

WAKATIPU REFORESTATION TRUST



Annual Report 2016

The years seem to become busier and busier and 2016 has continued this trend. Much of this can be put down to the work of our Conservation co-ordinators.

In December 2015 our Volunteer co-ordinator, Ange van der Laan resigned after a very industrious year that kept us all on our toes. Ange continued this job until the appointment of Nita Smith in March producing a very useful report surveying all our planting sites and recording successes and issues. Nita was selected from a strong group of applicants for this 20 hour per week position paid through the DoC Community Partnership Fund and funded for the next three years. Nita has carried on from Ange and is doing a magnificent job, organising plantings, particularly with other groups such as Green Cabs, AJ Hacket Kawarau Bungy site, Rotary, Climbing Club, Bike Club, Golf Club, Zip Trek, Glenorchy community and others. She has led the strategy group and our strategy document is almost complete. Statistics that Ange developed have been kept up-to-date and added to with all our documents, newsletters and other data available on Drop Box. She also puts the latest information and photos on our Facebook page. Thank you Nita.

The Trust has met only twice this year as most of the action is carried out by the Management Group. Richard Struthers resigned at the beginning of the year having moved to Nelson. Jada van Vliet was appointed to take Richard's place. She brings valuable skills and enthusiasm to the Trust.

Helen McPhail chairs the Management group that meets at McPhails house and enjoys a wonderful meal cooked by Helen before business. She then runs a well organised and effective meeting. This group (includes Trust members) deals with site planting and maintenance, nursery management, plant numbers/species, funding, has participated in the formation of our strategy and responds to our busy Conservation Co-ordinator requests. The Management Group meets monthly. Thank you Helen for an excellent job.

More changes at DoC has meant that Susie Geh has been partly sidelined but her contribution and enthusiasm where possible has been invaluable. Thank you Susie. Family commitments have led to Carrie Pritchard handing over secretarial responsibilities to Nita meantime.

The Jean Malpas Community Nursery must be one of the tidiest plant nurseries in the country thanks to Barb Simpson with help from Helen and other helpers. Plants are brought in as seedlings or as root trainer size and each Wednesday morning a group of volunteers pots them on into larger size bags/pots or weeds, or cuts up carpet for weed mats and other jobs but mainly potting. Last week (October) we trialled Weds evening potting as well. This was enjoyed by a small group and will be continued. More than 6000 plants were in the nursery over winter. Most of these have now been planted out and new stock potted up for next autumn planting (some have had to used for recent plantings). Helen has now started growing from seeds and cuttings and we hope that this process will grow and save some of the cost of buying in root trainers. Plans are in hand to double the size of the nursery to allow more room, particularly for beech seedlings.

The nursery has also been used as an educational facility and several primary schools have visited (and Arrowtown Pre-school) to learn about native plants and trying their hands at potting plants and planting, extending the native garden surrounding the nursery. Thank you Barb and helpers for both the well run and tidy nursery and the excellent teaching.

We have Ben Teele (assisted by Rebecca) to thank for setting up our web site, not yet complete but useable. Ben and Bec have also been working hard on producing a booklet about growing plants in the Wakatipu. This is progressing and will be most useful when complete. Ben and Bec are two of our keenest planters and an inspiration to other young people. Thank you Ben and Bec.

Much of our maintenance of planting sites is done by Tom McPhail with some help from others. It is a constant job, spraying grass and weeds, cutting rank growth with scrub bar and removing broom. Thank you Tom.

Finance is the realm of Peter Blanshard who not only makes sure that funds are available for our various activities but also keeps a keen eye on various documents that we receive or fill out and ensuring that we are keeping to our trust deed and not putting ourselves into a difficult situation with fund applications and other documents. The Government has set new requirements for Trusts and this means filling in a very large set of forms. Thank you Peter for your thoroughness and skill.

This is the last year of guaranteed funding from the Jean Malpas Conservation Trust (administered by Perpetual Trust) but it has been indicated that funding from this source could continue. This year the Lesley Hutchins Environmental Trust agreed to fund our Trust for Five years. We are most thankful to these two major funders as without this security of funding we would not be operating as well as we are at present. There have been no specific projects needing particular funding this year but we have responded to possible future funding by bringing forward planning on another major site. Zip Trek has held a very successful locals day last week with \$25 from each participant collected on the day given to WRT. The amount is likely to be substantial and will be put towards the tandem, tipping trailer now on order.

A few statistics will give an idea of what has been accomplished this year to date. In autumn we planted 2882 plants at 13 sites. Some of these sites are looked after by other groups/organisations. To date this spring a further 3176 plants have been planted at 12 sites with another 900 yet to be planted at 3 sites so almost 7000 plants this year compared with about 5000 last year. Due to the very dry weather this is probably all that we will plant this year and watering may become a priority later. More than 2400 volunteer hours have been spent by about 300 people though this figure includes regulars attending more than one planting. Added to our planting we know of privately funded plantings in the basin that have added more than 15,000 native plants greatly helping our vision of pockets and corridors of native plants across the whole basin allowing

Earlier in the year the Trust was nominated for a Trust Power Community award and won the Environment and Heritage Award. Several of us visited Pukerau Nursery for a training session seeing and participating with the experts. It was a useful training day. We are assisting the Shotover Primary School with a wetland project; are providing plants to schools paid for by the Honda Fund and also Trees For Schools Project. Project Crimson assisted with one planting involving the Remarkables Primary School. We recently bought a banner that can be erected at planting sites with our name and logo and we are looking at permanently identifying all sites with a small plaque.

Most of our planting is carried out on DoC and QLDC land at this stage and we continue to have a good relationship with both organisations.

Although the year is not yet done it has been another incredible period of development. I thank all Trust members, the management group, our major funders and all our wonderful volunteers.

Neill Simpson QSM
Chairman
Wakatipu Reforestation Trust

18 October 2016