

## Friends of Taupo Swamp & Catchment (FOTSC)

### The first six months since June 2018

..... over a coffee at Palmers Garden Centre, Jenny Brash (Greater Wellington Regional Council Councillor), Mike Jebson (QE11 National Trust CEO) and Bill McAulay decided that it would be a good idea to form a community-driven group to provide greater care and protection for Taupo Swamp. Judy McKoy promptly also took up the challenge as she had already been working on a Heritage Planting project for Plimmerton Residents Assn.

So what has happened since then and more importantly, what is in front of us?

- **FOTSC goals** include the protection, advocacy, restoration, monitoring, recreation and community engagement of the Taupo Swamp and Catchment. Note that parts of the wetlands system are in private ownership on Plimmerton Farm and other parcels of swamp are west of the railway line and north of Airlie Rd.
- Key stake-holders **QE11, PCC, GWRC** are fully on-board with our goals.
- The planned **urban development** of Plimmerton Farm has alerted FOTSC supporters to consider the potential risks to Taupo swamp and connected wetlands.
- **Predator Control** underpins all efforts to increase bird activity around the swamp. Pest Free Plimmerton and Predator Free Pukerua Bay volunteers plus GWRC contractors working will continue trapping mustelids and rats around the swamp.
- As most of the water from the catchment flows out of Taupo stream onto South Beach we are mindful of the current and future **water quality** in the stream. Monitoring by Wellington Water shows e coli contamination after heavy rain.
- QE11 have applied to GWRC to upgrade the **protection status** of the QE11-owned swamp.
- GWRC - **Collaborative Projects Contestable Funding**. Recently we were successful with an application for \$3.5k for the first year and \$6k for both years two and three. This is contingent on an approved restoration project plan.
- We have support from **PCC and GWRC** for commencing the removal of invasive plants - to be followed by riparian planting in the PCC-owned part of Taupo Swamp. ie the area north of Plimmerton Domain and west of the Ulric St industrial area. We have proposed that the work be done over a three to four year year period.
- Conservation Volunteers NZ is keen to provide volunteers for the weeding and planting.

### **What is next over the next three months?**

1. **Memorandums of Understanding** with GWRC and PCC to be agreed and signed re 'business as usual' of FOTSC.
2. **Mapping** of the catchment is currently underway by Tim Clark.
3. A FOTSC **logo** is currently being designed by Sabrina Malcolm.
4. Sabrina is also working on a **website** for FOTSC.
5. Set up FOTSC as an **incorporated society** (we will need 15 signatures)
6. Set up a **bank account** for FOTSC
7. We need some '**starting point photos**' of key spots around the area. ie say 20 key places so we can continue a photographic record through future years.
8. We are seeking help with a **Planting Plan** for the area being targeted for restoration.
9. DOC will be opening up a new **community funding** round in February. *Funding will be directed toward community projects that restore the diversity of native plants and wildlife. Projects can include pest control, habitat restoration and weed management.*
10. We need support from neighbouring businesses around the industrial area. The Motor Homes Assn is on board with our goals.