

Kia Wharite

A unique partnership between Horizons Regional Council, Department of Conservation, landowners and iwi.

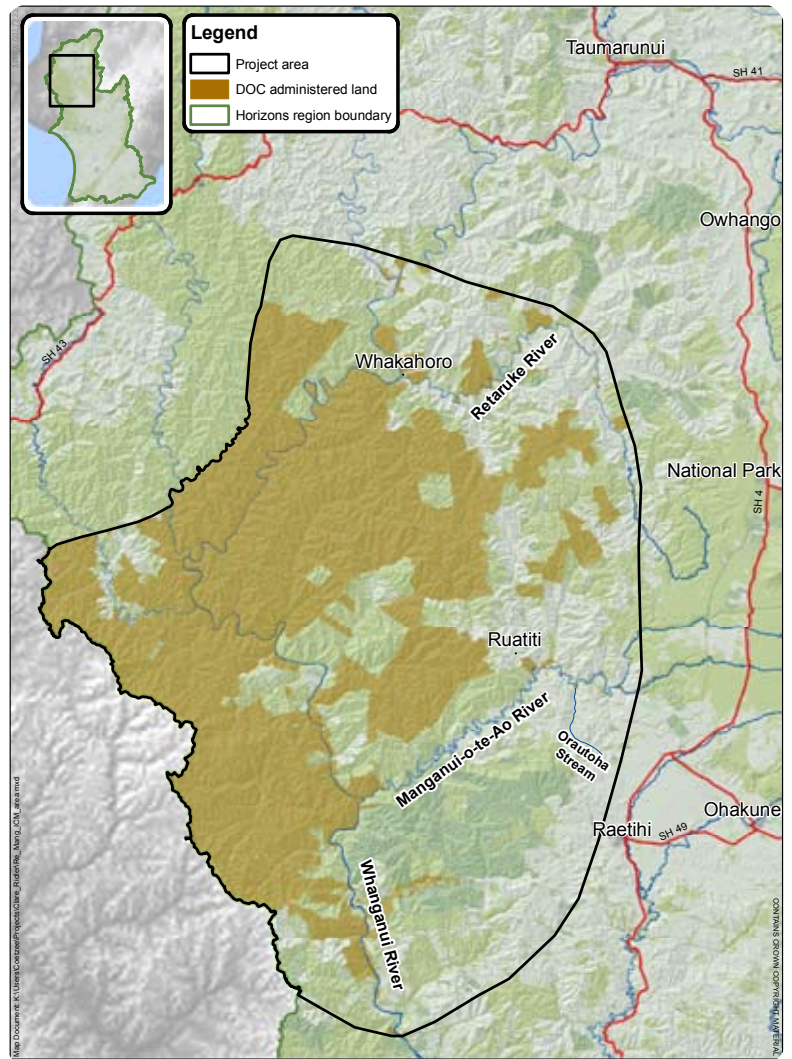
This partnership was started in 2008 and aims to protect some of our most precious taonga in one of the most stunning and least-known areas of the North Island. Blue Duck (Whio), North Island Brown Kiwi, and old growth forest will be protected by the combined pest control efforts of DOC, Horizons, landowners and iwi.

Where is the project?

The project area is centred on the Whanganui National Park, west of Ohakune, and includes long sections of the scenic Whanganui, Retaruke and Manganui o te Ao rivers. Horizons' pest control efforts are focused on private land, working in conjunction with landowners, while DOC focuses on Crown land.



Manganui o te Ao River



Kia Wharite project area

Why is the area important?

The project area is home to the largest remaining population of North Island Brown kiwi in New Zealand, the second largest stand of lowland indigenous forest in the North Island, and contains one of seven critical strongholds of the endangered Blue Duck (Whio).



North Island Brown Kiwi



Whio/Blue duck

However, the long-term survival of these iconic species, and indeed the forest itself, is under threat from plant and animal pests. Possums, goats and pest plants are damaging the forest, and the bird and animal life is being decimated by the combined effects of possums, stoats, rats and feral cats.

What's going to happen?

Over the next 10 years we hope to have:

- The entire project area (180,000 ha) under possum and rat control, and receiving pest plant control
- 35,000 ha receiving goat control
- 50 km of the Retaruke and Manganui a te Ao rivers protected from stoats and cats
- A large number of the privately owned bush remnants and wetlands in the project area are fenced to prevent stock access, and
- Significantly increase Kiwi, Blue Duck and other wildlife numbers and improve forest health.



Possum



Stoat

Who to contact for more information

If you would like to know more about this project, please contact:

Horizons Regional Council
0508 800 800 or
www.horizons.govt.nz

Department of Conservation
Whanganui Area Office
06 349 2100 or
www.doc.govt.nz