

MIRO

2016 Annual Report

Message from the MIRO Committee

Last year we saw significant changes to the committee with five departures and two arrivals. Mike Rumble's departure during the year was noted at the last AGM, but at the end of the year we saw Doug Mercer (as Chair), George Gibbs, Jan Heine and Colin Ross also leave the committee. We would like to take this opportunity to thank these committee members for their contributions to MIRO over many years and in various roles, in Jan's case dating back to the original MIRO steering committee under EHEA. However, nearly all of the above are still actively involved in MIRO and so their expertise is still around.

While the loss of five experienced people is a close parallel to what the All Blacks have recently been through, we were fortunate in retaining six long-standing committee members in Gail Abel, Jill Bagnall, Parker Jones (continuing as Secretary), Keith Levy (who was Acting Treasurer for several months), Linda Mead and Owen Spearpoint. We also welcomed two new members — Sally Bain and Terry Webb (the latter taking on the Treasurer's role from October). The committee decided to rotate the role of meeting Chair until a suitable replacement for Doug was found.

Front-of-mind for the new committee was the viability of the North Island robin population that had been established through a series of three translocations in earlier years. Closely related to that was the need for the Mainland Island to be extended to provide a sufficiently large area to establish a viable breeding population. Given these issues, the committee decided to undertake a strategic planning process so that we could agree on some key projects to undertake over the next 1–3 years. The planning took place over four meetings (with Greater Wellington Regional Council, GWRC, representatives) from November to February and considered a wide range of questions under the headings: Where are we at? Where do we want to get to? How are we going to get there?

In many respects the resulting plan reflects business-as-usual for MIRO, in other words, keeping on doing what we do well. However, some new things that we would like to accomplish are:

1. Possum trapping — increase servicing frequency of selected Eastern Ridge lines to 2-weekly so that we reduce the rate of incursion from the east. Test and implement new lures (apple in wire mesh; scented plastic) to achieve longer lure life and rat resistance.
2. Stoat trapping — service existing DOC200 traps and test for sensitivity. Begin the roll-out of stoat trapping across the whole Northern Forest, initially funded with GWRC annual grants. The rationale for this is that stoats and rats are the principal predators of native birds in the park, and while stoats also prey on rats, recent studies indicate that the rat population is limited by food supply, not predation, so removing stoats will be beneficial.
3. Rat control — a number of issues remain to be solved before we are ready to embark on an extension to the Mainland Island:
 - I. The need for a larger cohort of volunteers, many of whom will need to work off-track over fairly difficult terrain;
 - II. The need for a source of funding for the significant on-going servicing costs of such an extensive network, be it traps or bait stations; and
 - III. The current rapid development of traps, long-life lures and trap status communication systems that together may revolutionise how we control pest animals.
4. Parangarahu Lakes — we will have the opportunity to contribute to a review of the revegetation approach in the Parangarahu Lakes Area KNE Plan in 2016/17, especially regarding further plots (and locations) and extensions to existing plots. In the meantime, the plan is to continue to plant one new plot each year (800–1,000 trees) and, of course, maintain existing plots.

5. Parangarahu Lakes pest control — MIRO has taken over all predator trap checking from GWRC (it was split 50:50 before), freeing up GWRC staff for other related activities such as improving fencing to keep sheep out and carrying out regular night shoots for rabbits and hares. There has recently been a feral goat cull by helicopter.
6. Information systems — we aim to rapidly complete georeferencing and making inventories of all predator trap sites. When this is done we will start testing smartphone apps, such as DOC's "Walk the Line". This will enable trappers to enter kill data and will also guide you to the next site – this will become very important when we eventually take on servicing a denser network that is visited less frequently.

Many of you will already be aware that OSPRI (in part, formerly TB Free NZ) is planning a campaign to rid the Rimutaka, Orongorongo and EHRP areas of bovine tuberculosis over the next few years. Some OSPRI representatives made a presentation at our March committee meeting as part of their consultation process. OSPRI's aim is to reduce the possum RTC index to below 2% for a number of years and this should see the disease die out with time. A number of methods can be used to achieve this, including trapping, ground-based poisoning and aerial 1080 drops. We expressed a willingness to work with OSPRI, especially in areas where aerial 1080 was not able to be used (i.e. near urban areas or the whole park if that is the outcome from the consultative process). From a MIRO perspective, while the TB eradication programme may have a dramatic effect on possum and rat numbers in the short to medium term, it does not provide a long term solution — possums will recover within 3 years of the campaign ending and rats within 6 months. We can expect any impact on stoats to only last a similar time to that for rats. It is the committee's view that, while we do need to be responsive to the impacts of this work, we need to continue to focus on MIRO's long term aim of the protection and restoration of the native flora and fauna in EHRP.

During the year, one of our new committee members, Sally Bain, initiated an urban trapping project (ERAT — Educating Residents About Trapping). Hutt City Council provided 20 A24 self-resetting rat/stoat traps, which are loaned to participants for 3 months so they can be familiarised with trapping. A social media campaign has been started, encouraging residents to take responsibility for trapping on their own land and there has also been good publicity for ERAT in the local press. The broader aims of ERAT are to develop a larger cohort of trappers, extend trapping out from the urban areas to the foreshore and, in time, assist MIRO with intensified rat trapping in the Northern Forest.

Many of you will be aware that we now have new Health and Safety legislation in New Zealand. While the new legislation does not directly apply to MIRO, being a volunteer organisation, it does affect our partner organisation GWRC (and HCC for the urban area and foreshore). As a result, GWRC is keen for us to develop an approach to H&S that works for us. Prompted by this need, we have used a Conservation Volunteers H&S toolkit to draft a MIRO Trappers H&S guideline. When complete, this will be sent to all trappers for comment and we will produce equivalent documents for other activities. To complement these, a MIRO H&S policy has been developed. This sets out our proposed H&S principles, talks about hazard identification and control, assesses the risks we face doing MIRO work and sets out MIRO's responsibilities as an organisation. We want these to be 'living' documents that work for all of us involved in MIRO activities, so your feedback will be important.

This year, a long-standing MIRO member made a very generous donation of \$2,000 for the purchase of 11 goodnature A24 self-resetting rat/stoat traps. The traps, equipped with counters, will initially be deployed to target rats along Butterfly Creek, and will hopefully give us some insight into whether or not resident rats are poison-shy. We also hope to organise, at no cost, a trial of hi-tech sensors so that we will know when the traps have triggered. The trap donation will enable us to get first-hand experience with this new technology and will thus help inform decisions over the nature of future MI extensions. We are very grateful for such a timely and thoughtful donation.

There are many others we need to thank for their contribution to MIRO's success over the past year. First and foremost we would like to thank our volunteers and other helpers who again have

got through a lot of work with trap servicing, tree propagation, tree planting and clearing, bird counting, predator monitoring, dotterel protection and other less visible tasks.

During the year we again enjoyed great support from our partner GWRC, especially through the efforts of Kim Broad and Mark McAlpine. This year's GWRC funding will buy over 80 DOC200 stoat traps for roll-out in the Northern Forest. The input from Kim and the GWRC biosecurity group to our planning meetings was very important in keeping us aware of the latest research findings about predator control. As always, Mark was out there getting things done in the field, was the mainstay of the annual barbeque, but was also good at keeping us well-informed of current activity through his attendance at our committee meetings.

We would also like to thank the Hutt Mana Charitable Trust for a grant of \$900 to be used to supply soil and compost to our tree nursery and GNS Science for the continued use of their land to house it. Last but not least we are also grateful to George Tuffin, for his auditing of our accounts, to the Days Bay Menzshed for managing poisons, traps repairs and other supplies, and to Spiral Web Solutions for providing and sponsoring all of our web services.

The MIRO Committee
June, 2016

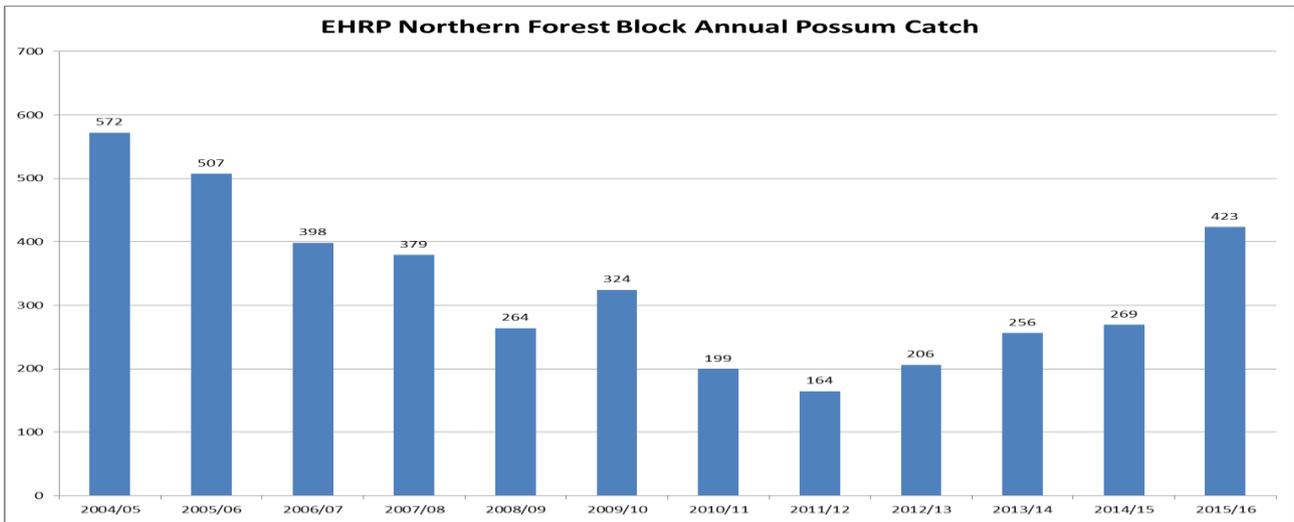
Membership

It is difficult to quantify MIRO membership numbers accurately as there are widely varying degrees of involvement. We prefer to think of all our volunteers as members so, using this measurement, we had at least 88 people involved in MIRO activities during the year. As an Incorporated Society, we also have to treat membership more formally on occasions, particularly regarding eligibility to vote for committee members and on other constitutional matters. For these purposes, membership is determined by the payment of an annual subscription (\$10 per individual or \$15 per family) and for the past year the total was 33 members, assuming two per family membership.

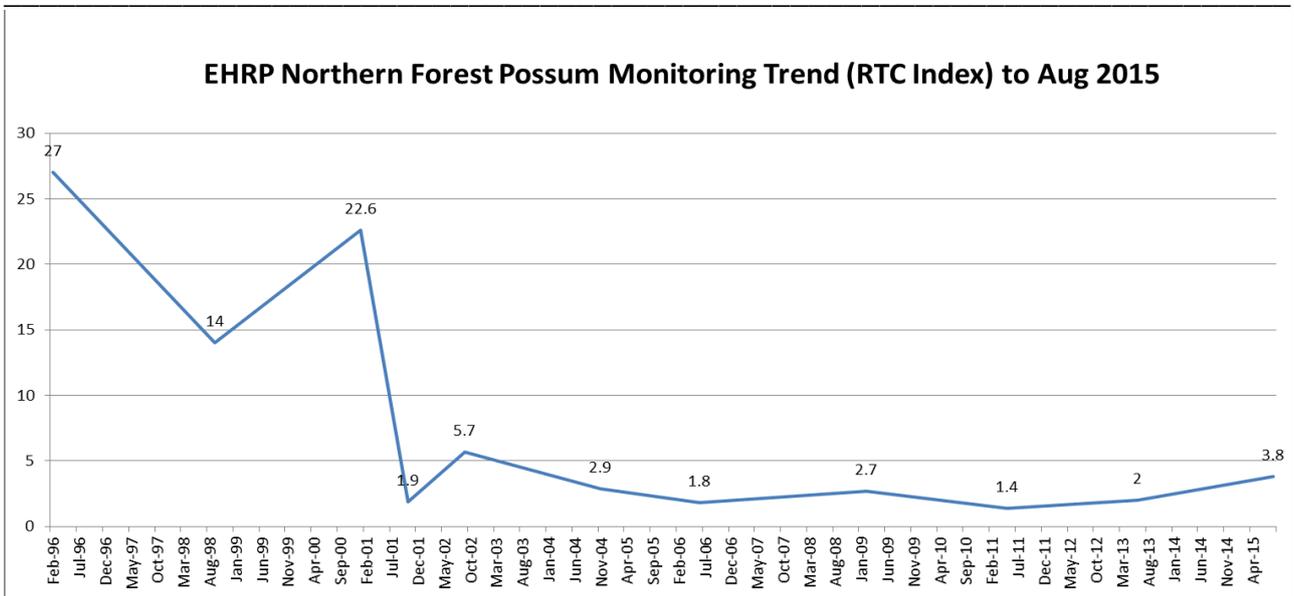
MIRO Activities

Pest Control — Possums

There has been an upward trend in possums caught in the last four years, especially in the last year. Some of this recent increase can be accounted for by the reopening, during the year, of two possum trap lines on the Wainuiomata side of the Park which are being serviced weekly; and the weekly servicing of two lines on the northern end of the Park. All of these lines are showing consistent catches. Generally lines on the eastern and northern sides of the Park show a much higher rate of catches.

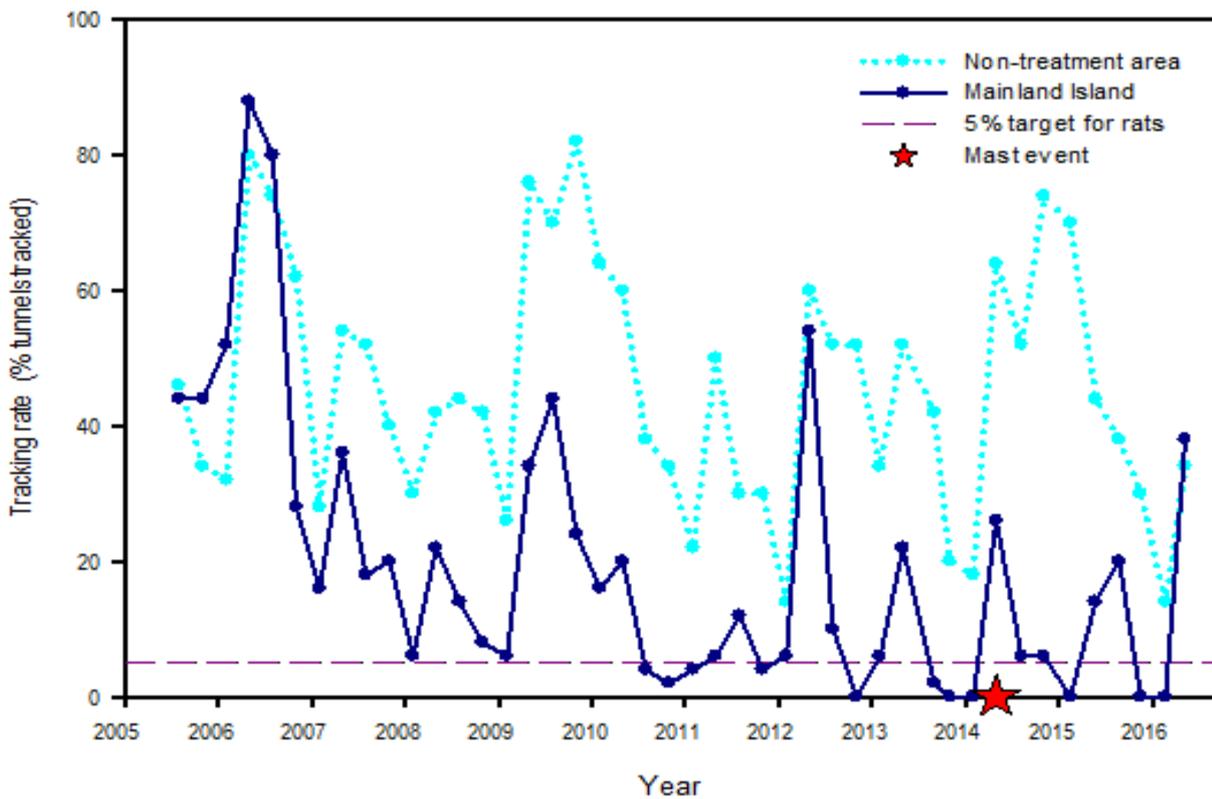


The latest RTC index, which is our official monitor of possum levels in the Northern Forest, was 3.8% in August 2015 which is still below our target of 5%. However this measure has also shown a rising trend since 2011.



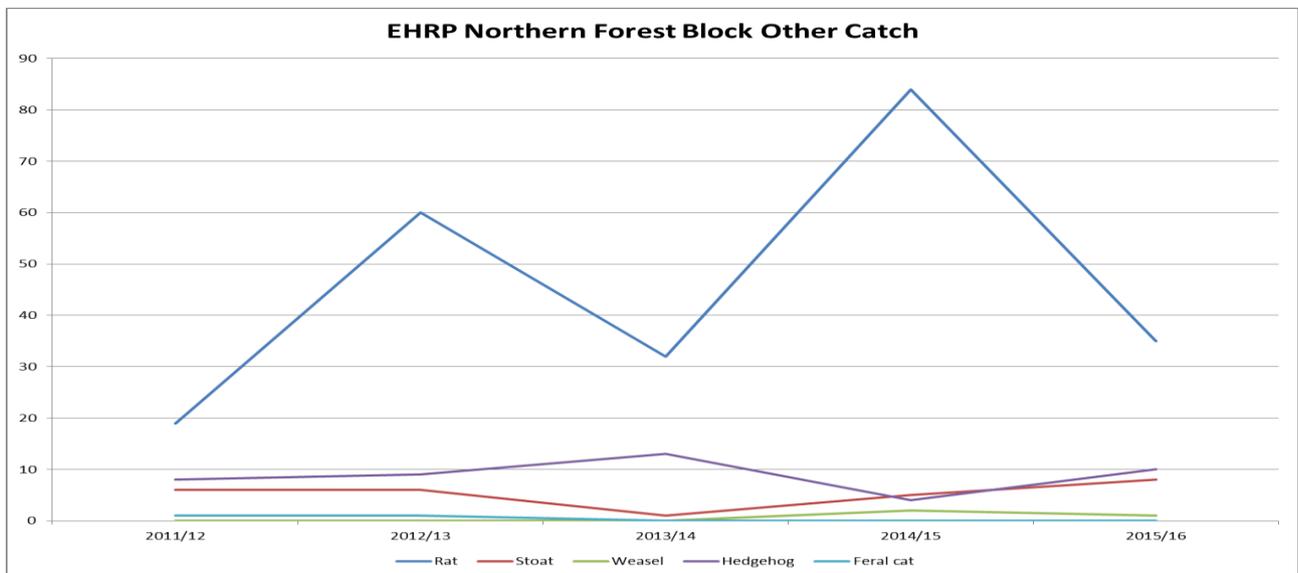
Pest Control — Rats

The last rodent monitor data from GWRC shows rats tracking at 38% in the Mainland Island and 34% outside. While it is quite typical for numbers to climb from the February to May monitors, this is the highest that rats have tracked in the Mainland Island since 2012. In response to this, the latest fill of the GWRC bait stations has been with Difethialone, which we hope will be more effective. MIRO will be making spot checks of the bait consumption rate in the next month.



Pest Control — Other Catch

Stoat trap numbers have not changed over the last 12 months and catches have remained at similar levels to previous years. Other catch is by-catch in possum and stoat traps.



Pest Control — Deer

We have been aware of deer browsing on native vegetation near private properties at the northern end of the park (e.g. York Bay) and have, naturally, been concerned about the impact on select native plant species. During May, professional hunters contracted by GWRC culled 10 deer over a period of two weeks — this is a very good haul compared to previous years, so we hope that browsing will have been greatly reduced. Over a period of 21 days in March/April, balloted private

hunters culled two deer.

Bird Monitoring

Monitoring of birds using 5 minute bird counts took place in October. As usual, a wide range of species was recorded (20), but missing from counts again this year were both long-tailed cuckoos and North Island robins. Long-tailed cuckoos were recorded in 2014, but were missing from earlier counts in 2012 and 2013. Robins were also missing this year — they were last recorded in counts in 2012. However, outside of the formal 5 minute counts there have been a number of sightings of robins around the Park. Red crowned kakariki have been observed, but it is uncertain whether these are breeding in the Park or visiting from Matiu.

Eastbourne Dotterels

We had four banded dotterel nests on the Eastbourne foreshore last year, protected by ropes as well as by signage to make dog owners aware. Three of the nests each had one chick and the fourth had two. From the total of five chicks, four successfully fledged. There was no vandalism of the nesting sites and the dog walkers were very careful around the area. Once the chicks were off the nest, the dogs did not seem to bother them, but the nesting ropes were left up until the dotterels left the beach in mid-February.

Nursery and Parangarahu Lakes Planting

This year planting continued at the ninth Lakes plot with 1,000 trees in a new site high up by the upper lighthouse, which may be challenging for growth. This site had been used by lighthouse keepers for gardens. The hard dry summer that followed has resulted in a success rate of only around 50–60 percent. Plot 8 was topped up with 100 more pioneers.

Planned in-filling with final canopy trees in earlier plots did not take place as the planting season ran late with two cancellations due to bad weather occurring at the beginning. Dry weather then brought an abrupt end to the planting season. The logistics of planting at the Lakes are not always easy — labour, transport, poor site access and weather all make for difficulties. The latest plot was planted out by Iwi as well as corporate groups from Reserve Bank of NZ and GNS Science, while Conservation Volunteers assisted with in-planting.

400 pioneers were supplied to Friends of Baring Head, while excess stock has been shared with Friends of Waiwhetu Stream (100), EHEA (50) for track edges in EHRP following weed control, and GNS Science (1,000) to plant up their steep grass slopes.

Annual MIRO Walk

The annual MIRO walk took place on 6th March this year. 16 members of the public joined committee members for an off-track ramble up Gollans Stream beyond the picnic area, with a stop for lunch along the way. We highlighted the treasures of the forest, explained the wide range of activities undertaken by MIRO and demonstrated the use of traps and bait stations. Though participants rated the walk highly, a change in location was mooted for next year.

MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.						
Statement of Financial Performance						
For the year ended 31 March 2016						
INCOME			2016			2015
<u>GRANTS</u>			\$			\$
Hutt Mana Charitable Trust			900			894
Eastbourne Games Charitable Trust			1100			
Trap Grant			2000			
TOTAL GRANTS			4000			894
LESS Unexpended Grants			3700	300		0
						894
GWRC INCOME						
Sale of trees (Honda Tree Fund)			0			6106
AGM Reimbursement			233	233		0
						6106
OTHER INCOME						
Subscriptions			305			265
Donations			105			600
Bank Interest			164	574		321
						1186
TOTAL INCOME				1106		8186
EXPENDITURE						
OPERATIONS						
Nursery			615			2133
Trapping			0			794
Robin Monitoring			1650	2265		6000
						8927
MISCELLANEOUS						
AGM and Meeting Costs			391			558
Men's Shed			0			0
Grey Power Stall			0			0
High Viz Vests			0			0
Post Box			175			170
Sundry			307	872		246
						974
TOTAL EXPENDITURE				3,138		9,901
NET INCOME (LOSS)				-2,032		-1,715

MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2016

	2016	2015
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Kiwibank-Call Account	4,093	3,129
Kiwibank-Front Runner Account	7,928	7,224
LESS Unexpended Grants	3,700	-
Net Assets	8,321	10,353
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MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Balance 1 April	10,352	12,068
Surplus (Loss) for year	(2,031)	(1,715)
BALANCE 31 MARCH	8,321	10,353
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MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2016

Incorporation

The Mainland Island Restoration Operation (MIRO) was constituted by a resolution dated 5 June 2009 and was incorporated under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 on 18 June 2009.

MIRO was previously part of the East Harbour Environmental Association (EHEA).

The purpose of MIRO is to provide benefit to the community through restoration of the natural ecosystems in the East Harbour Regional Park located in Lower Hutt.

Accounting Policies

Reporting Entity:

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

Measurement Base:

The measurement base adopted is that of historical cost.

Goods and Services

Tax:

The accounts have been prepared on a GST inclusive basis.

REVIEW REPORT

**To the Members of the
MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO)
INC.**

- 1 I have reviewed the financial statements, as attached, of MIRO for the year ended 31 March 2016.
- 2 My review is limited primarily to the inspection of MIRO's financial records and analytical review procedures applied to financial data and thus provides only a moderate level of assurance and less assurance than an audit. I have not performed an audit and, accordingly, I do not express an audit opinion. My review cannot be relied upon to prevent or detect fraud or error.
- 3 The Committee is responsible for recording the financial transactions of MIRO, maintaining the financial records and preparing the financial statements of MIRO.
- 4 Based on my review, nothing has come to my attention that causes me to believe that the accompanying financial statements do not give a true and fair view of the results and state of affairs of MIRO for the year ended 31 March 2016.

This review has been completed on 24 June 2016.



George Tuffin
Accountant
Eastbourne

**MINUTES OF THE MIRO ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING
24th July 2015
EAST HARBOUR WOMENS CLUB ROOMS**

Present: Gail Abel, Jill Bagnall, Parker Jones, Keith Levy, Sally Bain, Owen Spearpoint, Kim Broad, Mark McAlpine and approximately 30 others.

Apologies – Fran Wilde, Ray Wallace, Terry Webb

Minutes of the 2014 AGM

Accepted Jill/Gail

Election of Committee

All nominations for the 2015/2016 were elected by unanimous approval. The Chair will be shared by the committee members on a rotation basis for the next year.

The committee is:-

Keith Levy – Acting Treasurer

Parker Jones – Secretary

Gail Abel, Jill Bagnall, Sally Bain, Linda Mead, Owen Spearpoint, and Terry Webb

Moved and Accepted Gail/Parker

Annual Report

Doug tabled the annual report.

Chairman Review

Doug reviewed the past year mentioning the following accomplishments and points of note:-

- Robins with Delia Small monitoring and Elizabeth Parlato model which led the committee to decide to halt the robin program;
- MIRO's large team of trappers;
- MIRO's bird counters;
- Lake Plantings;
- Lakes Trapping
- Nursery ; and
- Dotterel Nesting

Conclusion

Doug Mercer noted he was retiring from the committee. The meeting thanked Doug for his excellent chairmanship.

Doug noted thanks to Greater Wellington Regional Council, MenzShed and to MIRO's volunteers and introduced Melody McLaughlin, the guest speaker.