

For immediate release

17 October 2007

## **KOKAKO NEST EGG FUND READY TO HATCH**

Ten years on from successfully establishing the Kaharoa Kokako Trust, which aimed at increasing the number of this endangered bird, a Kokako Nest Egg Fund is now being planned.

Anne Managh, Trust secretary / treasurer, said, "The need for the Kaharoa Kokako Trust become evident in 1997 when funding for pest control at Kaharoa by the Department of Conservation (DOC) was not able to be sustained."

A just completed DOC / Landcare Research project had shown that without pest control the Kokako numbers were in decline due to predators, mainly possums and ship rats.

Only 26 birds were identified in the area at that time.

The Trust was formed to ensure pest control was continued.

Tracks and bait stations have been extended over the last 10 years and an annual pest control operation has been undertaken prior to nesting to enhance the Kokako's chance of successfully fledging chicks.

The census completed late in 2006 identified 121 adult Kokako, but Anne Managh said the total number of Kokako is probably more likely about 180 if fledglings were to be included in this figure.

"Kaharoa now has the fourth largest population of Kokako in New Zealand and two birds have been translocated to Northland to assist with its breeding programme."

Anne Managh said as the population increases translocations to other parts of the country where pest control measures are to a high enough standard to ensure their survival, will also be likely.

"The Trust has been very proactive in getting neighbours involved and there has been a lot of support from the people of Rotorua and also the wider Bay of Plenty region."

"We have now achieved what we set out to do in terms of making the environment safer for Kokako to breed and are now looking to the next 10 year plan."

The aim is for the Trust to become financially self-sufficient over the next 10 years in order to continue carrying out initiatives such as pest control and eradication to keep the Kokako in Kaharoa safe.

Funding from the Rotorua Trust will assist with the purchase of publicity materials to raise awareness of the Trust's work and the Kokako Nest Egg Fund.

Waiotapu Forest School Camp will use funding from the Rotorua Trust for the exterior re-painting and maintenance of its huts.

Steve Matthews, Trust secretary, said the camp, set in the Waiotapu Forest below Rainbow Mountain, has 25 huts capable of accommodating approximately 85 people, along with a communal hall, kitchen, dining room and outdoor confidence course.

"It was originally built as a prison camp, with inmates labour used to plant some of the Kaingaroa forest."

"In 1974 the Trust was established to utilise the camp for school and community groups."

Every year up to 2,500 people, predominantly Bay of Plenty schools as well as other groups, use the camp for two to five night stays.

Steve said, "The Trust is always on the look out for new members."

"Our main aim is to maintain and progressively upgrade the camp facilities."

The eight local organisations to receive funding from the Rotorua Trust this month were:

<b>Early Childhood Convention</b> Convention	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>Kaharoa Kokako Trust</b> Publicity material	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>Koutu Play Centre</b> Building upgrade	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Rotorua Competitions Society</b> New Zealand Aria	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Rotorua Hospital Chaplaincy Trust</b> Training and workshops	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Rotorua Model Railway Club</b> Model Railway Show	<b>\$1,500</b>
<b>Waiotapu Forest School Camp Trust</b> Painting of huts	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Youth Projects Trust</b> Funding for youth projects	<b>\$30,000</b>

**Ends**

**For more information please contact:**

Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust  
Stuart Burns  
Chief Executive  
Telephone 021 972 535  
Web [www.rotoruatrust.org.nz](http://www.rotoruatrust.org.nz)

Kaharoa Kokako Trust  
Anne Managh  
Telephone 07 345 9952.

Waiotapu Forest School Camp Trust  
Steve Matthews  
Telephone 07 345 6133

**Issued by:**

imPRove it Public Relations Ltd  
Telephone 07 348 1444  
Mobile 027 430 8876  
Email [annette@improveit.co.nz](mailto:annette@improveit.co.nz)  
Web [www.improveit.co.nz](http://www.improveit.co.nz)

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