



Media release

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Commitment to whānau and whenua: \$19m for Kaimai Mamaku forests

Hoki atu ki ōu maunga kia purea ai koe ki ngā hau o Tāwhirimātea; Return to your mountains to be cleansed by the winds of Tāwhirimātea. This powerful whakatauaki is driving a landscape-scale restoration project across the Bay of Plenty, initiated by the Manaaki Kaimai Mamaku Forum (MKMF).

Resourcing the people of the Kaimai Mamaku whenua to return as kaitiaki has been a desire for many hapū and iwi. The Jobs for Nature funding announcement by Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage will make this aspiration a reality with \$19 million dedicated to hapū-led mahi to restore and sustain the Kaimai-Mamaku forests.

The ambitious 240,000 ha landscape scale restoration project will create approximately 60 jobs through the investment over four years. Iwi and hapū will work to support and expand the conservation efforts that is already happening at six hub areas in the wider Kaimai-Mamaku forest landscape. The aim is to restore the mauri of the forest and the water that flows from it with comprehensive animal pest control, cultural protection, and biodiversity management.

“Working in partnership with many iwi and hapū over a significant area of public conservation land is a unique opportunity and will breathe life into the Treaty Partnership relationship,” says DOC Tauranga District Manager Jeff Milham.

In addition to the biodiversity outcomes from increased pest control, this kaupapa will support the iwi and hapū of the Kaimai-Mamaku to restore the cultural knowledge associated with indigenous species and strengthen kaitiaki knowledge and practices.

MKMF Co-Chair Carlton Bidois said, “the funding will achieve an extremely significant milestone for all Iwi and Hapū involved in the Kaimai-Mamaku restoration project. The announcement is a substantial acknowledgment to a genuine partnership between Iwi and Hapū of the Kaimai- Mamaku Ranges and the Crown through DOC.”

The Kaimai Mamaku is an ancient and enduring forest that has sustained people since the beginning of time. The unchecked introduced pests found throughout the Kaimai Mamaku are silencing the bush and destroying the ability of the forest to heal itself. Ramping up efforts to remove rats, stoats and possums through bait stations and trapping will be an initial focus for the project, as well as controlling goats.

“As the Co-Chair of the MKMF I must acknowledge Minister Sage for her ongoing commitment to community conservation efforts and the Treaty Partnership. I would also like to recognise the DOC Tauranga District Manager, local staff, Iwi and Hapū leaders, our community partners and coordinators in their unwavering dedication to ten years of collective effort toward our vision. Nga mihi maioha ki a koutou katoa” said Bidois.

The MKMF was established in 2009, as an alliance between government agencies, Iwi/hapū, community conservation groups, NGOs and many other stakeholders and interested groups with a shared vision for healthy people, water, and biodiversity throughout the Kaimai Mamaku forest landscape.

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Contacts

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Photos: supplied by Kaimai-Mamaku Forum





