



# Friends of Mana Island

## Work Party Report June 6 – 9 2025

Participants: Colin Munn, Steve Rowell, Steve Sutton

This trip was arranged to assist DOC with track widening on Mana Island. Vegetation had encroached on many of the tracks making them impassable for wider equipment. DOC is keen to make greater use of the tractor located on the island.

The original intention had been to travel on 5 June, but this was delayed by bad weather and rough seas. We travelled over to the island on Friday, 6 June, leaving from Mana Marina at about 09:00 on *Te Kapehu*, operated by Dave Wrightson, together with the DOC Rangers, Jane Haxton and Georgia.

The weather for most of the weekend was not great with cold southerly winds, choppy seas and driving rain showers for much of Friday and Saturday. Sunday was a sunny day, but the southerly winds persisted.

### Friday

We spent Friday morning unpacking gear, completing briefings, confirming the work programme and sorting the equipment to be used. Unfortunately, the DOC brushcutter was not working correctly and was unsafe for the rangers to use. Except for a small garden chainsaw, we resorted to using manual tools including loopers, silky saws, secateurs and hedge clippers for the work.

In view of the horrible weather, we decided to work closer to the houses for the afternoon and worked on the lower part of the No Public Access track up Kaikomako Valley. Approximately 50% of the length was completed in three hours. Some larger manuka trees were left to be cut when the chainsaw battery had recharged.

### Saturday

On Saturday we walked up to the Tirohanga NW Trig track and commenced widening this section. We worked for about two hours widening 150 metres of track. This was mainly low growing mingimingi and fairly slow going with manual tools. We decided it would be more efficient to use brushcutters to complete this work. The area was also exposed to the cold southerly winds and rain squalls.

We decided to return to the upper part of the No Public Access track started on Friday and after lunch, completed this section of track in two hours.



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No access track widening



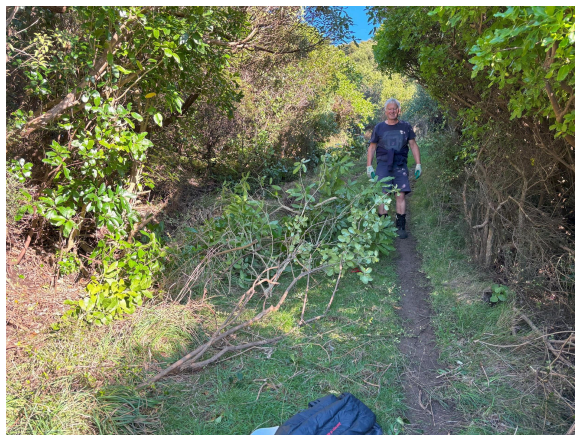
Tirohanga NW Trig track

On returning to the Lockwood, Colin and Steve Rowell inspected the wetlands system. All the ponds were full to overflowing, in stark contrast to the previous work party on 11 – 13 April, when there was no water in any of the ponds. The high-water levels made it difficult to access some of the pond inlets and outlets. There was also a significant flow from Pond G to pond J via a channel that had not been documented previously.

### Sunday

On Sunday morning, in sunny weather we spent three hours widening the upper part of the Tirohanga track from the large slip to the Takahe enclosure, about 50% of the total length required. The balance of the work has larger trees and will be easier to complete with mechanical equipment.

In the afternoon we spent two hours with two multitools cutting yellow pipes and bagging pipes ready for transport back to the mainland. There are five fadges of reusable pipes and four fadges of rubbish pipes ready for transport.



Steve Rowell hard at work widening the Tirohanga Track



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### Monday

On Monday morning we were up early to clean the Lockwood and pack our gear, leaving the island on *Te Kapehu* at about 9 am.

### General

The team enjoyed the trip despite the weather. We shared our meals, enjoyed some walks and went kiwi hunting at night, without success. Steve Sutton even got some work done on a DOC report he was writing. A big thank you to Jane and Georgia for looking after us on this visit. I anticipate there will be more opportunities for smaller work parties to assist with projects on the island.



Georgia, Steve R and Steve S rugged up at the Mana Island Trig

Prepared by: Colin Munn