establish their own pockets of native bush and it continues to engage students in the restoration of a unique lowland forest swamps and regrowth on the Rathkeale College Eco-Trail, where a number of spring-fed creeks feed into the Ruamahanga River providing a biodiverse habitat for indigenous fish species and serving as a protective forest canopy for native birds.

The **Eco-Trail** is home to original stands of ancient kahikatea and totara that pre-date European settlement — trees that are held in great esteem by Maori who once lived in the area. Ancestral stories and local Maori heritage are equally important to our understanding of the area's importance. These unique and biodiverse pockets of bush and wetland are key to the long-term health of our river system and are natural habitats for a range of indigenous freshwater fish and native birds.

Our aim is to continue our work on this special Eco-Trail site at Rathkeale—including the restoration of two disused sewage-treatment ponds—as areas of environmental heritage significance that a range of schools can visit to conduct outdoor field research.



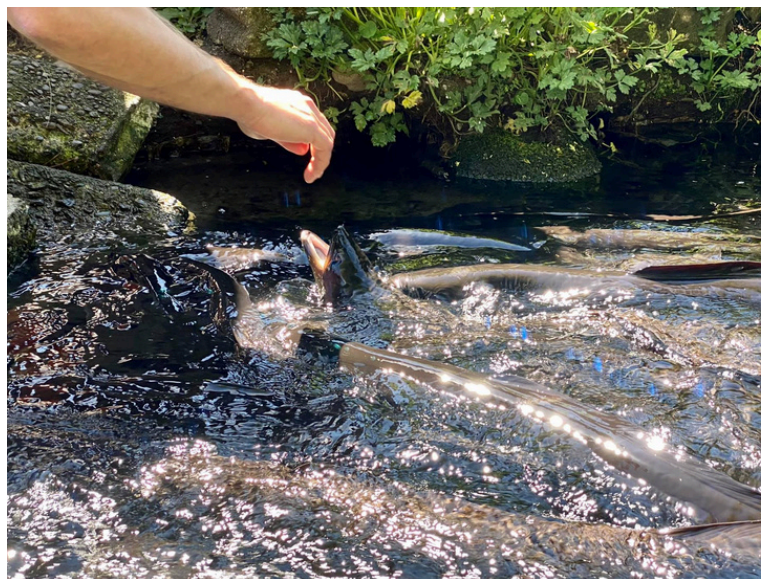
The ponds are part of our restoration planting plan in 2022 with the goal to plant some 2,000 flax and carex grasses along the inner rim of the ponds as a means to attract aquatic birdlife and provide nesting opportunities and protective shade for birdlife and fish species such as short and long fen eel, bullies and mudfish. This will be the first time that the ponds have been planted in 50 years and the project is a key step in helping establish the grounds as an open wildlife sanctuary for native birds on the corridor from Pukaha Mt Bruce.





These sites and activities will further provide opportunities for local schools to use these areas for scientific research and conservation study programs that benefit the wider community.

Our long-term plan extends to restoration planting areas of unproductive land between Rathkeale College and Mt Bruce as part of a goal to create pockets of native bush that when linked together form protective native bush corridors for birds from the Tararua Ranges and Pukaha, in the same way that Zealandia has encouraged the return of many bird species to Wellington.







We value and respect that all schools have a choice as to where and why they would like to plant native trees. In some cases, the schools may choose to plant public reserves or riparian strips on private farmland. Every location helps serve a purpose.

2022 will see the Trust continue to focus on plantings within habitats that provide opportunities for student-led research in conservation, land management and clean water protection. In tandem with these efforts, the trust hopes to encourage students to create their own new methods of study, to make their own discoveries, and create their own career paths.





## 5. SPECIAL EVENT DAYS

Whenever possible, fundraising activities will also support participation in special event days, such as Restoration Day, Moana Wetlands Discovery Day, World Fish Migration Day, Arbor Day and Conservation Week, etc.

Support will be offered to those activities planned or promoted by community group, such as **WP2K, Sustainable Wairarapa**, or the **Aorangi Restoration Trust**, along with any school activity that requests our support.



## 6. FIELD TRIPS

**Te Ao Māori** recognizes the need to consider the connectedness of all things including the past, present and future. In considering how our future and our community could be impacted by climate change transitions we must consider where we have come from, as well as the wellbeing of current and future generations. This means we must take an inclusive approach to understanding our place and our heritage over time.

The Trust organizes or helps fund field trips that support the concept of tiakitanga—being a good guardian or steward of the land and waterways—for the wellbeing of current and future generations of New Zealanders.



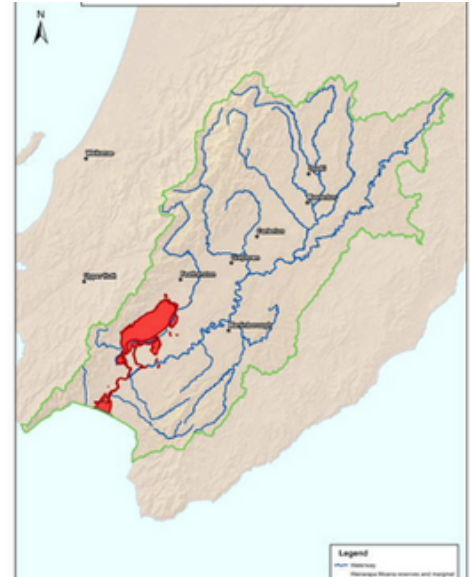


In consultation and with the participation of local iwi, we will develop or support field trip activities that invite teachers and students on field trips to natural heritage or historical sites connected to the Ruamahanga—or its tributaries—to help students understand how and why early Maori chose particular sites and how they worked with the land and its resources. This also helps address the values of **whanaungatanga** – being mindful of the relationship between all things, our connections to each other and how we connect to our land and manaakitanga – having a deep ethic of care towards people and the whenua, acknowledging their role in the ecosystem, and how they could be affected by future outcomes.

In this respect the Trust will liaise closely with local iwi to ensure the right decision makers are involved in the right decision-making process (tikanga), working collaboratively and inclusively to access the best ideas and information with collective effort (kotahitanga).







In November 2021, the Trust supported a field trip organized by organised by **Mokomoko CCEM** Program Coordinator, Sam Ludden. With the help of several teachers, Sam led a group of year 8 & 9 students from **Kura Kaupapa o Wairarapa** and **Mākoura College** on a river walk along the upper reaches of the Ruamahanga River. The trip was a highlight of the year for the Mokomoko program and turned out to be a real treat for the students, many of who had never connected with their awa in this way.

The Trust plans to continue working with Mokomoko with the aim to visit a number of number of sites and places of interest that provide stories about early Maori presence along the Ruamahanga and its tributaries. This includes everything from acquiring knowledge about early Maori and their use of available flora and fauna, to knowledge about archeological sites and local geology, to the study of native birdlife, fish species and tree species found in the area. Each field trips will consist of between 8-20 students, plus one iwi representative and a conservation expert or local historian for insight and knowledge about the area and environment.

As such, we hope to make younger people more aware of the historical and traditional uses around our local environmental heritage; to learn and understand the sustainable use of waterways and lowland forests, but also to share their own stories in a way that helps others appreciate the need to restore, protect and sustain our environment.



## 7. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project managers help coordinate activity planning and to provide leadership between the schools and environment groups. Schools are keen on engagement and activities, but they need coordination on tasks, so as to relieve the pressure or burden otherwise placed on teachers or other admin staff.

Given sufficient resources, the Trust sees an opportunity to lead with Schools Behind our River connecting like-minded community groups, schools, and local organizations with a program of activities that are accessible and open to all.

Schools Behind our River takes a holistic approach to encouraging students to actively participate in a number of activities, but someone has to help pull it all together with schools, students, teachers and parents. The task requires planning time and coordination.

The Trust also hopes to use the same project management skills to prepare the groundwork and designs for the establishment of a small Environmental Heritage Resource Centre that serves as a base for school students to visit and access, all within proximity to the Eco Trail at Rathkeale College; as a place that acknowledges the relationship of the area as whanaungatanga — including the connections between Maori and the first European settlers and how the landscape and environment evolved.

Our role will ensure that we and all involved follow the principles of tiakitanga, being a good guardian and considering the wellbeing of current and future generations, including acknowledging rangatiratanga by enabling Māori to exercise their role as kaitiaki, and to encourage students to seek career pathways in environmental heritage, conservation, sustainable farming, and earth sciences.

In 2021, the Trust used the project management role to form collaborative partnerships with **Pukaha Wildlife Centre**, **EnviroSchools**, **House of Science**, and **WP2K**.

In 2022, our project management efforts will extend to aligning our interests with local businesses such as **Urlar Organic Wines** (located on the alluvial flats of the Ruamahanga River) who have agreed to work with the Trust, using their vineyard site for community-led engagement around restoration work and fundraising activities.





## 8. CAREER PATHWAYS

The Trust hopes that Schools Behind Our River can ultimately shape and influence young careers and create new jobs by encouraging mentors from the farming, technology, science, and media sector to help school leavers prepare themselves for careers inspired by nature.

According to the draft report from the New Zealand Climate Change Commission, education, and science and innovation systems are critical for ensuring low emissions economic growth, adding that the education system needs to ensure that New Zealanders are set up with the skills that are needed in the labour market.

“Aotearoa is known as a country of innovators and problem solvers. Being an early mover in researching new technologies and adopting existing technologies will benefit not just the climate, but the economy and wellbeing of New Zealanders. This is particularly true in sectors where Aotearoa is traditionally innovative, such as agriculture.”

Where possible, the Trust will try to help students seek out or create new job opportunities ranging from conservation work to predator control, development of new technologies related to emissions or agricultural practices or work in native forestry or regenerative farming.

The Climate Change Commission states that as the country transitions to climate-resilient low emissions future “new skills, knowledge and capability will be needed in the workforce. Ensuring the workforce’s skills match what is required in the labour market is key to ensuring that businesses can innovate, adopt new technologies or commercialise new ideas.”



## A BIG ASK

In 2022, the Trust will continue its support of its first 9 schools and plans to invite the participation of at least **11 additional schools** as marked\*, leaving a further eight schools still to be added.

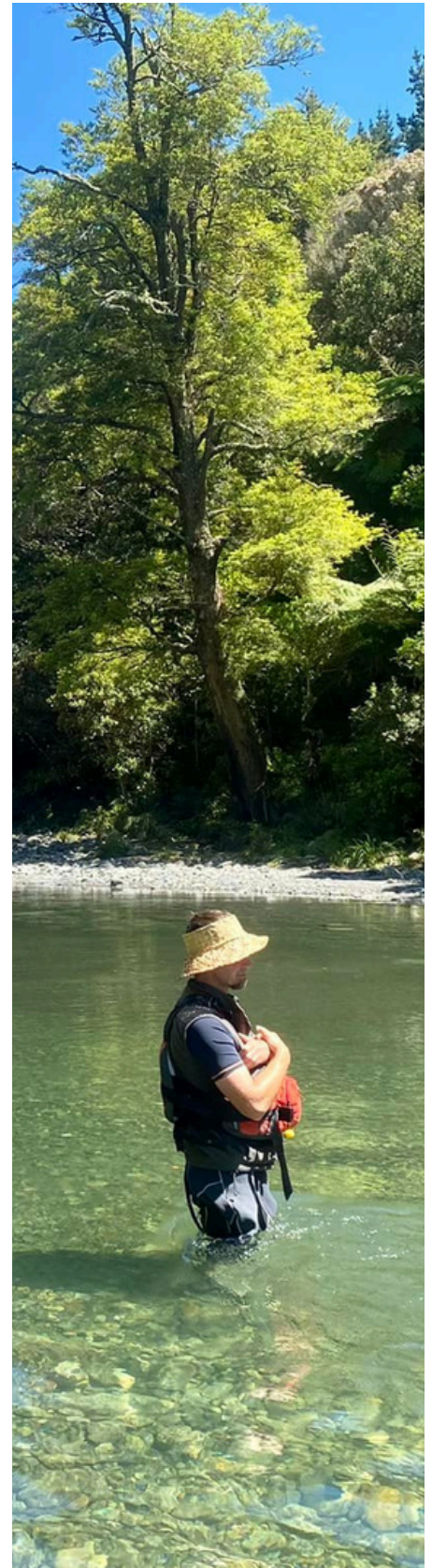
“

*It's one thing talking about the river at home, or at the marae, but being there, being immersed in it, that's where the real connection is.*

Wake Mathews  
Kura Kauapa o Wairarapa

”

1. Opaki Primary
2. Rathkeale College
3. Mauriceville Primary
4. Gadstone Primary
5. Douglas Park School
6. South End School
7. Kahutara School
8. Kura Kaupapa o Wairarapa
9. Mākoura College
10. Wairarapa College\*
11. Chanel College\*
12. Greytown School\*
13. St Matthews College\*
14. Hadlow Primary\*
15. Masterton Primary\*
16. Lakeview School\*
17. Featherston School\*
18. Masterton Intermediate\*
19. Pirinoa School\*
20. St.Patricks\*





Funding support will be directed to all these schools using the Eight Steps plan, depending on the level of funding contributions received.

**John Bissell** and **Trevor Thompson** will continue to be hired as contractors to help advise and supervise Predator Control and restoration plantings, and to pass on their relevant knowledge to students as needed.

The Trusts will ask Teachers, parents, and community volunteers will help supervise and allocate tasks according to the students age and abilities, incorporating the tasks where possible into outdoor activities and educational curriculum.

As a result of our work, reports and photos will be published by the Trust on social media sites and shared with other conservation groups and interested parties, including individual schools, EnviroSchools, WP2K and Pukaha Wildlife Centre

Volunteers will be encouraged to post online and the Trust will issue blog posts or press releases describing the activities and results from the 'Schools Behind Our River' Project, highlighting the role and contribution from funding bodies and sponsors.



*Teachers know how meaningful hands-on learning experiences are to the students, so to have resources available for teachers to make those connections and then be able to implement that with their students is a huge help, because teachers don't necessarily have the time or the know-how to connect with certain groups.*

Desiree Pearse  
Mākoura College



## PROJECT OBJECTIVES 2022-23

- 1. CONTINUE** to raise awareness among students and local farming community of the need to restore and protect wetland areas, including feeder streams through rural farmland and along the riparian margins of the Ruamahanga River.
- 2. ENGAGE** farmers, DOC, GRWC, and local iwi in our activities, to help pass on oral history and traditions regarding the local habitat and to draw attention to how the forest wetland and resources within the natural habitat along the Ruamahanga River catchment were once explored by local Maori as the “first scientists” in the area.
- 3. BRING** together more students from more schools across the Wairarapa as a means to reinforce community spirit and a sense of resolve among our future generations; working together for a common cause to restore fragile ecosystems, regenerate native bush, protect endangered species, create bird corridors and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change.



*Massive thanks to the Ruamahanga Restoration Trust who most generously donated the native trees that were planted at our working bee along the stream embankment. The trust provided over 1,000 native plants that will help to clean up the waterways around our school.*

Belinda Bunny  
Gladstone School Principal







*“For the students to have the element of fun and adventure is really important. It hooks them in but it’s also a tool to allow us to teach them an appreciation of the environment and the preciousness of the resources,”*

Vicky Pilling  
Outdoor Education Teacher



4. **INSPIRE** and encourage students and volunteers to create newsworthy stories for social media that are then highlighted by mentors and community leaders who acknowledge the tasks and results with praise and positive reinforcement.
5. **PROVIDE** meaningful outdoor physical and mental activities for students that can demonstrate measurable results for the health of both students and the local ecosystem.
6. **BUILD** on the framework established in the first two years, embracing more schools and areas bordering the Ruamahanga River.
7. **REINFORCE** the Trust’s point of difference, working through schools to bring farmers, conservationists, scientists, iwi, businesses, and local communities together with a common cause that benefits all.
8. **SUPPORT** any measure of activity that helps ensure access to clean water.
9. **ENCOURAGE** innovative thinking to help create and support jobs and new opportunities for local youth.

# HANDS-ON ACTIVITY KITS FOR SCHOOLS

Funding the supply of water science kits, monitoring materials, and predator traps — suitable for data collection and analysis, reports, media production, and trapping activities.



## WATER ANALYSIS KITS

IN COLLABORATION WITH **HOUSE OF SCIENCE WAIRARAPA** ANNUAL SPONSORSHIP OF 1X WATER ANALYSIS TESTING KIT TO BE SHARED BETWEEN PRIMARY SCHOOLS ACROSS THE WAIRARAPA TO HELP STUDENTS BUILD AWARENESS OF WATER QUALITY ISSUES



## TRACKING & TRAPPING KITS

IN COLLABORATION WITH **PUKAHA WILDLIFE CENTRE** AND **ENVIROSCHOOLS WAIRARAPA**. FUNDING 6X TRACKING AND TRAPPING KITS PURCHASED AND ASSEMBLED BY RUAMAHANGA RESTORATION TRUST TO HELP ENGAGE STUDENTS COLLECT AND RECORD PREDATOR DATA



## E-DNA KITS

IN COLLABORATION WITH **PUKAHA WILDLIFE CENTRE** AND **WILDERLAB**. FUNDING OVER 25X E-DNA SPECIES RESOURCE FOR SCIENTISTS, CONSERVATIONISTS, AND EDUCATORS TO COLLECT DATA AROUND OUR BIODIVERSITY AND WATER QUALITY .



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## BEYOND 2022

Besides encouraging students to embrace conservation and science to mitigate the effects of climate change, we also have a long-term vision that will encourage youth to take more interest and pride in their own environment — preparing them for new responsibilities in their future career and community leadership roles.

Another long-term aim is to see a noticeable increase in native fish species and birdlife.

Most importantly, our long-term vision is to expand the **Schools Behind Our River** project by engaging and including the wider community and landowners into supporting the restoration and planting of bird to bush corridors, from the mountains to the sea, creating the return of clean waterways and healthy soils, which in turn offer more productive benefits to the wider farming community and all those that live within the catchment.



Our hope is that **Schools Behind Our River** will become a successful thriving initiative that will in turn inspire other schools and community groups across the country.

Furthermore, our plans for 2022-23 include concept designs for a place of our own where leading environmental scientists, academics and entrepreneurs inspired by nature will be invited to encourage and inspire future generations of students and conservationists.

# OUR SOCIAL MEDIA : 2021

In addition to using traditional social media platforms, the Trust also creates BLOG POSTS on the website [www.RRTrust.org.nz](http://www.RRTrust.org.nz) and links this to Twitter and Facebook.

## TWITTER

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2021  
IMPRESSIONS 4,400  
TWEETS 14  
FOLLOWERS 89



## FACEBOOK

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021  
PAGE REACH 7,100  
PAGE LIKES 340  
PAGE VISITS 116  
IMPRESSIONS 23.5K  
FOLLOWERS 361



## INSTAGRAM

MARCH - DECEMBER 2021  
PROFILE VISITS 155  
REACH 573  
FOLLOWERS 116







# **RUAMAHANGA**

## **RESTORATION TRUST**

### **BOARD TRUSTEES**

Michael Birch  
Campbell McLean  
Christopher Morrison MNZN

### **ADVISORY TEAM**

John Bissell  
Grant Harper  
Bruce Logan  
Trevor Thompson

### **SUPPORTING FUNDERS SPONSORS**

Masterton Trust House  
Eastern & Central Community Trust  
One Foundation  
Macarthy Trust  
Lloyd Morrison Trust  
Gibson Sheat Lawyers  
BackBlocks Environment Management  
Forest Protectors  
WindRush Design  
Good Books Accountancy  
Karma Drinks  
Urlar Wines

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