



SOUTHERN
LAKES
SANCTUARY

**PROJECT
UPDATE IV
12.2023**



Southern Lakes Sanctuary is one of the largest and most exciting conservation projects in the country. Our team are highly skilled, dedicated and motivated to make a positive difference for native biodiversity across our region.

“2023 has been a year of expanding field operations, ongoing support of the founding trusts, and recognition by agencies and funding partners that the work at landscape scale is the way of the future for conservation in Aotearoa.”

Greg Lind, Co-Chair

To learn more about our project in HD video, follow the link below:

southernlakessanctuary.org.nz/SL5005



Kia ora and welcome to our fourth project update.

I am writing this after doing a site visit to Makarora which showcased both the challenges we face in the conservation world and the champions that fill me with hope that our ambitious conservation goals are possible.

The incredibly dedicated volunteer army of Central Otago Lakes Branch of Forest & Bird have been doing their best to protect mohua in Makarora for over a quarter of a century. The fact that mohua are still present in this area is down to their efforts.

However, after a beech mast event, unprecedented rat numbers in the area means this treasured mohua population is in peril. We have been able to install 700 bait stations and additional traps, and the volunteers have been working tirelessly, helping to service some 1350 traps almost weekly and refilling the bait stations with staff. Similar dedication is echoed in our other hubs by the thousand or so volunteers across our partner groups. This is what protecting our native taonga

means to our community.

Later that day I heard news that the takahē that were released by DOC on Ngāi Tahu ancestral land in August, which I was lucky enough to attend with staff, have started to hatch chicks. This news came through while some of our staff were hiking through difficult terrain in the Rees Valley installing traps, establishing monitoring plots and planning alpine traplines towards our vision to release takahē in collaboration with Rees valley station, Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust, NZ Nature fund, Fulton Hogan, Ngāi Tahu and DOC. Takahē have been the talk of the town in Glenorchy. This is also what protecting our native taonga means to our communities.

Community led conservation will be integral in our country's journey towards PF2050. Our priority is to continue to support our community groups and our partners as much as we can, and to continue to protect our wildlife and our

wild places as much as we can. We are now not just dreaming of takahē returning to areas like the Rees Valley, we are planning and preparing for it. These dreams can be achieved when community led conservation is adequately funded and supported. Projects like ours need to continue.

Kā mihi,
Paul Kavanagh, Project Director
Southern Lakes Sanctuary





I READ THE NEWS TODAY...

We have been busy spreading the Southern Lakes Sanctuary message. A journalist from 1News interviewed our Queenstown based staff for a story on how conservation is employing locals in the post-covid landscape. German newspaper Die Zeit spent time in the Rees Valley as part of a story on how introduced species are impacting native populations. Our mohua work in Makarora has also been a focus of a story on Radio New Zealand. National Geographic International spent some time in the field as well as learning about our use of the FTP IMS system with our noded AT220 traps. Read more at: southernlakessanctuary.org.nz/news/



PŪTEKETEKE © John Darby

BIRD OF THE CENTURY

During early November, you couldn't turn around without hearing about the pūteketeke / Australasian Crested Grebe. Late night talk show host John Oliver decided to meddle in the New Zealand Forest & Bird, Bird of the Century competition – backing his favourite “weird puking birds with colourful mullets”. This flurry of international attention also coincided with the hatching of the first pūteketeke chick at the Lake Wānaka Grebe Project. Our Wānaka Co-ordinator Petrina has taken on the co-ordination of the project alongside our partner group Forest & Bird Central Otago Lakes Branch with the amazing John Darby keen to hand over the baton.



REPTILES RESEARCH

Our third lizard eDNA trial will conclude next week as we look to develop an innovative and cost-efficient method of monitoring reptiles. This trial is further developing our PipeDNA sampling technique from last year. It has seen us test baited pipes alongside unbaited ones to see if we can increase efficacy. Trail cameras were also installed for a better understanding of interaction rates and behaviour. The results of this trial will inform our fourth trial this summer in non-managed habitat in Central Otago.

Two of our staff also attended the Society for Research on Amphibians and Reptiles in New Zealand conference in Akaroa this November where they presented our research to date. There is a lot of interest for using our eDNA technique in various locations across Aotearoa. Thanks to Kiwipark, Mokomoko Sanctuary and the Leslie Hutchins Foundation for their support of this mahi.



PREDATOR FREE 2050

In August, Predator Free 2050 Limited held their annual Board Meeting in Queenstown. We hosted the board and staff on a field trip up the Rees Valley to showcase our work in this special area. Our staff, trustees, advisor Amanda Hasselman and the Scott's from Rees Valley Station explained how we collaborate and our future plans. We are seeking to partner with Predator Free 2050 Ltd as we work towards our common goal to protect our native species. Collaboration will enable us to achieve this goal and the Rees valley is a priority candidate site for an ambitious predator elimination project.

TŪPIKI TRUST

A who monitoring trip involving four Conservation Dogs, their handlers, Southern Lakes Sanctuary staff and volunteers, observed 11 who within our area of interest in Makarora. Who were spread amongst the Leven Stream, Ore Stream, Waterfall Creek and Blue River. Based on our monitoring, we have now planned to intensively trap the Leven Stream over this summer. We will continue monitoring for native species within the area – with additional who surveys planned for January 2024; eDNA monitoring of the creeks in the area and bat surveying with the use of acoustic recorders. Funding from Tūpiki Trust allows us to complete this important monitoring and protection work.

“Protecting New Zealand’s biodiversity is a massive challenge that is being tackled by DOC and many other agencies. Over 4000 of our native species are on the Threatened or Endangered list, their status imperilled

by a diverse range of threats particularly exotic mammalian pests. When Southern Lakes Sanctuary applied in 2022 to Tūpiki Trust for funding to support extension of trapping in the Upper Young Valley, the Trust asked how would this project contribute to biodiversity management?

We noted that the project would do much more than just extend trapping lines up valley, it was pitched at some important goals. There are limited resources available to protect biodiversity and basic information is needed to make effective use of the resources available. Key information sought, and currently being gathered from field work in the Upper Young includes: what native species are present in the valley, what is their threat status, and what are their main threats?

Tūpiki Trust is providing funding over two years to enable traps to be set out and monitored in the Young Valley thanks to dedicated work by SLS staff and volunteers. The project is gathering



information to help answer those fundamental questions listed above.

Our chances of winning battles against pests will be boosted if we can continually increase the productivity of these projects (lower the cost per unit of output). Innovation and application of new techniques and technologies to biodiversity projects is essential. Tūpiki Trust applauds the continuous focus of SLS on innovation, deployment of smart technologies in the Upper Young (and its many other projects), and the willing sharing of knowledge gained.”

Ross Cullen
Trustee, Tūpiki Trust

SPOTLIGHT ON BEECH MAST

A recent ‘mast season’ of native beech trees, which generally happens every two to six years, has led to the beech forests of Makarora, Matuktuki, and the Rees/Dart producing a large number of beech seeds.

This abundance of food leads to an “explosion” of rat numbers, followed by a surge in stoat numbers. Once the seed is gone, the predators will turn to native

species. These rat plague events can wipe out native species including entire mohua populations, in one season. In Makarora, the mohua – a species that nests in holes in trees – is particularly at risk.

To protect our native species, predator numbers need to be dramatically reduced. Southern Lakes Sanctuary staff and Forest & Bird Central Otago Lakes

Branch volunteers have installed a bait station network of over 700 bait stations in the areas with known mohua nest sites as well as increased trapping.

So far, we have seen four mohua nests with chicks and are hoping the chicks will survive to fledging.





BIODIVERSITY CREDITS

We were pleased to co-host the September Queenstown Chamber of Commerce Business After 5 event with AJ Hackett Bungy NZ. This was an opportunity to share our mahi with many Queenstown businesses, which Bungy have been instrumental in enabling. We also used the event to reveal the ongoing support that Bungy have committed to Southern Lakes Sanctuary, as well as showcasing our new Biodiversity Credits available through CarbonZ. Similar to Carbon Credits, we believe that Biodiversity Credits will form a part of our ongoing sustainable funding model. Find out more at: www.carbonz.io.



TECH SOLUTIONS

The AT220 trap has proven itself to be prolifically successful for our efforts to control rats and possums with over 3,000 possums having been removed with these new traps alone. When paired with FTP Solutions Ltd's node and camera technology, we can now monitor traps in real time from the office, allowing us to make better informed conservation decisions. This saves on labour costs enabling us to work over much larger areas. The results have been incredible with us making huge conservation gains with this exciting innovation.

FTP are writing the model to teach these traps to only activate for target species using an AI camera so we can then use these incredible traps in some of our very remote areas where there are kea. Watch this space!

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

Collaboration is one of the key elements of our project. As such, our staff are always on the lookout for opportunities where we can collaborate with other environmental organisations in our region. We assisted Mana Tāhuna with a planting day at Te Wai Whakaata (Lake Hayes). In October our team helped out at the Jardines Boulders, at the foot of the Remarkables, planting the beginnings of a Tōtara forest. This project was led by our Technical Advisor Phil, in conjunction with the Queenstown Climbing Club, Whakatipu Wildlife Trust, Wakatipu Reforestation Trust and the QEII National Trust.

We also recently presented at a “Meet the neighbours” event, hosted by the QEII Trust. This marked one year since Dick and Jillian Jardine generously gifted 900 hectares of land at the foot of the Remarkables to the QEII trust. We will be involved along with our partner, WWT in the conservation work on this land. We often refer to conservation as being a gift to future generations; what an incredible legacy for the Jardine family to leave for our mokopuna.



SPOTLIGHT ON TAKAHĒ

24 takahē were released recently on Ngāi Tahu whenua in the Greenstone Valley in efforts to re-establish wild populations for this species that has previously been declared extinct. Our staff have supported the incredible work of Department of Conservation, Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to create an

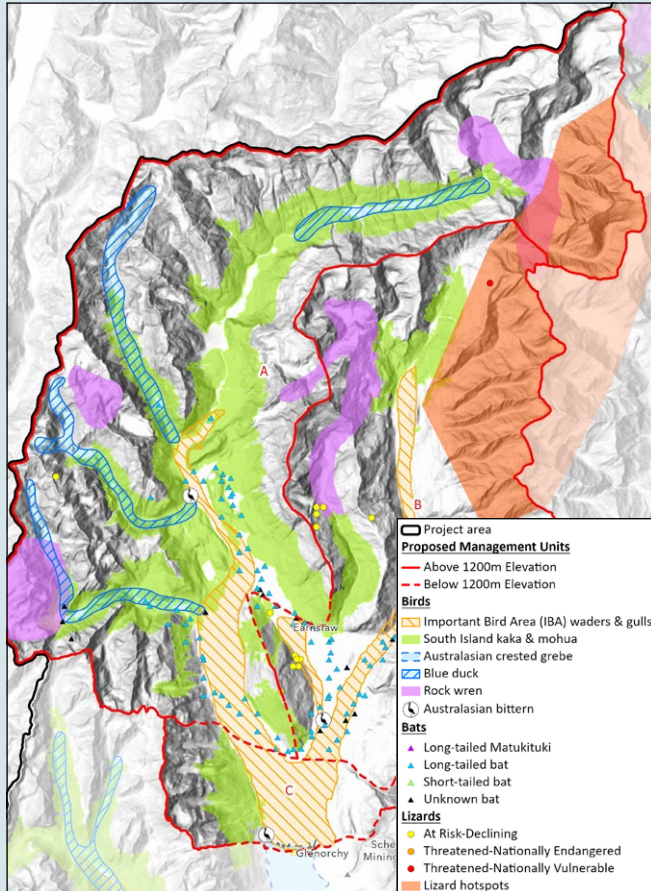
environment safe for these magnificent birds. Excitingly, these birds have already started to breed... what a Christmas present!

The takahē recovery team have been doing amazing work for years to protect this iconic species and are now looking for future release sites, like the Rees Valley. Our newly installed

traplines in the Rees Valley are designed with takahē in mind.

To hear about the legacy of the Scott family at Rees Valley Station click here: southernlakes sanctuary.org.nz/SLS016





KIWI IN DOWNTOWN WĀNAKA?

With support from QLDC, we commissioned Wildlands – an ecological consultancy company – to create a report on possible elimination sites within our operational area. It was greatly pleasing that their top five sites aligned with areas we have been focussing our work – reinforcing that our project scoring matrix aligns with industry best practice. This piece of work will be invaluable as we devise our long-term plans and move into predator elimination strategies.

In addition, Wildlands created a tool, containing information on the potential habitats and wildlife likely to have occurred within the Queenstown Lakes District prior to European settlement and the introduction of mammalian predators (view it here: southernlakessanctuary.org.nz/SLS018). This fascinating tool helps us with planning species translocations and may help guide any groups working in environmental restoration across our region. How cool to think that there may have been kiwi foraging along downtown Wānaka, and takahē close to our Queenstown office!

“Council has made a clear commitment to tackle both the ecological and climate emergencies, so we are proud to have supported this innovative project as part of the district’s Climate and Biodiversity Plan.”

QLDC Mayor Glyn Lewers

CHAIR'S REPORT

Year ending 31st December 2023

Kia ora koutou e te whānau,
As 2023 comes to a close we celebrate our second full operational year. If our first year was characterised by developing operational excellence and “getting runs on the board,” in our second year we’ve seen first-hand the power of our core values of openness, collaboration, and innovation, and the results that approach is having across the whole of our rohe.

On the surface our numbers tell a story in their own right of our 22 outstanding staff, our more than 1000 volunteers within our partner groups who are doing the mahi day in and day out, and the more than 10,000 traps that are now operating in the field, but there’s another story that’s beneath that which speaks to the thousands of cups of tea, the conversations, the relationships that we’ve been growing that are the deep roots of the strength of the Southern Lakes Sanctuary.

How we achieve our goals comes through a huge combination of efforts. The strategic work at the Board level, in the office, the relationships with local, national and international organisations including PF2050 and the International Conservation Finance Network, the development of deeper and more trusting relationships with Ngāi Tahu, DOC, QLDC, ORC, and meeting more regularly and



closely with our local conservation whānau, most especially Mana Tāhuna, Wai Wānaka, QEII, and the Whakatipu Conservation Alliance, all contribute to making our potential for better outcomes stronger. We’re grateful to the members of all of those groups who have also seen the value of developing deeper relationships that will allow us to work together in the years to come.

We’ve seen the results of collaboration this year with the historic release of the takahē into the Greenstone valley. Many of our team walked for hours to be there, teary-eyed, watching the first release, and now we are all following their nesting progress and look forward to 2025 when the project hopefully expands into the Rees Valley. As our biodiversity focus allows us to celebrate these kinds of victories, it also draws into sharp focus the danger of this year’s rat plague and its impact on the mohua populations in Makarora and the Dart Valley. Here our capacity for monitoring and research is allowing us a base for engaging in well-informed advocacy work to try to lobby for the best possible outcomes. Climate change isn’t making any of this any easier but we increasingly have both the tools and the capacity to be in the right conversations with data that speaks.

One of the highlights of the year was the recent completion by Wildlands Consultants of an Optimal Biodiversity GIS Layer and ranking of potential predator elimination sites across the district. Funded by QLDC and led by the SLS, this seminal piece of work provides the entire district with an easy to access understanding of what the biodiversity was in each area 1000 years ago so that we all can share in making informed decisions going forward in restoring habitat and understanding what's possible for species reintroduction. We look forward to seeing it roll out in the coming year.

Like all of the groups who were initially funded by the Jobs for Nature initiative, as the June 2024 funding cliff looms, we have spent this year focused on cultivating our funding 'irons in the fire.' The Board would like to formally thank our outstanding Project Director, Paul Kavanagh, and his team, for the hours he has spent in this space in particular. Through a dedicated campaign to raise the Southern Lake Sanctuary's national and international profile we have seen features on Paddy Gower, RNZ, TV1, and will feature in National Geographic next year. In our openness to innovate, we are the first South Island Biodiversity Credit project of CarbonZ and look forward to seeing biodiversity credits grow in our region.

Our enduring relationship with AJ Hackett Bungy continues and they were our first funder to pledge 3 years of continued significant funding, for which we're deeply appreciative. The Hills, Rod Drury, Lotteries, the Stout Trust have all recently joined in the support for our work and we look forward to seeing the funding

mosaic get clearer and clearer in the next few months as our many funding irons in the fire alchemise into conservation gold. Support for the Southern Lakes Sanctuary has never been more urgent, and our board is working hard with Paul and the team to ensure our future. If 2023 taught us anything it was that the uncertainties of government and climate change will likely be with us for a long time to come and building a strong and supportive base of individuals, businesses, and agencies who recognise the intergenerational necessity of our work for not only this moment in time but for the future and who can offer us continuity and stability will serve our region well. We look to forge those enduring relationships and continue to ask for your help.

As ever, we thank the outstanding work of our partner groups, the trustees who serve on both the partner groups and the SLS board, and the work of Paul, Matt, the GSD team, and all of the volunteers who make this all possible. We look forward to 2024, seeing the Southern Lakes Sanctuary continue onwards, and the arrival of takahē chicks to inspire us towards all that is still to come. Roll on 2024!

**Greg Lind, Leslie Van Gelder and
Steve Batstone, Co-Chairs
Southern Lakes Sanctuary**



Progress Report: Jobs for Nature

YEAR 1 (END 06.22)

- ✓ Establish baseline monitoring
- ✓ Trap audit & calibration
- ✓ Grow knowledge & innovation
- ✓ Plan new Cardrona Valley Hub

YEAR 2 (END 06.23)

- ✓ Connect two Hubs
- ✓ Initiate plan for new Cardrona Valley Hub
- ✓ Long-term operational plan completed

YEAR 3 (END 06.24)

NEW TRAPS:
1,818

TRAP TOTAL:
10,462

EXCEEDED

SUPPRESSION AREA:
155,400 ha

EXCEEDED

ACHIEVED:

Establish Cardrona Valley Hub

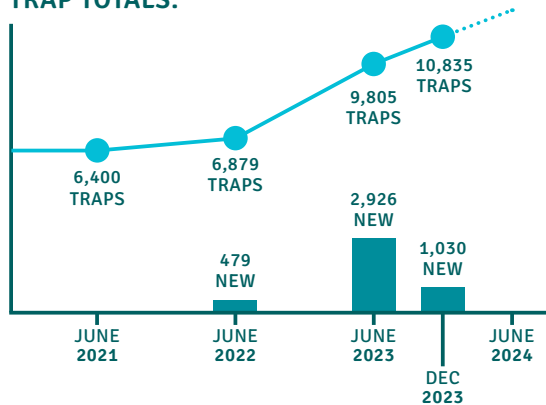
ONGOING:

Assess biodiversity & trapping gains

WORK IN PROGRESS:

Secure funding for long-term plan

TRAP TOTALS:



DEC 2023 (MID YEAR 3)

NEW TRAPS

TARGET: 909

ACHIEVED: 1,030

TOTAL TRAPS

TARGET: 9,553

ACHIEVED: 10,835

SUPPRESSION AREA

TARGET: 138,300 ha

ACHIEVED: 163,109 ha

“2023 has been another good outing for Southern Lakes Sanctuary. They’re now nationally recognised as a large-scale restoration project, with a willingness to work with others to enable efficient technology use for predator control gains, such as their ongoing work with FTP Solutions, towards AT220 self-resetting traps being able to be used in areas where there might be kea.

Southern Lakes Sanctuary have conducted an exemplary Jobs for Nature project, which is well on track to achieving all predator control targets by their project end date in July 2024. They’ve been successful in obtaining some other funding to achieve these targets, and I wish them every success in being able to continue their good work across the Southern Lakes District well past July 2024.”

David Butt, Pou Matarautaki Operations Manager,
Whakatipu-wai-Māori Office, Te Papa Atawhai Department of Conservation

JOBS
FOR NATURE

MAHI
MŌ TE TAI AO



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

163,109 ha
PREDATOR SUPPRESSION AREA

35,555
PREDATORS REMOVED
SINCE 2022

10,835
TRAPS WITHIN OUR NETWORK

1000+
VOLUNTEERS ACROSS OUR
PARTNER GROUPS

HUB UPDATE: MAKARORA



This Spring, we resumed our mohua monitoring work with the assistance of Dr Laura Molles. We caught and banded 12 mohua and re-caught one mohua which was initially banded in 2019. This research and our protection efforts of the mohua in Makarora is thanks to funding from Science Into Action, Mohua Charitable Trust, The Leslie Hutchins Conservation Foundation and The Tūpiki Trust. Listen to our RNZ interview here: southernlakesanctuary.org.nz/SLS017

It has been a busy time. There has been a great deal of trap-related work – kea proofing, replacing ancient traps, and adding many more rat traps to some lines. Our Forest & Bird volunteers would have struggled to cope, and the level of activity demonstrates how much more effective our Makarora trapping operations are with Sanctuary support. Southern Lakes Sanctuary sponsored events such as Pestival were also appreciated by our volunteers, and have expanded our ability to fight the predator war.

A big effort has gone into mohua monitoring, with SLS staff and Laura Molles putting out a large number of remote acoustic recorders, and banding birds. Populations in the Young are stable, but in other areas they have declined. Breeding pairs of mohua around the Blue Pools may be benefitting from the intense trapping efforts there.

However, from autumn onward we

have had a rat plague. In spite of fortnightly trap clearances, many trap lines are seething with rats. Numbers have escalated to the point where survival of the mohua is seriously threatened. With no aerial 1080 operations in sight, a combined workforce installed over 700 poison bait stations in the Muddy Creek – Cameron Flat area, across breeding mohua territory. These have been serviced weekly, with rapid bait uptake. This operation was very demanding on SLS staff, and would have been almost impossible with volunteers. If our mohua survive in these areas, it will largely be through the mahi of the SLS.

Working with the SLS whānau across the Southern Lakes this past year has been enjoyable, productive, and uplifting. These people really care.

Mo Turnbull, Trustee, Forest & Bird, Central Otago Lakes Branch & Southern Lakes Sanctuary



HUB UPDATE: MATUKITUKI

The Matukituki Valley continues to improve its habitat for birds and the result is anecdotal but significant increases in interactions with kea, kākārīki and robins being reported. There is also optimism that some new species are returning to the valley – such as whio.

The recent SLS project to install bait stations for rat control is another significant tool and this should provide the habitat for future release of mohua but also strengthen the current bird population. SLS has carried out all of the logistics and management of the field volunteers for this and the regular programme and this contribution has been fundamental to Matukituki Charitable Trust being able to continue its predator control programme in the West Matukituki.

The Matukituki Charitable Trust volunteers are doing incredible work with weekly trap check trips. But they're being stretched as



they're helping both Matukituki and Makarora with bait station work.

Derek and Gillian Crombie, Founding Trustees, Matukituki Charitable Trust

Bait stations have been installed in the red beech forest in West Matukituki valley to help deal with an increase in rat numbers which have been steadily growing since winter. These are funded through ORC's ECOfund and are part of the plan to translocate mohua into the area.

Our Hub Co-ordinator Scotty ran a workshop with Upper Clutha Deer Stalkers on how keen hunters can volunteer and contribute to the work in the East branch of the Matukituki. This complements the other groups active in the wider area, including Otago Kiwi Recovery Trust, Diamond Lake Conservation Trust, Minaret Station, Longview Environmental trust, Wānaka Multisports, Matukituki Charitable Trust and many others.

HUB UPDATE: DART / REES / GREENSTONE



With a lack of early winter snow, we were able to complete additional tracking tunnel monitoring and trap servicing of areas usually inaccessible in July. In Spring, we finished installation of the 25-Mile Creek trapline in preparation for creating an environment suitable for a potential takahē release. Kea Basin and Temple Peak traplines were also completed, yielding good results. With our full summer staff back on board for the season, we are making great progress with trap installation, servicing and maintenance. Another new trapline around Mt Alfred, helps to protect the braided river birds of both the Rees and Dart.

The Rees River was surveyed for birdlife, with the Nationally Threatened wrybill being observed. Wrybill are one of the target species of the Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust Braided River Project, and had only been observed on the Rees in one previous year.

The Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust has had a successful year, one of steady consolidation of all activities, both as an independent trust and as a collaborative partner with the Southern Lakes Sanctuary. We are especially pleased with the feral cat trapping, having now caught over 100 of these predators since we started. We are hoping to increase the number of feral cat traps in the Rees Valley next year.

It goes without saying that the release of takahē into the Greenstone Valley was a highlight – one of our trustees was delighted to be a witness when the release took place.

The Southern Lakes Sanctuary has been highly successful in the thirty months of its existence. It will be a dreadful setback if work does not continue from July next year, especially with all of the investment – both capital and labour. It is our hope that Southern Lakes Sanctuary and our partnership with them will be sustained and supported in the long term.

Geoff Hughes, Trustee, Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust & Southern Lakes Sanctuary

HUB UPDATE: MOTATAPU



This year's highlight in the Motatapu/Mahu Whenua area has been the deployment of 20 AT220 automatic possum traps supplied by Southern Lakes Sanctuary. These traps continue working right through the winter when our trapping team has trouble accessing the valley in the ice & snow. We have removed over 400 possums since June. We are seeing the benefit of our trapping programme when we see pairs of

kārearea nesting and chicks fledging, when we hear korimako, & tūi in areas that were previously quiet, and we see native scrub regenerating thanks to the seed spread by the increased bird population. Kārearea are nesting within the Mahu Whenua area – successful nesting proves that our trapping efforts are making an impact.

Jo Booker, Trustee, Soho Properties Ltd & Southern Lakes Sanctuary



Beginning in January, one of our founding Trustees, Jo Booker, will commence a year-long challenge. She has decided to walk 5,200km in 2024 to raise funds for, and awareness of, the work of the Southern Lakes Sanctuary to protect and restore the biodiversity of our region. The fundraising goal for this challenge is \$10.00 per km - \$52,000.

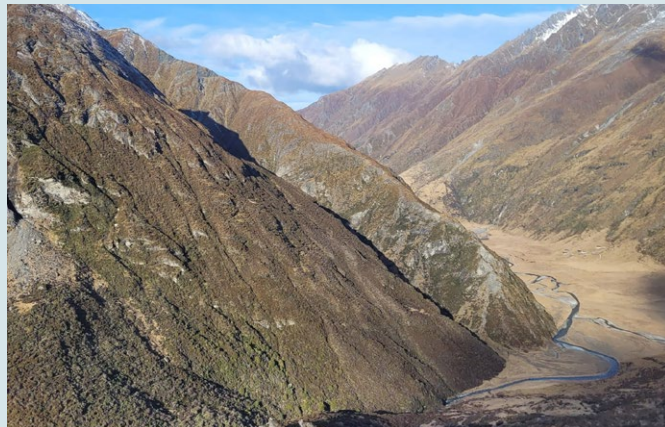
Lets make each of her steps count, together we can create a lasting legacy of conservation and environmental stewardship. To support Jo's challenge please visit: jo-steps-up.raisely.com

HUB UPDATE: CARDRONA VALLEY



We have been assisting The Cardrona Kārearea Project in studying the local population of this threatened species. Southern Lakes Sanctuary staff have been assisting with monitoring, banding efforts and in spreading the word to our groups and volunteers.

Prompted by reports from old tenure reviews about large numbers of braided river birds nesting on the open tops of the Pisa Range, our staff have been surveying this area and have recorded a considerable number of banded dotterel and South Island pied oystercatchers that were nesting or preparing to nest in the area. We will devise a long-term monitoring plan so we can better understand abundance, nest success rate and predation levels for these birds in this type of habitat.



Beyond Cardrona, our co-ordinator Tom is working with the amazing team at Minaret Station, along the western shores of Lake Wānaka, to help with the long-term planning of their conservation efforts. We have just finished building 250 traps for installation on their stunning station to protect biodiversity. Many threatened species have been observed on Minaret Station including rock wren / pīwauwau, kea, kārearea and whio and this committed team are doing what they can to protect these species.

HUB UPDATE: WĀNAKA-HĀWEA



Wānaka Backyard Trapping has had a few busy months! Southern Lakes Sanctuary have been amazing in support, from trap making and supplying, community liaison, calibrating traps, let alone co-ordinating and installing new traplines; the list goes on. We are on a wave and feel humbled to be part of this!

Southern Lakes Sanctuary staff have been busy auditing, fixing and installing traps, as well as ensuring they are up to date on Trap.nz. We also have increased

volunteer engagement thanks to the Volunteer South Volunteer Speed Dating event and the Winter Nature Talk series which was really well attended.

The support of our volunteers by Southern Lakes Sanctuary is enabling us to go from strength to strength, and really making a difference for conservation in Wānaka.

**Kris Vollebregt, Trustee,
Wānaka Backyard Trapping & Southern
Lakes Sanctuary**



Wānaka now has five new traplines. A line on the lower Cardrona River has been created in conjunction with Disc Golf Wānaka; and another around the Albert Town lagoons with the Albert Town Community Association.

Our Hub Co-ordinator Petrina has been working with local schools and pre-schools teaching children about conservation and how we can protect our precious biodiversity. Children are our future conservationists and it's vital that they understand that fewer predators mean more birds and lizards in our region.

HUB UPDATE: WHAKATIPU

Our main trial sites for using the communication noded AT220 traps are Bush Creek, Bob's Cove, Coronet and Wye Creek / Remarkables. These now have remote monitoring for 90 traps, with AT220s in these areas having caught over 5,500 predators. Monitoring, via wax tag indexing, shows possum numbers have reduced from a high of 70% down to as low as 13% in heavily trapped areas, proving the success of the AT220 traps. These results simply could not have been achieved as rapidly with single set traps. Thanks to the support we have received from Rod Drury and the Hill family, which has allowed this project to expand quickly, making a remarkable difference to the native biodiversity in these areas.



The Whakatipu Wildlife Trust continues to grow the number of community trapping groups that we support along with the number of volunteers who are contributing to the predator control effort. The help of our trapping group co-ordinator Bonnie has been invaluable; liaising with groups, providing on-the-ground support and training new volunteers, with over 150 trained in the past year.

We are starting to collect real data that supports anecdotal evidence that bird numbers are improving in our trapped areas, which is fantastic. Southern Lakes Sanctuary have been crucial in providing planning, strategic and practical support to predator control efforts in the Whakatipu. Long may the alliance continue!
Daniel Sweeney, Trustee, Whakatipu Wildlife Trust & Southern Lakes Sanctuary

FUNDING UPDATE

We are thrilled to confirm that AJ Hackett Bungy will continue to support our mahi – with the announcement of \$100,000 per year for the next three years.

Southern Lakes Sanctuary have been applying for a range of grants and making progress in creating relationships with philanthropic funders.

We are delighted that the Lotteries Environment and Heritage Fund granted us \$100,000, and the Stout Trust \$32,000, towards our work in the Rees Valley.

Alexander McMillan Trust has also funded 20 AT220 traps to be distributed



throughout our network of partner groups and volunteers.

Ensuring the continuation of our project is our highest priority so we can continue to support our partner groups and protect our native species.

“I am proud of the AJ Hackett Bungy NZ subsidiary, GSD Workforce, which has enabled the amazing work undertaken by the staff and volunteers of Southern Lakes Sanctuary. It is incredible to see the extent of work achieved and the difference it makes. By assisting with established company resources such as vehicles, office space and administrative capability, we have helped Southern Lakes Sanctuary quickly grow into a professional entity within the conservation industry. We hope that other tourism businesses get behind great initiatives like this either financially, or by using a similar model to support their local conservation organisations.”

David Mitchell, CEO, AJ Hackett Bungy NZ



PARTNERSHIPS

Southern Lakes Sanctuary are pursuing sponsorship agreements to fund our mahi going forward. Check out our Partnership Document for more information or if you can help in any way, don't hesitate to contact us. We are doing important work protecting our native wildlife, so we really need to keep it going!

Download our Partnership Document: southernlakesanctuary.org.nz/SLS015



SOUTHERN LAKES SANCTUARY

THANKS TO OUR PROJECT PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS:

- DOC MAHI MŌ TE TAIAO
- CENTRAL LAKES TRUST
- ROD DRURY
- QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL
- OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL
- GARDELL FAMILY TRUST
- LESLIE HUTCHINS FOUNDATION
- AJ HACKETT BUNGY
- TŪPIKI TRUST
- THE HILLS
- QEII NATIONAL TRUST
- MINARET STATION
- COLLIERIES
- SCIENCE INTO ACTION

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