

Conservation of biodiversity on private land in the Hoteo Catchment, Kaipara

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New Zealand's most threatened lowland ecosystems and species lie primarily on private land. Providing assistance and funding for fencing and management of forest remnants, wetlands and riparian areas is an important part of the toolbox. The ecological and social outcomes of an initiative led by farmers in the Hoteo Catchment to protect indigenous biodiversity on private land are discussed. Landowners lead this model for protection of biodiversity on private land for landowners, and work with a variety of agencies for support. The value of this approach and working strategically at the grass roots is discussed. The Forest Bridge Trust's mission is to develop a bridge of green from the east coast to the west coast across the central Kaipara/Omaha isthmus, within a sustainable farming landscape. Innovative methods are being used including crowd funding, rural networks and workshops and working with local schools. Key factors include being flexible, community led, responsive to local needs, maintaining trust and ensuring funding goes to 'on the ground work'.