

## Official launch for Mahia Pest free project

On Monday 2 July 2018 a bold new Mahia Peninsula predator free project was officially launched in Napier with the announcement of a \$1.6 million kick start in funding from the government.

Hawkes Bay is the latest region to get behind the country's goal of becoming Predator Free by 2050. The first phase of the \$4.86 million project will focus on removing possums from 14,500 hectares of land

on Mahia Peninsula within 4 years. The knowledge gained in Mahia will be used to develop a low-cost farmland control and eradication model applicable to other areas in the region and NZ. HBRC chairman Rex Graham states that we can reduce the cost of rural predator control by more than 50% through smart technology. The project also fits with the councils overarching goal of improving the region's natural ecosystem and biodiversity in the council's long-term plan states Mr Graham.



*New Mann Images*

## Conservation Minister visits Mahia.



In September, Mahia welcomed Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage. A large group of iwi, community, central and local government gathered at Tuahuru marae to discuss the Mahia Pest Free project. This is a large-scale pest free initiative aimed at removing possums, controlling mustelids and feral cats from

14,500 hectares of land from Mahia Peninsula which has been named "Whakatipu Mahia – Predator Free Mahia". In July, Hawke's Bay Regional Council and Predator Free 2050 Ltd launched a project aimed at creating a Predator Free Hawke's Bay. Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage said "we have all come together to work and make this special place a haven for our native plants and wildlife". "I am impressed by the energy and passion that so many people here have for the project and I will watch it's development with great interest" Minister Sage said.



## Whangawehi walkway

The WCMG organised a landowners gathering with Nicola Henderson from the NZ Access Commission to progress the project. Graham Douglas from Grandy Lake Forest took us on the new track recently opened and to be included in the walk. Discussions are underway to progress the project to the next stage which is the survey of the walkway.



## Whangawehi up for an Asian pacific river prize award

The WCMG were thrilled to have been announced as a finalist in the prestigious Asia Pacific River International prize awards held in Sydney recently. These awards recognise organisations who have achieved strong on the ground results in river restoration and who are happy to share this



knowledge with those that can benefit from it.

The WCMG competed in the Bert & Vera Thiess Australasian River prize category-alongside Laidley Creek which connects

with the lower reaches of the Brisbane River and the Parramata River around Sydney. All three groups in the Australasian category had been credited with achieving incredible outcomes for rivers in a collaborative partnership with the community, sponsors and government agencies.

Representatives of the Whangawehi Group who attended the Asia Pacific International River Prize awards were ecstatic to win the Pacific category. The group was grateful just to have been chosen as a finalist but was blown out of the water when they were announced as winners. The judges were very impressed with just how well the group collaborated with tangata whenua, the community and it's sponsors along with it's on the ground work which is diligently monitored. A big thank you to all who have been involved, it is a wonderful achievement.



## New Entrance for the Whangawehi

On Saturday the 1st September, the Whangawehi community banded together for a very productive working bee. The aim of the day was to spruce up the entrance way into the conservation project- alongside the Whangawehi



bridge. There had been some dissatisfaction amongst members that the gateway to such an award-winning conservation project needed to look much more the part. The group laboured to remove the long agapanthus hedge (and its roots) next to the road side but the new post and railing fence built in its place more than justified the time taken as it looked very impressive in the finish. The school planting site was beautified with some much-needed weeding and the addition of a smart new access site. On the Pongaroa Station side of the river the weeds were taken to with a vengeance and old poplars removed with a chainsaw. Thanks to the community for rolling up their sleeves and getting behind this project. It's going to look great for years to come.



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