

Transforming the Maraetōtara River



*An Investment in the Future
Since 2003*

www.maraetotaratreetrust.co.nz



The Maraetōtara River Restoration Project

Maraetōtara Tree Trust partnering with Hawke's Bay Regional Council, landowners, DoC, volunteers, donors, sponsors, schools and others has substantially progressed Maraetōtara River restoration every year for almost 20 years.

The project is about river restoration, water quality and biodiversity gains, by successfully planting around 10,000 native trees every year on riverside land – over 40 kms fenced and planted since 2003.

Maraetōtara River geography



River before fencing



Miller/ Taurapa
Station 2016



Kahuranaki Station
2016

Tree species planted

Predominantly

- ✓ Manatu/ Ribbonwood
- ✓ Ti Kōuka/Cabbage tree
- ✓ Harakeke/ Flaxes
- ✓ Karamu
- ✓ Kohuhu
- ✓ Kowhai
- ✓ Karo

Others (plus another 11)

- ✓ Whauwhaupaku/ Five-finger
- ✓ Horoeka/ Lancewood
- ✓ Houhere/ Lacebark
- ✓ Rewarewa
- ✓ Manuka
- ✓ Kanuka
- ✓ Kahikatea
- ✓ Totara
- ✓ Titoki

Plants are sourced from commercial suppliers throughout the lower North Island. They can provide quality plants at a reasonable cost.

Plantings two years on 2019 ...



The journey since 2014 includes

- Moving away from a trust involved with growing and planting trees to management, fund raising and governance.
- A history of success and recognition enabling project leverage
- Enhanced HBRC partnering and MTT contractors use
- Fiscal success and financial sustainability ... MTT money in the bank
- Ongoing solid MTT governance and an unwavering vision
- ~10,000 trees annually by MTT 2016-22
- An increasingly enhanced Maraetōtara River and river catchment biodiversity – the project is already a major success ...

Community Involvement



Summary so far

- It's a 17 years continuous visionary project that's saving a river
- A governance structure with a long-term vision and allowed for 30 years of management oversight
- Proof of what is achievable ... a tangible example
- Farmer buy in, Regional Council key roles and works budget, community support and commercial sponsors increasing support
- It's a massive combined effort with great synergies and community leverage
- It's a successful public-private-donors-volunteers-schools tree-planting project

The future and completion 2030-35

- Maraetōtara River is 86 kms both sides
- 26 kms is inaccessible for planting including gorges, or is HDC waterfall land
- 60 kms is accessible and available for planting
- 40 kms (66%) is done 2003-21 led by Maraetōtara Tree Trust
- 20 kms of river is still to plant (33%)
- 90,000 trees to plant (~\$600,000) plus HBRC costs river clearance, fencing subsidy and volunteer hours
- 10 years to complete funding dependent – possibly by 2032
- At least \$1m in direct and indirect costs to complete the project being about the same as expended so far
- Future backfill plantings and maybe a wider reservation corridor ...

Governance Model

- The trust was established by a group of enthusiasts who grew their own plants and then engaged government and local agencies, work schemes and corrections detainees to plant them, supervised by an employed planting Co-Ordinator.
- About 10 years ago the trust changed the manner of its operation to become a project manager.
- The original structure set up by the founding trustees has allowed this to occur.
- We have a well drafted original trust deed and a group of dedicated trustees some of whom helped found the trust.
- This solid foundation has allowed the shift in focus from growing and planting seedlings to funding and management of the planting project.
- Costs per annum include accounts (\$1,000), public liability insurance (\$1,000) and publicity (\$1,000).
- All trustees and planners are volunteers. This allows for low overheads which is important both to give funders confidence in the scheme and to ensure funding received results in trees by the river.
- Contractors complete all planting work overseen by a professional Co-Ordinator who receives an honorarium.

Sharing what we have learned

- We believe that part of our Kaupapa is to share what we have learned with similar groups.
- The most important start is a group of like-minded enthusiastic volunteers.
- Ensure that you have a good structure including a trust deed, regular meetings and good accounting structures to ensure cash flow is maintained.
- Keep overheads to a minimum.
- Bring your community along with you.
- Good relationships with local authorities is vital. For us the HBRC has provided huge support and have a representative who attends many of our meetings.
- Only employ staff if you are sure you have the cash flow and governance to afford them and oversee their performance
- Ensure that you are reliable and trustworthy so that prospective funders have faith their money will be spent as they intend.
- We are happy to answer any enquiries from any like-minded groups.

Maraetōtara water quality



Maraetotara River at Kahuranaki Station

River valley biodiversity



11 species of native fish have been recorded in the Maraetōtara River

Inanga (white bait) spawning ground at the river mouth at Te Awanga

Recognition



Reserved and replanted 2008



Progress November 2017



Photo by MTT Treasurer Alan Berry

The vision is: As it once was ...



It's a 100 to 1,000 years project ...

Online presence MTT's website ~2,000 visitors annually

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Maraetotara River Falls | by Aileen Davies

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