

# Guardians of the Ruakituri

Kaitiaki o te Ruakituri

## Catchment Catchup December 2023 Annual Summary

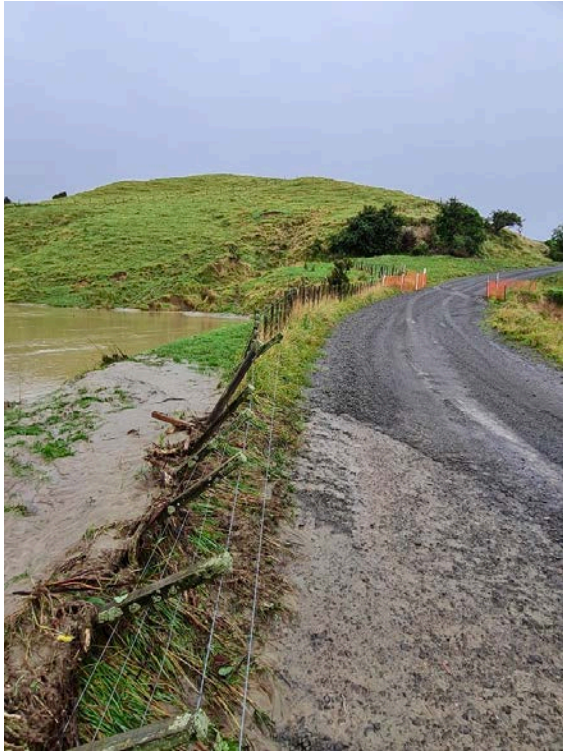
January: Purchased Large Generator for the hall to build on our resilience to adverse events. Thanks to James Brownlie for organising this great resource!



February: Cyclone Gabrielle and her follow-up rain events. With comms down and the road out, we had the choppers drop us off supplies. Thanks to Saff, Helena & Emma for their great mahi during this time- keeping the supplies organised and available at the hall.







There were plenty of folk far worse off than us. Once the road was open many Valley residents travelled to town to support our mates in North Clive, making sandwiches at the marae for the workers and helping folks who were devastated by Cyclone Gabrielle. The rain kept falling in the valley and many felt the rain events that occurred in the weeks after the cyclone were worse for our properties.

Thanks to the Wairoa Community Development Trust for bringing the BackYard BBQ to us in the valley. A great occasion to come together and share the current burdens.







No conversation in the valley has been complete without including the saga of the TeReinga Bridge- originally damaged in March 2022 then declared unpassable after the cyclone.



The bridge was sunk during the middle of the year and work to replace with a temporary structure has proved challenging and slow.



The crews have battled the wet winter and difficult hydrology and at year end have managed good progress in the construction of the two abutments that will support the middle section of a Bailey bridge.

Our thanks go to Wairoa District Council for their regular updates and sourcing the funds to ensure the construction can be completed without the added cost burden on the ratepayers.





The Guardians Executive met with the representatives from the Nature Conservancy and Hawke's Bay Regional Council to discuss the opportunities and challenges for the Land for Life project. We have 4 of the 12 pilot farms in this project, to explore maximising farm outcomes looking at different land use and reducing erosion in a financially viable way.

April: The Guardians made a Submission into the Ministerial Inquiry into Land use (AKA the Forestry Inquiry) on behalf of our farmers and industry. While forestry impacts aren't currently a significant issue for us, we support good practice that has less harmful outcomes for communities, waterways and highly erodible land.

May: The Guardians project to define a baseline data spread across the stretch of the Ruakituri awa was accepted into the National eDNA Project. This provided us with the resources and tools to do the sampling at locations spreading from the Top to the bottom of the valley- including the school students in this project also. Unfortunately, due the very wet winter and damaged state of the river after cyclone Gabrielle we haven't managed to do the sampling. The intension is to gather this information in the very near future.

June: Butchery Course hosted by Vaughan McNabb with the support from Affco,



Was a fun afternoon and has inspired more adventurous meat cuts and processing as a result.

**AGM-**This year marks the Amalgamation of the Residents Association with the Guardians of the Ruakituri. This was purely to simplify the administration of each group, with the Guardians taking over the admin and financial management. The Residents Association remains a significant Committee within the Catchment group and seeks to honour the legacy of those who worked so hard to develop the hall complex and the Wilderness Status of the upper reaches whilst ensuring the venue remains fit-for -purpose for all users well into the future.

With the potential upgrade providing motivation to ensure efficient and transparent management of this valley Taonga.



The Hall upgrade feasibility study includes a full evaluation of the current state and needs, including reports from plumber, electrical, builder, survey etc plus the architects' to draw up options to future proof the facility; we have \$55,000 to carry out this study from Lotteries NZ.



When this stage is complete we will move into stage 2. which will be when we will need to seek the funding to do the upgrade. Ruakituri Community has a designated steering group to guide the early stages, with full community consultation being sought once we have basic concept designs to present. Special thanks to those who are on this steering group doing the mahi on behalf of the community.

We have received a further \$34,000 to upgrade the driveway and water at the hall; this includes new tanks, Ultra violet filter system and installation. This will progress once the bridge is open.

A crew of valley farmers were able to complete their Wheels, Tracks & rollers course & certificate with funding from the Eastland Central Community Trust.



## Integrated Farm Planning & Community Catchment Project Launch:

The Catchment Community came together to enjoy a special catered lunch; thanks to Emma Morton catering and her team. We were entertained by guest speaker David Todd from Toddy Talks. This was a fabulous occasion to



acknowledge the progression from securing and planning this project, to actually beginning the delivery stage.

The IFP Project is a significant investment from Ministry for Primary Industries and spans 4 years (having actually begun the process in 2022). The Guardians have appointed AgFirst Gisborne to manage the programme and since the Launch, have delivered the Financial workshop, a Feed Smart workshop and planned a Worm Wise programme (which was postponed until the new year due to weather and lack of farmer availability). Pete has been working with individual farmers to do extensive baseline mapping to consider Land Use.



*Catchment Farmers focus in on managing their money well at the Financial workshop*

The Community Catchment Group which was launched mid-year is underway with the support of Simon Stokes as project Manager and Ashley Broadman doing the admin. The steering group for this Kaupapa are in the early stages in defining the vision and values of the project with the expectation that a plan will be developed early 2024, that can progress the mahi of that vision. Big mihi to this group for committing their time to this exciting and long term project.



**FUNDING PROJECTS:** In the background the Guardians have been



advocating for the needs of the valley farmers and community. We have distributed \$29700 of vouchers to all valley residents from Grant raised funds. We raised \$94,000 to have all the road Cattle stops replaced in the valley. These were breaking down due to the substantial weight and volume of traffic due

to the Te Reinga Bridge being out, the Grant Funding was received from NIWE MPI. Fencing project via the MPI NIWE we raised \$132,000 for repairs to road and boundary fencing paid directly to farmers.

Funding of \$37,000 was sourced from MPI to provide gravel and fencing materials to support the yards and access for Mangaroa and Papuni Rd properties.

Late December we were notified that we have been successful in our Red Cross application which will fund a non-cellular tower and handhelds. These will go to the 6 community Links leaders to support communication



James Brownlie loading the RRT posts for the community

during outages.

There is also additional funds to purchase two more defibrillator's to be located across the valley- reducing the time to access this equipment during an emergency.





**Milestone 3 IFP completed:** timing and farmer availability has been a challenge to progress the IFP project, however we have managed to meet our minimum requirements to achieve Milestone 3. Thanks to the team at Agfirst especially Shanna & Pete. Here's hoping 2024 will bring a much less stressful farming year and we are able to turn our minds to maximising the benefits of this project, which runs until mid 2026.



*Practicing the Condition Scoring at the Feed Smart workshop and below working out feed availability using Beef+LambNZ tools*



Climate Commission hui Hall; during November members from the NZ Climate Commission visited the valley to discuss how policy and 'wellington thinking' translates into real farming experiences. Nuku, Di, James and George were able to share their experiences and aspirations, undoubtedly a valuable lesson for our esteemed visitors.



December: The Guardians has been instrumental in advocating for all our Valley farming properties to receive the NZVet Council funded Animal Health and Biosecurity Plans. Properties will work with their preferred veterinary provider to complete these plans.



Our thanks goes to all those who have supported the valley residents in what has been a very difficult year.



Special thanks to QRS who have managed to keep the road open, traction seal Jame's nemesis and been responsive to our needs- whilst it's certainly not a main highway, it has been great to have their commitment.

The Guardians of the Ruakituri Executive Committee are consistently supporting life in the valley and looking for opportunities. The majority of the mahi goes unnoticed but has proudly developed an organisation which is trusted across the rohe and instrumental in advocating and making improvements in tangible ways.

The Guardians of the Ruakituri is a Not-for-Profit Farming Catchment Group. Chair; Nuku Hadfield, Deputy Chair; Peter Larsen, Treasurer; Peter McCarthy, Finance; James Brownlie, Coordinator & Administration; Di Roadley

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