



Delivery Partner for

Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2020

This is the eleventh annual report of the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust, presented by the Chair Hoani Langsbury at the Annual General Meeting held on the 16th November 2020:

Last year's annual report from the Chair noted the beginning of a shift in the mindset of the Trust away from mere suppression of the possum population to a focus towards eradication of possums from the Otago Peninsula. This shift in focus is consolidating and running parallel with a change in operational management towards an employer model. Our staff numbers are increasing, and we are at present welcoming a new Manager to oversee a group of 5 employees.

The past year has presented a steep learning curve for the Trust with the Covid19 lockdown just one of the challenges we had to face.

In this context we would like to acknowledge the big contribution that our previous Manager, Nathan McNally, has made to the operations and management of meeting our goals within the eradication plan. His sudden resignation from the position presented quite a challenge and required some adjustment.

We are still developing our skillset and we realise that we have to become better employers. Our HR skills need improving also, to ensure our highly skilled workforce remains motivated and their combined knowledge is being put to the best use. Matthew Montgomerie (Montie) is on board now as our new Manager and we are looking forward to seeing his experience and enthusiasm in action.

With the proposed PFD Expansion Project, the planned multi-species program is being brought forward and will make us concentrate towards different pathways than what we are used to coming from a one predator focussed group.

The next step for the Trust is to scale back from the operational work on the ground and concentrate more on governance.

One of the operational points that presented quite a challenge during the year required a decision to abandon the use of the complete ZIP system of remote controlled leghold traps. The network proved itself unworkable in its original form as the electronic hubs that controlled the nodes on the legholds were unsuitable for the steep terrain on the Peninsula and did not cover the distance required between stations. A hybrid system comprising ZIP legholds and Cellium nodes was assembled and is being deployed at present.

As of the beginning of November the total possum tally stands at almost 20,000!

We are looking forward to another productive year.

The Chair concluded by acknowledging the work of all the current and former Trustees, who provided the foundation of all the achievements so far.