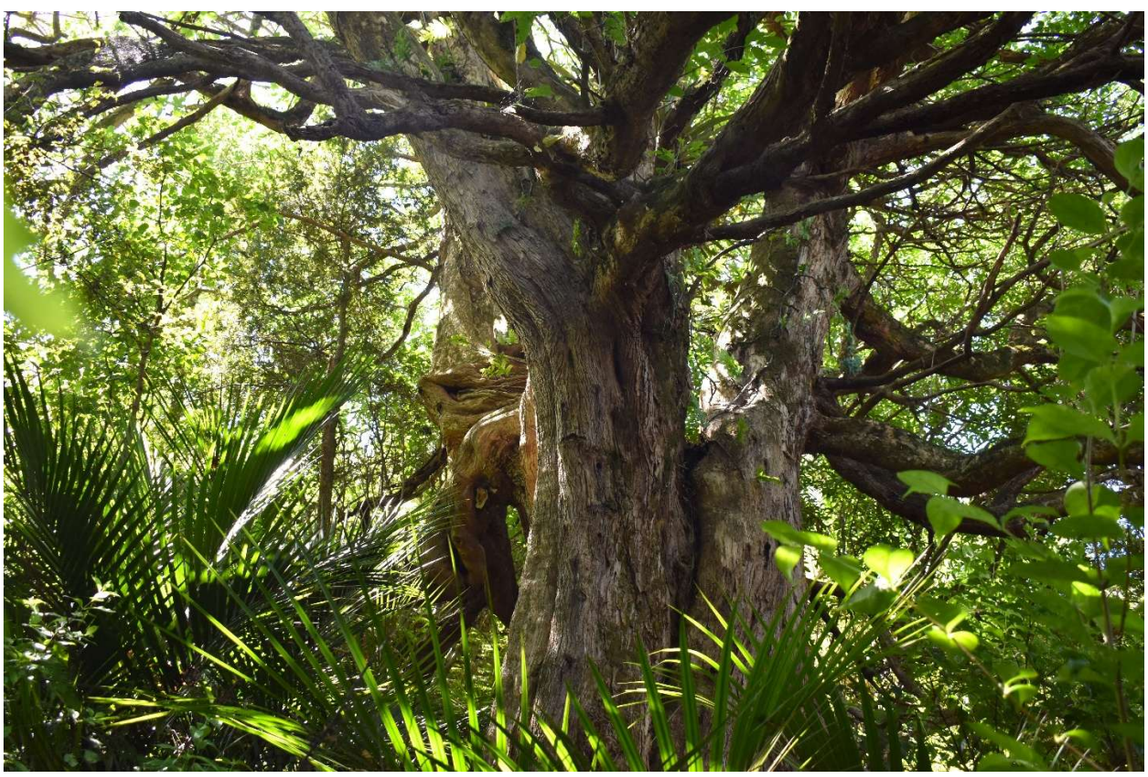
TĀNE'S TREE TRUST

Native Forests for our Future
Hereherea te Wao-nui-a-Tāne

Annual Report 2026



Puriri Tree – Photo Credit: Paul Quinlan

To be Presented at the Annual General Meeting

Thursday 15th October 2026, 4pm

At the Beachside Conference and Events Centre Tāhunanui Beach, Nelson

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AGENDA OF THE 2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Welcome and Opening Comments from Chairman Peter Berg
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the 2025 Meeting and Matters Arising
4. Chairman's Report
    a. Where we are at
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5. CEO's Report
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6. Treasurer's Report
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MINUTES OF THE 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 17 October 3pm at the Franklin Club, Pukekohe

1) Welcome and Opening Comments
    a) Peter Berg (Chair) welcomed attendees to the 2025 AGM, thank you to the members, trustees and patrons who have come along to the AGM.
    b) Attendees: (names withheld)

2) Apologies formally received (names withheld)

3) Minutes of 2024 AGM
    a) Chairman noted that the minutes from the 2024 AGM were reviewed.

4) Matters Arising
    a) No further matters arising or raised by attendees at the meeting.

5) Chair's Report
    a) Peter Berg (Chair) noted that our founding chairman, Ian Barton, passed away after a long association with the trust. In recognition of the quality of the work Ian did over many years, we are putting a lot of focus tomorrow on Ian's work. Ian was involved with many native species, but particularly with kauri. He was the leader of Tāne's Tree Trust for the

first ten years of its establishment and had a major role in the shape and direction of the trust.

b) During the course of the year, we produced A New Zealand Guide to Growing our Native Tall Tree Species booklet and we are deeply indebted to Te Uru Rākau for their support of the production of this booklet.
c) This year at Fieldays the inaugural Growing Native Forests Champions Awards were made for different facets of forestry. Two of our trustees, Ian Brennan and Paul Quinlan, were recipients of two of the awards.
d) Peter acknowledged the terrific support with both funding and on the ground aid from many people, including TUR/MPI through the SFFF project and The Tindall Foundation, who have been an extremely important supporter of TTT for many years. Without this support we couldn't have done what we have been able to do.
e) Peter mentioned that Ian Brown has retired because of illness but he has been a wonderful supporter and leader of the trust. Gerard Horgan was a valued trustee for a number of years, with an economics forestry background. Gerard has also retired due to illness.
f) Peter thanked Mel and Keri for the work they do, as CEO and Office Manager.
g) No further matters arising or raised by attendees at the meeting.

6) Chief Executive Officer's Report
   a) Mel Ruffell (Chief Executive Officer) thanked the members who have paid their membership fees for the year.
   b) Our newsletters go out four times a year to nearly 1200 people.
   c) We have continued our strategic review that we started last year and this afternoon we will be introducing our new logo.
   d) Thank you to all the trustees for their ongoing support and guidance.
   e) No further matters arising or raised by attendees at the meeting.

7) Treasurer's Report
   a) Warwick Silvester (Treasurer) mentioned that the funding situation has been particularly healthy due to funding from The Tindall Foundation. The foundation did make it quite clear at the beginning that they don't fund forever; rather they are here to get organisations started. It is quite clear that we are now a fully-fledged association. We have used quite a lot of The Tindall Foundation money as seed money to get other funding, so we have been able to grow that money. We are very appreciative to Sir Stephen Tindall and his foundation.
   b) Moving forward, we will be looking for alternative funding sources.
   c) Peter noted that some of our projects are funded in advance. We also have had a large bequest which we haven't used yet.
   d) The full financial report is available on the Charities Services website.
   e) Warwick thanked Mel for her wonderful work as our CEO and Keri as office manager.
   f) No further matters arising or raised by attendees at the meeting.

8) Project Updates
   a) All projects have updates included within the Annual Report. The chairman encouraged members to read these and to direct any inquiries to the individual project manager. The

Annual Report is a good compendium to give to others and also point them to our website.

b) No further matters arising or raised by attendees at the meeting.

9) Other Business
   a) We are particularly keen on building our database on growth and yield on many different species. We have help from Te Uru Rākau and The Tindall Foundation, along with other parties, and are aiming to build a database of projection of growth and yield for mixed species and mixed aged forests.
   b) A question on whether our O Tātou Ngāhere conference resulted in significant new numbers of members. Mel explained that everyone who attended the conference got a one-year complimentary subscription. Quite a few people renewed their membership, with only about 20 people taking themselves off the list. Some changed from a paid membership to just receiving the newsletter, so we are still able to share the information with them.
   c) Tāne's Tree Trust acknowledges all of our project partners and funders. They are key to our ability to continue to do our work. As part of a strategic review we have been undertaking, what we are trying to do is ensure that we are as collaborative as possible, and are trying to assemble a hub of interested parties to work together more formally.
   d) Everything we do is freely available on our website.
   e) Paul Quinlan thanked and acknowledged the time and leadership of our Chairman, Peter Berg.
   f) Mel presented our new TTT logo.
   g) No further business raised.

10) *Treasurer, Warwick Silvester, moved that the 2025 Annual Report, including financial reports, be received and approved, seconded by Andrew McEwen and carried.*

11) Close of Meeting 3.36pm

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - October 2026

The past year has been a little quieter for the Trust for no other reason than we have taken some time out to consider how we can best continue to contribute to our lovely country's forestry future. This has meant recognising that we must continue to be as obvious as possible as a proponent for native trees and forests in any forum given consideration to related matters and ensuring that we and the aspects of forestry we represent are given appropriate consideration. To help do this we are giving more prominence to our services, our data and to building better links across the community as part of a hub of native forestry excellence. A small team withing the Trust is guiding this development by building closer relationships with kindred organisations both within and outside New Zealand and otherwise taking time to be more recognisable by others wherever we can.

A catalyst for this approach has been the concern that while there has been growing advocacy for forestry with native trees there appears to be less understanding of what this means or could look like across future landscapes. Multiple challenges in the form of a changing climate, a multitude of introduced pest plants and animals and even the appearance of new or suddenly more active diseases and pathogens mean that recreating the past is neither feasible or even affordable. We may need to consider a future where as far as is possible the key matters of natural biodiversity, conservation of our soil and protection of water quality are accomplished alongside a safe and even nurturing environment for those people that now make New Zealand their home. To do so these forests will need to be;

- Permanent and natural renewable.
- Able to provide services and resources where it is feasible to do so (such as food, medicines, wood and fibre and peace and tranquillity).
- Part of a mosaic of landuse acknowledging that difference sites will support different activities.
- Shielding other areas of existing natural resources already protected in perpetuity and representative of past ecosystems.

Meanwhile the value provided by forests through the provision of ecosystem services is a consideration that is being increasingly discussed, with a view to integration alongside other societal systems, and inclusion in the form of a Payment for Ecosystem Services. These sorts of schemes are usually defined as market-based mechanisms (rather like the ETS) that offer monetary incentives to landowners in exchange for managing land to provide an ecological service. The incentive encourages continuous provision of the service while the restoration of ecosystems is actively undertaken. Members of the Trust have actively participated in the development of technology designed to better identify the magnitude of ecosystem service contributions while elsewhere the terminology around this work is also being standardised. Most recently the Parliamentary Commission for the Environment (PCE) has commissioned and published work to develop monetary values for a range of New Zealand's ecosystem services, noting that ecosystems provide benefits, such as carbon storage, water purification, flood mitigation and recreation.

Recognising the value of these services in monetary terms will help ensure they are included in environmental policy and investment decisions. The PCE's project will progress more thinking

about how ecosystem services might be provided and encouraged in New Zealand and make better data available to support such developments. To quote … "*This work is not about putting a price on nature. It is about ensuring that nature does not enter public decisions with a value of zero. While monetary valuation cannot fully capture nature's importance, it can help make environmental trade-offs more transparent and improve decision-making*."
Matters such as these are best achieved after long term consideration and commitment, and preferably after working over a range of landscapes – and ideally require consensus at Government and landowner level to be achieved (and alongside some maturing on the part of organisations solely focused on their own agenda).

Our annual report this year includes updates on our programme embracing some of these aspects and is targeted at continuing the process of re-familiarising New Zealanders with their native forests, but with particular focus on "*Native Forests for Resilient Landscapes*" (NFRL). While our aim has been to weave native forestry into discussions and strategies for forestry more broadly and alongside all other uses of land, as noted earlier we're now targeting just what those forests should look like and how they should be managed. By providing a lead on the restoration of natural ecosystems we think that the information and tools we have provided are helping although it is still a big step from planting trees (or protecting an area of natural reversion) to establishing durable and resilient forests for future generations to benefit from.

We are again fortunate to be supported by Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service (TUR) to host tomorrow's Conference *"Beyond the Canopy",* and field day which will be attempting to give more light to this discussion and guide a better balanced approached to rural land-use, and which can be further backed up through workshops, providing case studies and contributing to field days aimed at encouraging and facilitating the establishment and management of native trees and forests.

As well, we're continuing to develop access to our information around productivity, new management models, information sheets, etc on our website and as noted earlier demonstrate how these can benefit native tree planting and management projects wherever possible. Many of these developments are detailed in this report so I won't expand upon them here – suffice to note that this Annual Report gives updates on many of the projects and progress being made and members (and others) will find it a fairly comprehensive account of where we have been engaged most recently.

TRUSTEES

The trustees are –Ian Brennan, Peter Berg, David Bergin, Paul Quinlan, Robert McGowan, Warwick Silvester, Jon Dronfield, Jacqui Aimers, Wayne O'Keefe, Michael Orchard, David Horgan and Michael Bergin. As usual a number of Trustees retired by rotation, and all being willing to attend the Trust for another term they have all been reappointed.

I also record Warwick Silverster's retirement as Treasurer and his replacement by David Horgan in that capacity. Warwick held the role for many years and during that time ensured robust accounting for our funds and some sage advice on investing and making best use of the resources we have had available – particularly the ability to leverage our funding to attract additional investment from other sources and accordingly magnify the scale of activity we have

been able to undertake. We also appreciate David being prepared to step up and maintain the momentum, which is not particularly easy when difficult times are limiting discretional spending by potential investors. Ian Brown has also retired after a number of years of very valuable service – we are already missing his literary contribution to our work/reports and of course Ian's long-term personal experience as a forestry practitioner and wide knowledge of the many species planted by others around New Zealand has often ensured our projects are firmly grounded and properly justified.

As is usual, I note that additional Trustee applicants would be welcome and that we would be delighted to have more ladies and Maori representation.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

And another annual acknowledgement – our brilliant executive team continue to ensure we have remained on task and on time and their professionalism in every respect continues to be reassuring for our supporters, members and the Trustees alike. We were sad to lose Keri midway through the year but also delighted to welcome Karen who has ensured a seamless transition and brings an array of talents we are fortunate to be able to access.

TRUST FUNDING

Throughout this annual report readers will once again find reference to a number of significant projects only underway because of the funding support we receive – valuable projects are only possible with quality backing and it's important to us that we reciprocate by ensuring that our supporters are well advised of progress and that the results of our work are both well disseminated and readily accessible. For more than a decade we have been recipients of hugely important backing from the Tindall Foundation, support which has both given us momentum and even more importantly the confidence to back our project proposals and provide certainty about timely completion. As a consequence, the Trust has become recognised and acknowledged for our work with native trees and forests and has confidence that work will continue.

Our annual financial report for the past 12 months activity is attached; it has been independently reviewed and otherwise indicates the breadth of our effort and our robust present situation. The level of activity is a little reduced from the previous year and actually posts a small deficit, largely the consequence of funding and periods of activity not exactly coinciding. We continue to get great help from many of our members and in appreciation we've worked to hold the modest membership charge at its present level. As we have previously noted, we appreciate any additional support any of our members are able to provide – it enables us to extend our work to other important aspects and promote it as widely as possible.

In summary, 2025-2026 has included more inward reflection, but little less activity for the Trust with our programmes, workshops, publications, etc all getting lots of coverage. Our team continue to work famously together, and we expect to continue expanding the data and tools necessary to ensure that native forests will for many landowners be part of a highly valued land use well into the future.

Peter Berg – Chairman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER UPDATE

The 2025/26 year has seen TTT continue to expand and strengthen our support, guidance, and project work across various regions of New Zealand. The comprehensive project updates in this report highlight the breadth and depth of the work we're involved in. Recent work includes updating our databases —including the revamp of our comprehensive primary database uniting planted, regenerating, and transition forestry sample plots; the completion of the tōtara project developing a functional supply chain and building local capacity; the release last year of our Tall Trees Booklet with support from Te Uru Rākau; entering the 4th year of our transitioning exotic to natives project, marking the publication of our Preliminary Guidelines for Transition and completed ongoing field measurements across key trial sites; completing year two of our Tindall Foundation funded Native Forests for Resilient Landscapes project, which supports all aspects of TTT's work; entering the final year of our valuing the provision of ecosystem services on private land - which includes developing a prototype tool to assist landowners with assessing ecosystems before and after intervention; and the final year of our three year seed island project for Trees that Count and Z Energy, which now spans 13 monitoring and demonstration sites nationwide.

With continued challenging economic conditions, we've had a modest financial year. Membership renewals are again down compared to 2024/25, but overall membership remains strong. Subscriptions for the 2025/26 year have been sent out, with the annual fee remaining at $45.00. We currently have 666 members, with 166 already paid for the 2025/26 year. We have a further 499 subscribers to our newsletters.

Unfortunately, Keri departed our team earlier this year. I wish to acknowledge all of Keri's hard work over the last 3 years and thank Keri on behalf of myself, our members and our trustees.

In June, we welcomed Karen into our small team. Karen has quickly picked up the role and is doing a great job navigating member enquiries, maintaining our website, overseeing our social media presence, and producing her first informative and engaging newsletter in September. I look forward to continuing to work with Karen going forward.

Over the past year, TTT has continued its strategic review and the development of a forward-looking framework. I was excited to unveil our refreshed brand and logo at our AGM last year as part of this process. We also launched our new look, more user-friendly website. I hope our members and general visitors to our website are enjoying the easier navigation for all of our reports, tools, silvicultural guidance notes and information.

We remain focused on opportunities to further our research and progress toward our vision—promoting the use of indigenous New Zealand tree species to support biodiversity, enhance landscapes, deliver cultural value, and offer sustainable options for high-quality timber and other resources. Several new proposals are currently in development to advance this work, with a particular emphasis on permanent, resilient native forests.

Alongside field operations, TTT has maintained a strong voice in policy and practice over the last 12 months. Highlights include our formal submissions on the NZ Sustainable Finance Taxonomy

and Climate Change Commission advice, alongside new peer-reviewed research published on understorey regeneration in exotic plantations.

We are excited to be holding our Beyond the 'Canopy' - Rethinking How We Grow Native Forests here in Nelson over the next two days. Many months of planning have gone into developing a forward-thinking programme of speakers and topics. We were excited to be able to offer tickets for our conference at a price point we feel is accessible for everyone, and wish to thank all of our Sponsors, especially our Principal Sponsor Te Uru Rākau - New Zealand Forest Service for helping us make this happen.

Finally, I want to thank the trustees for their ongoing support. Your guidance enables me to carry out my role effectively, and I'm truly grateful for your commitment to TTT's mission.

Please contact either Karen at the office, office@tanestrees.org.nz if we can be of any assistance or if you wish to obtain any of our publications or you can reach out to me at mel@tanestrees.org.nz.

I am looking forward to what the 2026/27 year will bring for TTT.
Mel Ruffell – CEO

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Trust remains in a sound financial position, although we must remain mindful of the ongoing challenges associated with securing research funding and the steadily increasing costs of delivering high-quality research programmes.

The support we have received from the Tindall Foundation over many years has provided an invaluable foundation for the Trust's work. Their commitment has enabled us to build a strong organisation and deliver significant outcomes. While it is unlikely that we will receive substantial funding from the Foundation in the future, we are immensely grateful for their longstanding generosity and support.

Our programme leaders continue to do an outstanding job, both in securing research contracts and in ensuring that funding is applied as effectively and productively as possible. I encourage members to read the research summaries contained within this report and to explore the results and resources available on our website. They demonstrate the depth and quality of the work being undertaken.

The work of the Trust is important. We are a leading organisation that provides essential knowledge and understanding about New Zealand's native trees and forests, contributing valuable research that informs conservation, restoration and management efforts across the country.

The latest financial statements are included as Appendix 1. Like many organisations operating in the science and research sector, we have experienced a challenging year, with costs continuing to rise. As a result, the Trust has recorded a moderate loss for the financial year.

Our funding model is largely based on the project work we undertake. Looking ahead, we need to consider whether this model remains the best fit for the future, or whether the extensive information, expertise and data held by the Trust could support a partnership with a long-term funding organisation that provides a level of base funding. Such support would allow us to disseminate our knowledge more widely and maximise the value of the information we have accumulated over many years.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Warwick for his many years of service as Treasurer. He has done an exceptional job, and I can only hope to follow the high standard he has set.

I would also like to thank Mel, whose leadership as CEO is quite remarkable. She does an outstanding job of ensuring the Trust remains financially well managed and operates smoothly and effectively.

Finally, I would like to recognise Keri for her dedicated service as Office Manager and thank her for all the work she has done over the years. We wish her well and warmly welcome Karen into the role.

David Horgan - Treasurer

PROJECT UPDATES

2025–26 Highlights

- Preliminary science-based guidance on transitioning standing radiata pine to permanent native forest completed in February 2026, with a complementary TTT factsheet in preparation.
- The nationwide seed-island project entered its final year, with more than 250 native trees interplanted at Rangiuru, remeasurement of the two Kāwhia sites, and 500 canopy-tree seedlings established at Mangarara.
- Final nationwide seed-island measurements and vegetation assessments were scheduled through winter 2026, ahead of final reporting in September.
- Major progress was made on TTT's indigenous forestry database upgrade, including checking and validation of 99 long-term planted-native PSP datasets supplied to MPI.
- Detailed specifications, field forms and reporting requirements were developed for the new web-based database, covering planted, regenerating, transitional and continuous-cover forests.
- A new Northland farm-tōtara project tested a functioning supply chain through two small harvests, milling and timber dispatch, while building local forestry and processing capability.
- Native Forests for Resilient Landscapes (NFRL) continued to shift the emphasis from blanket planting toward assisted natural regeneration, strategic planting and working with existing vegetation.
- Advocacy, education and promotion continued for sustainable timber production via continuous cover forestry (CCF), and the wider environmental and cultural values associated with native forests. This included workshops and conference presentations.
- The Pāmu ecosystem-services project is in its final year, reaching an important milestone with the native-forest Rapid Assessment Form (RAF) published in a peer-reviewed Restoration Ecology paper; while work continues on publishing papers on the development of wetland and stream RAFs, and a paper on monetising ecosystem services.
- Development of the prototype Nature Benefits Calculator (NBC) continues - this digital tool will help improve accountability in restoration investment, reduce assessment and reporting costs, and support environmental assurance, sustainable finance and nature-market applications.

Introduction

The 2025–26 year has seen several of Tāne's Tree Trust's major projects move from establishing trials and collecting baseline information into remeasurement, analysis, practical guidance and application.

An increasingly strong theme across the Trust's work is the need to establish permanent native forest at much greater scale while keeping costs realistic for landholders. This means complementing conventional planting with assisted natural regeneration, strategic or supplementary planting, effective pest and weed management, and better use of existing native and exotic vegetation as shelter and nurse cover.

At the same time, TTT has made substantial progress in strengthening the long-term datasets and information systems that underpin its science and technology transfer. The redevelopment of the indigenous forestry database is particularly important, providing the platform for bringing

together information from planted forests, natural regeneration, continuous-cover forestry, transition forests and other current projects.

The principal projects and initiatives progressed during 2025–26 are outlined below.

1. Transitioning Exotic Forest to Native

PROJECT STATUS: Fourth year of five-year project completed

The Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures project investigating transition from radiata pine to native forest has moved increasingly from field surveys into synthesis, long-term monitoring and development of practical guidance.

A major milestone was completion of the Preliminary Guidelines for Transitional Forestry in February 2026. These bring together the national LUCAS analysis, regional and bioclimatic surveys and carbon modelling undertaken during the project. Analysis of 185 LUCAS plots and the Tairāwhiti work confirmed that many older and lower-density pine stands already support significant native understorey vegetation. Favourable transition sites tend to combine adequate rainfall, suitable climate, older or thinning pine canopies, nearby native seed sources and relatively low browsing pressure.

The emerging message is that there is no single transition prescription. At favourable sites, pest control combined with natural regeneration may be sufficient, whereas more difficult sites may require enrichment planting, weed control and varying levels of canopy intervention. Canopy manipulation should therefore be regarded as one management option rather than an essential treatment.

The carbon modelling also highlights an important trade-off. Faster canopy removal can accelerate progress toward native dominance but increases the risk of weed invasion and rate at which carbon held in the pine canopy is lost. Slower transition retains pine carbon and site protection for longer but may extend the period before native trees dominate. The latest project synthesis concludes that some temporary decline in total carbon is likely during transition, with its timing and scale strongly influenced by management decisions.

Long-term monitoring of canopy-management trials has continued at Omahuta in Northland, Whangapoua in the Coromandel, and the upper Maitai catchment in Nelson. These compare treated and untreated pine canopy areas and fenced and unfenced subplots to assess planted-seedling performance, natural regeneration, weeds and browsing. The fencing is experimental rather than a recommended landscape-scale treatment; its value is in demonstrating the effect of removing browsing pressure. Final trial results will contribute to the project's guidance due in 2027.

During 2026, the project team also prepared a new illustrated TTT factsheet to provide a summary of the project. It focuses particularly on transition pathways, likely timeframes, carbon implications, management risks and the need for adaptive management.





Seedling plots two years after establishment in the upper Maitai catchment, Nelson.

Upper: poisoned pine and fenced treatment, showing substantial growth of planted seedlings and natural regeneration.

Lower: unpoisoned and unfenced treatment, showing significant browsing of planted seedlings and limited natural regeneration.



Open, dead pine canopy in the poisoned treatment plot at Whangapoua, Coromandel, two years after treatment.

2. Accelerating Landscape-Scale Restoration of Native Forest – Seed Islands

PROJECT STATUS: Final year of three-year project – completion September 2026

The seed-island project undertaken by Trees That Count and Tāne's Tree Trust, and funded by Z Energy, has entered its final field-measurement, analysis and reporting phase. Work during 2026 has concentrated on testing how established seed islands are performing and what can be learnt about using strategic planting as part of assisted natural regeneration.

At Rangiuru Pā in the Bay of Plenty, more than 250 additional native canopy and nurse species were interplanted during 2026 into the shelter created by the original three-year-old planting. Species included tōtara, mataī, rewarewa and pigeonwood. Most of the established shrub-hardwood nurse species were already 1.5–3 m tall and showed excellent survival and vigour, demonstrating how a relatively simple pioneer planting can be progressively enriched with longer-lived canopy species.

At Kāwhia, the two coastal back-dune sites, each containing ten seed islands, were remeasured for survival, height growth, vigour and damage. Modified RECCE assessments were also undertaken to quantify native and exotic vegetation and natural regeneration. Tī kōuka and harakeke were performing particularly well, while browsing, insects and competing grasses affected several shrub species. Interestingly, planted natives growing within some exotic woody cover performed better than those on more open exposed sites, reinforcing the potential value of retaining useful nurse vegetation where it is not creating an unacceptable weed risk. Pampas remains a significant management issue.

The final demonstration site was established at Mangarara Station in southern Hawke's Bay in June 2026. Five hundred native seedlings were planted in ten seed islands, each 15 m in diameter, distributed through more than 10 ha of retired hill country containing previously

established mānuka, kānuka and kōhūhū nurse cover. Species included tōtara, mataī, kōwhai and tītoki.

The final phase includes nationwide remeasurement and modified RECCE assessment of the remaining sites, including Waipoua, Pihitia, Waikereru, Waingake, Mount Vernon, Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara, the Remarkables and the Te Anau site. Data entry, quality assurance, analysis and preparation of the final report will be completed before the end of 2026.

The project increasingly supports the view that seed islands should be regarded as one tool within assisted natural regeneration, rather than as a fixed planting prescription. Strategic placement within existing shrub cover, sheltered microsites, riparian areas, gullies or places lacking suitable native seed sources has the potential to achieve considerably more than simply distributing planted trees uniformly over a landscape.

This has led directly to development of a potential next-stage programme aimed at testing how seed islands could be deployed strategically at farm, catchment and landscape scales, including questions around spacing, ecological connectivity, seed dispersal and optimal placement.



Three years after establishment, native nurse shrubs at Rangiuru near Te Puke in the Bay of Plenty, are mostly 1.5–3 m tall, allowing longer-lived canopy species such as tōtara, mataī and rewarewa to be planted into sheltered gaps.



Five hundred native canopy-tree seedlings were planted in ten seed islands within previously established mānuka, kānuka and kōhūhū nurse cover on retired hill country in southern Hawke's Bay.



Greg Hart (Mangarara Station owner left) beside woofer helpers from France, Germany Spain and Canada - image credit Greg Hart.

3. Native Forests for Resilient Landscapes

PROJECT STATUS: Second year of three-year programme completed

The Native Forests for Resilient Landscapes programme, supported by The Tindall Foundation, continues to provide an umbrella for much of TTT's work on establishing and managing permanent native forest in working landscapes.

The programme comprises five workstreams covering working with nature, continuous-cover and native timber forestry, non-timber values, advocacy and education, database development and the survey of planted native stands. A major emphasis during 2025–26 has been working with natural forest processes. Assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting and seed islands are

increasingly being considered alongside conventional planting, particularly on marginal hill country where blanket planting at scale is unlikely to be affordable.

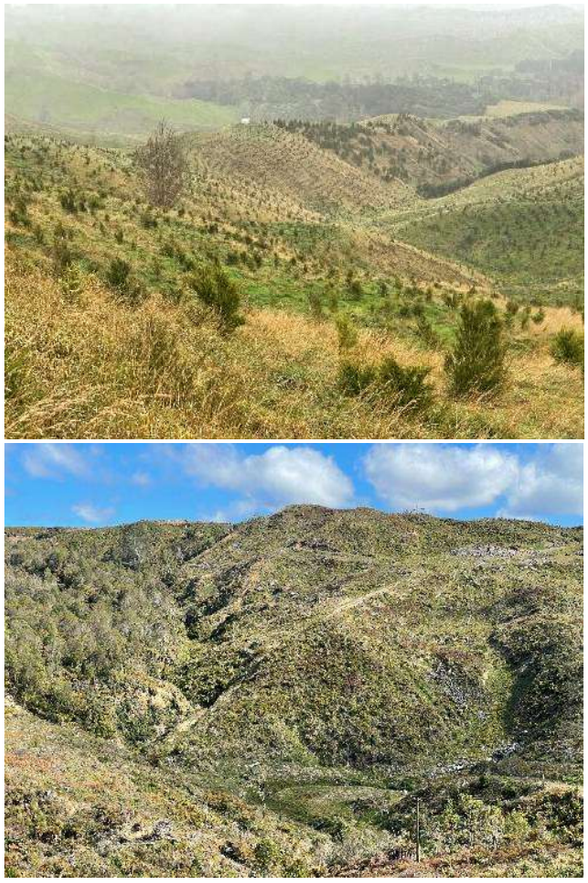
The programme also continues to support managed native forest and continuous-cover forestry within productive landscapes. This includes naturally regenerating tōtara, mixed native and exotic forests, transition forestry and integrating permanent native forest into the least productive or most erosion-prone parts of farms.

Much of the tangible second-year progress is now occurring through the indigenous forestry database and survey work, the transition and seed-island programmes, and the new Northland farm-tōtara supply-chain project described below. Also, there is ongoing liaison with government and non-government agencies, including collaborative work and sharing of information, and coordination with crown research institutes on relevant research projects. Advocacy for incentives for native forestation continues, including provision of advice regarding voluntary carbon and nature credit markets. Advice was provided to the New Zealand Taxonomy (agriculture and forestry criteria) to help define which economic activities are environmentally sustainable and aligned with a low-emissions future.

The Trust has continued to showcase native forestry at workshops, field trips, conferences and Fieldays, to various audiences including farm forestry, plantation forestry and agricultural industries, other eNGOs and general public. TTT has coordinated with and helped disseminate the results of three post-grad students from three different universities, contributing to insights into native forests and climate adaptation, podocarp seed germination, and native forest regeneration under woolly nightshade.







The Native Forests for Resilient Landscapes programme and aligned projects, including the Seed Islands Project, are promoting natural regeneration, strategic planting and mixed land-use approaches on marginal and erosion-prone land. Examples, from top to bottom: mixed hill-country farming and forestry in Nelson–Marlborough; seed islands at Remarkables Station, Queenstown; mānuka and kānuka planting with seed islands of mixed native trees on retired hill country at Mangarara Station, central Hawke's Bay; and native regeneration following pine removal at Waingake, Gisborne District Council's water-supply catchment, Tairāwhiti.

4. Indigenous Forestry Database Redevelopment and Plantation Survey

PROJECT STATUS: Major MPI-supported redevelopment underway

The redevelopment of TTT's native forest database has become one of the Trust's most significant infrastructure projects. In 2026 MPI contracted TTT to upgrade the existing Native Plantation Permanent Sample Plot database into a secure web-enabled system and to provide MPI with access to cleaned historical planted-native data.

By 31 May 2026, 99 permanent sample plot datasets (for which landowner or manager consent had been confirmed) had been error-checked, validated and supplied to MPI. This included 54 plots delivered in the first tranche in February and the remaining consented plots in the second milestone. All landowners and managers who were successfully contacted agreed to the data being supplied for the purposes of the project.

In parallel, detailed design work has progressed on the new database. The proposed system uses MySQL and Python and will accommodate planted and naturally regenerating native stands,

mixed-age and mixed-species forests, RECCE vegetation plots, early survival monitoring, transition forestry, continuous-cover forestry and mixed exotic–native stands.

The new database is being designed for web-based field and desktop entry, automated checking and calculation, and reporting of forestry measures including stocking, basal area, mean top height, stem volume, carbon and species diversity. It will also provide different levels of access while protecting sensitive landowner and site information.

Considerable work has also gone into developing standardised field forms and a practical species list. The objective is to avoid cumbersome field systems containing thousands of rarely encountered taxa while maintaining sufficient flexibility for the diversity of planted and naturally regenerating forests likely to be entered into the system.

Database development continues alongside remeasurement of existing native plantations and establishment of new plots. This is essential because the value of TTT's long-term growth, yield and carbon models depends on maintaining and expanding the underlying measurements across different species, regions, stand ages and management histories.

The longer-term aim is for the database to become a national hub for data on planted and managed native forestry, complementary to systems such as NVS (National Vegetation Survey) and other national forest databases rather than duplicating their role.



Permanent sample plots in planted native stands provide the long-term measurements needed to improve TTT growth, yield and carbon models and are being incorporated into the new web-enabled indigenous forestry database; 100-year-old kauri in Cornwall Park, Auckland.

5. Developing a Functional Farm-Tōtara Supply Chain in Northland

PROJECT STATUS: New 2026 project completed

An important new initiative during 2026 has moved the long-running Northland farm-tōtara programme from research and demonstration toward testing an actual timber supply chain.

TTT coordinated a project from 9 March to 30 June 2026, with project management funded by Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service. The project aimed to build local capacity and establish a workable supply chain for sustainably managed farm-tōtara from Māori-owned and other Northland properties.

The project involved two small harvests. The first tested harvesting, milling and dispatch of "green-off-the-saw" farm-tōtara to an established timber buyer. A subsequent face-to-face supply-

chain meeting brought together potential suppliers, a local portable sawmiller and a New Zealand furniture manufacturer. A second harvest at Te Whangae Farm then tested the developing supply chain in practice.

Training and knowledge transfer were deliberately incorporated, including involvement in forest harvesting, inventory and permanent sample plot work associated with sustainable forest management planning, and timber milling. The project also recorded quantities, costs and processing experience so that practical constraints within the supply chain could be identified and refined.

This represents a significant progression from earlier TTT and Northland Tōtara Working Group research. The issue is no longer simply whether naturally regenerated farm-tōtara can be sustainably managed and produce useful timber, but whether durable relationships can be developed between forest owners, harvesters, millers, processors and buyers.

The project provides a practical foundation for the wider Tōtara Industry Initiative being developed in Te Tai Tokerau Māori Forestry Inc.



Josh Witehira (right) and forestry trainer Shane Maxwell, participated in a small-scale harvest of in Northland to test a functional supply chain of sustainably managed farm-totara timber.



Sawmiller Li Legler decides the cutting plan for a tōtara log. The timber was harvested and milled to order for NZ-made furniture makers Innate Furniture Ltd.

6. Pūniu River Care Planting Audit

PROJECT STATUS: Final year

Tāne's Tree Trust was commissioned by Pūniu River Care (PRC), with funding from the Waikato River Authority, to undertake a two-year independent audit of three native afforestation sites planted by PRC in 2024. The sites cover approximately 10 ha of retired hill country on three South Waikato properties and were monitored from establishment through to the final two-year assessment in winter 2026.

The planting design comprised a relatively simple native forest mix, with mānuka and kānuka established as the initial nurse cover and tōtara interplanted as a longer-lived canopy species. This approach aims to rapidly establish protective woody cover while retaining a substantial component of a native tall-tree species that can increasingly contribute to the future forest canopy.

TTT established 8–10 permanent 10 m diameter monitoring plots on each property. All planted seedlings within each plot were identified to species and assessed for survival, height, vigour and damage or other establishment issues. This provided a consistent basis for comparing establishment success among the three sites and tracking changes over the first two years after planting.

The recently completed final assessment recorded mean survival of approximately 84.6% across the three sites, indicating generally good establishment two years after planting. Average current stocking was only about 1,600 stems/ha.

The project also reinforces the value of monitoring during the first few years after planting so that weed control, animal-pest management and infill planting can be undertaken while they are still likely to be effective. The final audit provides PRC and the Waikato River Authority with an independent assessment of planting performance and practical guidance for refining future large-scale native afforestation programmes.



Remeasurement of permanent monitoring plots two years after planting provides an independent check of survival, achieved stocking, plant vigour and establishment problems across several Pūniu River Care restoration sites.

7. Valuing Ecosystem Services on Private Land

PROJECT STATUS: Final year of a 4-year Phase I project

TTT continues to have an integral role in this collaborative project - valuing ecosystem services provided by natural ecosystems on private land - led by Dr Clint Cameron and funded by MPI, Pāmu and The Tindall Foundation. The project is focused on developing practical, user friendly ways to assess the ecological quality of native forest, wetlands and streams, and to link improvements in ecosystem condition with ecosystem services and the economic value they provide.

Data was collected from ecosystems in varying condition on Pāmu farms in Northland. Rapid Assessment Forms (RAFs) were developed and tested for native forest, wetland and stream ecosystems. Standard quantitative ecological indexes were also used for assessments in the three types of ecosystems, as a comparison. The RAFs have been designed to give land managers a practical way to benchmark ecosystem condition, identify pressures and management responses, and monitor change through time, while retaining a clear link to more rigorous ecological assessment methods.

In addition to this, both types of assessments (RAFs and quantitative ecological assessments) were undertaken on reference sites in conservation land in Northland, i.e., comparing the forest and wetland remnants, and stream ecosystems on farms with the generally higher quality ecosystems on conservation land. Management actions such as fencing and pest and weed control were also considered in relation to improvements in ecosystem condition and the services those ecosystems provide.

The ultimate goal is to create a user-friendly web-based tool - the Nature Benefits Calculator (NBC) – based on the RAFs, for ordinary people to accurately assess the ecological condition of forests, streams and wetlands, as described in more detail below.

A major milestone earlier this year was the publication of the native forest component in a peer-reviewed Restoration Ecology paper. The study tested use of the forest RAF across native forest fragments on Pāmu farms, in comparison with a quantitative index of forest structural complexity. The relationship between the RAF and the quantitative index was very strong, with the ecological-state component of the RAF explaining 99.3% of variation in comparison to the structural index and the overall RAF score explaining 83.8% of variation. This provides an important evidence base for using a relatively simple land-manager assessment (via the Forest RAF) as a credible monitoring and reporting tool, including for future payment-for-ecosystem-services, and sustainable-finance and biodiversity-investment applications.

A paper based on the wetland component has also been submitted for publication in an academic journal. Two further papers will be submitted within the next 2 months (based on the streams component and also on ecosystem services). The wider research also includes work undertaken by post-graduate students. Matt Funaki's PhD research examines regulating services provided by wetlands on farms including flood mitigation and attenuation of sediment, nutrients and *E. coli*. Research by Rhiannon Warren (supervised by Professor Bruce Burns, a past TTT trustee) has examined the potential role - and risks - of woolly nightshade (a noxious weed) as a nurse species during succession toward native forest.

This Ecosystems Services project is particularly relevant to TTT's wider work on non-timber values of native forest. It provides a pathway for translating biodiversity, water-quality, climate-resilience and other ecosystem services into practical measures that can be understood by landholders, environmental stewards, funders and emerging nature-finance markets.



Ecological assessments being undertaken in a reference forest, in AH Reed Memorial Park, Northland. An assessment using a Rapid Assessment Forms (RAF) was undertaken alongside a quantitative forest-structure assessment. The quantitative measures were compared with (and ultimately used to validate) the RAF for native forest.

The Nature Benefits Calculator (NBC)

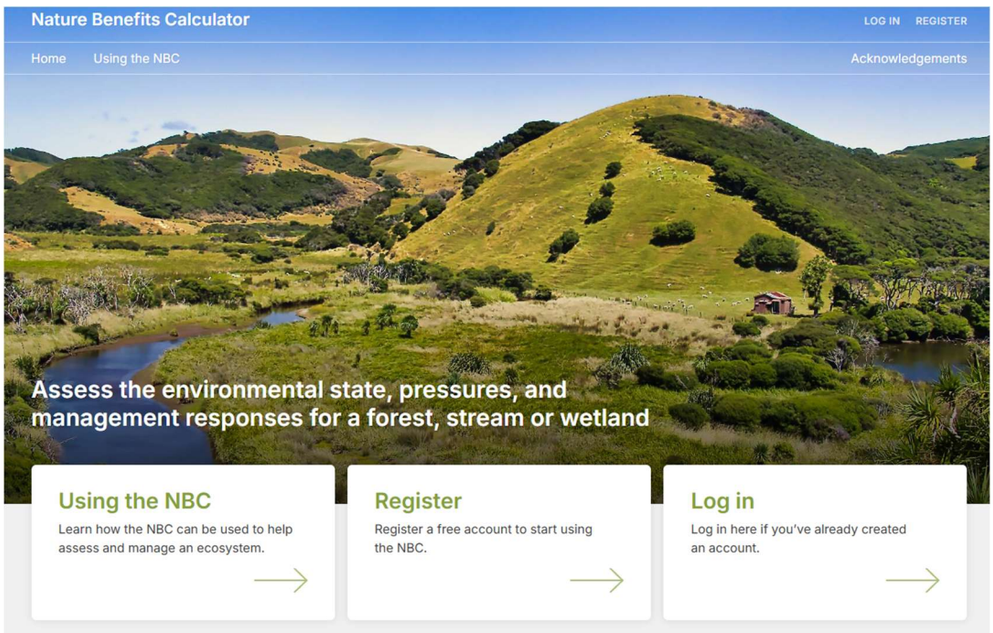
The prototype of the Nature Benefits Calculator (NBC) has been developed, using the RAFs in digital form for assessing native forest, wetlands and streams.

TTT and collaborators are seeking further funding for independent testing and further refinement of the NBC, to test usability and functionality.

The NBC will enable landholders and environmental stewards to consistently and accurately assess the ecological condition of forests, wetlands and streams - identifying the pressures affecting them, and help with developing appropriate management responses. Users can establish a baseline condition score, set key performance indicators (KPIs), and track environmental improvements over time. The NBC also allows users to estimate the costs of management actions – such as fencing and pest plant or animal control – and the resulting value of ecosystem services provided to society, expressed in NZD $ per hectare per year.

By recording management actions undertaken, the costs involved, and subsequent environmental outcomes, the tool provides credible evidence of improved environmental performance. This evidence can help landholders and environmental stewards demonstrate the value of their investment and potentially recover some of the costs through existing or emerging financial opportunities, including:

- Supporting accreditation under sustainability standards, such as NZFAP Plus or future biodiversity modules, which may provide access to market recognition or product premiums;
- Assessing and reporting on High Conservation Areas as part of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification;
- Green loans and sustainability-linked lending, including preferential interest rates; and
- Emerging natural-capital and ecosystem-service markets, such as biodiversity or nature credits.



The prototype of the Nature Benefits Calculator (NBC) has been developed for assessing native forest, wetlands and streams. We are seeking funding for independent testing and further refinement before it is fully launched. We are also inviting organisations and individuals to test the NBC and provide feedback.

8. Technology Transfer, Publications and Sector Engagement

Technology transfer remains integral to virtually all TTT projects, with research findings communicated through publications and guidelines, field days, conferences, National Fieldays, online tools, factsheets, videos and direct engagement with landowners, foresters, iwi, community groups and government agencies.

A major technical output during the year was the Preliminary Guidelines for Transitional Forestry, completed in February 2026. These bring together findings from the national and regional surveys, carbon modelling and field trials investigating the transition of exotic plantations toward permanent native forest. A shorter illustrated transition factsheet is also being developed as part of the TTT factsheet series. The existing factsheets are being revised to provide consistent authorship, publication dates and citations, and to allow both online use and future printing.

Recent professional and peer-reviewed publications associated with TTT's work include:

- Cameron, C., Thoresen, J., Stuart, R., Storey, R., Tracy-Mines, M., Ball, O., McQueen, J., Burns, B., Aimers, J., Bergin, D., Landles, W., Williams, G. & Tait, P. (2026). *Strong relationship between qualitative Rapid Assessment Forms and quantitative indices used*

to assess the ecological quality of forests in Northland, New Zealand. Restoration Ecology 34: e70272. https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.70272

- Casey, P., Quinlan, P., Paul, P., & Leuzinger, S. (2026). *Future forests and future foresters – forest management in a changing New Zealand landscape*. NZ Journal of Forestry 71(2): 39 – 44.
- Graeme, M., Kimberley, M., Bergin, M. (2026). Native understory of pine plantation stands in Tairāwhiti, New Zealand. NZ Journal of Forestry 71(2): 10-17.
- Kimberley, M., Graeme, M. & Bergin, D. (2026). *Carbon and biodiversity in the understory vegetation of New Zealand's exotic tree plantations*. NZ Journal of Forestry 70(4): 23-29.
- Quinlan, P. (2025). *Continuous Cover Forestry from scratch – planting mixed species and developing an irregular forest structure*. NZ Journal of Forestry 70(2) 29-34.
- Quinlan, P. & Aimers, J. (2025). *Difficulties managing regenerating tōtara under Part 3A of the Forests Act.* NZ Journal of Forestry 70(3) 40-45.

Major Sector-Engagement and Technology-Transfer Activities During 2025–26 Included:

- **Native Afforestation workshops, February 2026 –** Jacqui Aimers presented at two Te Uru Rakau workshops on Growing Native Forests in Te Aroha, Waikato, and Te Puna, western Bay of Plenty.
- **NZ Farm Forestry Association 68th Annual Conference, Cambridge, April 2026 –** TTT sponsored and helped lead the conference's *Native Forestry Focus* field day, including visits to Restore Native Nursery and Cassie's Farm, the property of TTT trustee Ian Brennan and Trisha Wren. Cassie's Farm provided an opportunity to demonstrate and discuss native forest establishment and management, including species selection, planting, silviculture and the longer-term potential for continuous-cover native forestry.
- **National Agricultural Fieldays, Mystery Creek, June 2026 –** TTT again participated in the Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service Forestry Hub. The TTT stand provided an important opportunity to engage directly with farmers, foresters, landowners and other visitors, promote the Trust's research and practical resources, and respond to questions about establishing and managing native forest.
- **Innovatek Carbon Forestry Conference, Rotorua, 4-5 August 2026 –** Meg Graeme presented a talk on Pine to Native Transition to forest managers, investors, industry leaders and government representatives.
- **NZ Institute of Forestry Conference, Dunedin, 26 – 28 August 2026–** Two trustees showcased TTT resources at a TTT conference exhibition stand at the NZIF Conference. This was a good opportunity to engage directly with forestry personnel and answer questions about TTT's work.
- **TTT Nelson Conference, 16–17 October 2026 –** *Beyond the Canopy – Rethinking How We Grow Native Forests* will bring together many of the ideas emerging from TTT's current research programme, including assisted natural regeneration, seed islands, transition forestry, continuous-cover systems, improved monitoring and more strategic approaches to native forest establishment.
- **Native Afforestation Wananga, Canvastown, 19th October 2026** – Two presentations at a Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance wānanga, Te Hora Marae, supported by Te Uru Rakau:
  - *Native Timber and Continuous Cover Forestry* – by Paul Quinlan
  - *Transition Forests and What we Know for Success* – by Meg Graeme

The Trust's online databases, calculators, native planting monitoring system, factsheets, videos, newsletters and technical publications continue to be important mechanisms for making research results readily accessible and responding to the continuing demand for practical advice on native forest establishment and management.



TTT helped lead the Native Forestry Focus field day at the 2026 New Zealand Farm Forestry Association conference, including a visit to Cassie's Farm near Cambridge to discuss practical establishment and management of native forest.



TTT again joined the Forestry Hub at National Fieldays in June 2026, promoting the Trust's research, tools and practical guidance and discussing native forestry with farmers, foresters and landowners.

9. Developing the Next Generation of Projects

Alongside our current funded programme, Tāne's Tree Trust is developing the next generation of research and operational projects to build on existing work, address key knowledge gaps and extend successful approaches.

Future work will focus on areas where further research, demonstration and long-term monitoring can make the greatest practical difference to native forest establishment, management and restoration, including collaboration with organisations that have shared objectives and complementary expertise.

TTT welcomes discussions with funders, partners and other organisations interested in supporting or collaborating on future work. For more information, or to discuss potential funding and partnership opportunities, please contact the Tāne's Tree Trust office.

Collaboration and Acknowledgements

TTT's research and technology-transfer programme relies on collaboration with landowners, iwi and Māori organisations, government agencies, forestry and farming groups, research organisations, universities, environmental groups and corporate partners.

Tāne's Tree Trust gratefully acknowledges the financial and in-kind support provided during 2025–26, including access to sites and datasets, technical expertise, field assistance and operational support.

Principal project funders and supporters include:

- The Tindall Foundation
- Ministry for Primary Industries
- Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service
- Pāmu
- Z Energy and Trees That Count
- Waikato River Authority and Pūniu River Care

Key project partners and collaborators include:

- New Zealand Farm Forestry Association
- New Zealand Institute of Forestry
- Te Tai Tokerau Māori Forestry Inc.
- Pure Advantage
- Tiwaiwaka
- Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust
- Mangarara – The Family Farm & Eco Lodge
- Auckland Council and other regional and district councils
- Participating Māori landowners, trusts, landowners and forest managers
- University and other research collaborators

APPENDIX 1 – FINANCIAL REPORTS

Statement of Financial Performance

Revenue

Donations, koha, bequests, and other general fundraising activities:*	9,484
General grants:*	0
Capital grants and donations:*	0
Government service delivery grants/contracts:*	273,991
Non-Government service delivery grants/contracts:*	285,564
Membership fees and subscriptions:*	10,330
Revenue from commercial activities:*	0
Interest, dividends and other investment revenue:*	25,065
Other revenue:	2,046
Total revenue:	**606,480**

Expenses

Expenses related to fundraising:*	0
Employee remuneration and other related expenses:*	94,056
Volunteer related expenses:*	3,505
Expenses related to commerical activities:*	0
Other expenses related to service delivery:*	476,965
Grants and donations made:*	2,100
Other expenses:*	52,762
Total expenses:	**629,388**

Surplus/deficit

Surplus/deficit:	**-22,908**

Statement of Financial Position

Current Assets	
Cash and short-term deposits:*	265,405
Debtors and prepayments:*	57,275
Inventory:*	0
Other current assets:*	1,434
Total current assets:	**324,114**
Non Current Assets	
Property, plant and equipmment:*	2,184
Investments:*	356,662
Other non-current assets:*	0
Total non-current assets:	**358,846**
Total assets:	**682,960**
Liabilities	
Total current liabilities:*	89,956
Total non-current liabilities:*	0
Total liabilities:	**89,956**
Assets less liabilities	
Total assets less total liabilities:	**593,004**
Accumulated Funds	
Capital contributed by owners or members:*	0
Accumulated surplus or deficits:*	316,606
Reserves:*	276,398