

Next steps - future actions

Please outline how you plan to continue the project and what next steps you are planning to maintain the project's momentum – including plans to seek additional funding

The aim of the BRPP (see above) is to improve the success of colony-nesting river birds protected in key sites, using commercial river users to locate colonies and undertake protection work by trapping pest mammals, improving habitats, and raising awareness and support of the Project through social education and advocacy. A one-page summary of the project is here: <http://braid.org.nz/conservation/brpp/>. We have applied to the Department of Internal Affairs for additional funding to employ a manager/facilitator to carry out this specific project, and have received \$5,000 in further funding from WWF to maintain BRaid's current momentum.

Budget statement, detailing expenditure of funds

Please outline how you spent the HPF funds on project activities including any underspend on project activities or variations from the original project budget.

The HPF funds were used entirely on wages for the manager who was responsible for carrying out, managing, or facilitating items outlined in 'Progress against outcomes and objectives', including building and maintaining the website and ongoing newsletters and social media.

Acknowledgement of sponsors

Please describe how you acknowledged WWF and promoted the assistance WWF gave you through the HPF.

WWF fund was and continues to be acknowledged on our website as a banner on the main webpage, and all internal webpages, as a bottom banner on all correspondence, invoices, meeting agendas and minutes, and on posters and flyers (see attached examples and website www.braid.org.nz).



for a living planet®

HABITAT PROTECTION FUND

FINAL REPORT

Braided River Aid Inc. (BRaid)

BRaid Manager

November 2015

Sonny Whitelaw

Agreed project outcomes

(From Funding Agreement)

The BRaid Manager will:

- Promote the protection and enhancement of braided river ecosystems
- Promote liaison and co-operation between stakeholders
- Encourage the involvement of community groups and facilitate their activities
- Facilitate the collection and storage of information

Agreed project objectives

(From Funding Agreement)

Partial funding of the Braid Manager position to coordinate and facilitate Braid activities including:

- Promotion of protection, enhancement of braided river ecosystems
- Liaise with stakeholders
- Facilitate cooperation between community group
- Facilitate collection and storage of information

Progress against outcomes and objectives

(Brief description of if the project has met the objectives)

Promote the protection and enhancement of braided river ecosystems

- Developed and implementing communications strategy
- Raised the profile of braided river birds through presentations to Forest & Bird, DOC, community groups and schools, and through newspaper and media coverage
- Advocated for the protection of braided rivers and water quality through formal submissions and presentations to regional and local councils and Canterbury Water Management Zone Committees (Waimakariri and Ashburton). This has helped to transform thinking in the way regulators, the community and regional stakeholders regard the value of braided rivers and endangered taonga bird species. For example:
 - The Pegasus Bay Bylaw is now being re-evaluated with much stronger environmental protection
 - Braided rivers are the only ecosystem in the ten broadly targeted areas to have its own set of targets in the Canterbury Water Management Strategy <http://ecan.govt.nz/get-involved/canterburywater/targets/Pages/targets-summary.aspx>. One of the targets under 'Natural Character of Braided Rivers' is to implement actions to correct the decline in useable braided river bird habitat.
 - Braided rivers are recognised as a special place in its own right in the draft Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy 2014-2024 (CCMS), which is

expected to be adopted by December this year. BRaid's aims to 'protect, enhance, and restore braided rivers' are referred to in this document on p22.

- Content review and input to Gravel extractors and River Engineers Code of Practice
- Running a 1 day 'Endangered birds on Braided Rivers' course 03 November with 45 people currently booked to attend
- Run ½ trapping workshops 17 October in Rangiora (attended by 60 people) and 31 October in Geraldine (attended by 16 people): photos attached (<http://braid.org.nz/2015-courses>)
- Since May, built 118 page website with online events calendar, 90 blog posts since June 2015, bi-weekly e-newsletter and social media presence linked to blog posts, and created videos on braided river birds (<https://youtu.be/5dApR9blQR4> and <https://youtu.be/BtAjNboDIWk>)
- Representation at DOC's 2-day Practitioners workshop in Geraldine. BRaid website recognised as 'first port of call, go-to' advocacy website for public use

Promote liaison and co-operation between stakeholders

- Using social media and e-newsletters to engage with and share news with stakeholders
- E-newsletter encourages and receives contributions from stakeholders
- Cross-promote local rivercare and community events, and items of interest such as WWF Conservation Innovation Awards (<http://tinyurl.com/q5igjg4>)

Encourage the involvement of community groups and facilitate their activities

- Assisted Ashburton group in community awareness and colony protection utilising media and in-school presentations, sign development, and professional input for this season's black-billed gull colony
- Assisting in Waiau river bird survey with local community volunteers; promote Orari River Bird Survey through email database and social media
- Created comprehensive 'Resources' webpage (<http://braid.org.nz/resources/>) to assist individuals and groups access crucial information for advocacy, lobbying, education, and research related to braided rivers and birds

Facilitate the collection and storage of information

- Solicited information from river surveyor volunteer groups for other Canterbury rivers to be consolidated into the DOC Surveys database to better inform agencies responsible for river and species management
- Actively working with DOC staff on data collection mechanisms to ensure comprehensiveness of survey coverage and wider access to data
- Created and promote website as a public portal to store and share information

Summary of the work carried out

Conservation/restoration activities undertaken

Please describe the work that you have undertaken as a direct result of receiving the HPF, giving quantifiable numbers where possible, including:

- *Weed control (# sites controlled, key species targeted etc.)*
- *Animal pest control (species targeted, # traps/bait stations laid, frequency of servicing etc.)*
- *Fencing (# metres erected, hectares fenced)*
- *Plant propagation (# of plants produced)*
- *Planting (numbers/area planted, # sites planted, # working bees held)*

This funding was specifically to assist with the cost of employing a part time manager to fulfil the project outcomes briefly listed in objectives above.

Volunteer involvement

Please describe the level of volunteer involvement in the project (See Habitat Protection Fund Project Monitoring Toolkit for guidance) examples of information you should report on includes:

- *Role of volunteers in project e.g. committee work and planning, working bees etc.*
- *Number of volunteers involved*
- *Total number of volunteer hours (approx)*

Braid has 47 members and over 90 e-newsletter subscribers, many of whom are also paid and/or volunteer members of other organisations including river care groups, F&B, DOC, and ECan, so it is difficult to tease out the exact number of volunteer hours specific to BRaid. The following is an approximation in the past 12 months:

- Committee work - communications, marketing, and admin, secretary, treasurer, auditor, Gerdaldine DOC workshop (8 people total): 266hrs
- Articles, press releases, presentations to schools and groups, advocacy, erecting signs, and community presentations in conjunction with other organisations such as DOC and ECan (see photos) (6 people): 318 hours
- Monitoring, bird counts on upper Waimakariri 20 people x 4 days + 59 people days x 8 hrs/day = 472hrs
- Assistance with bird counts on the Ashley, Ashburton and Oarai Rivers: average 45 people x 4 hours = 180hrs
- Trapping (specific to BRaid only, not including affiliated trapping programmes with other groups): 24hrs
- Weed removal on breeding habitats for back billed gulls on the Ashburton (8 people x 4 hours): 32hrs

Employment and contractors

Please outline if anybody has been employed as a direct result of the WWF's assistance through the HPF, including details of their job title, hours worked and main tasks undertaken. If you have used the HPF to employ contractors or consultants please describe this here too.

Jane Demeter was initially contracted to work as the manager of BRaid. In May 2015 Sonny Whitelaw was contracted as the manager. This funding was entirely used to contribute to wages for the manager's position, to initiate and complete the work outlined in '**Progress against outcomes and objectives**' above.

Issues and problems encountered

All projects experience unexpected issues and encounter problems which can influence the project's outcomes. Please describe any major issues or problems that you had during the life of this project, and outline how you adapted or changed your plans to cope with these. Did they prevent you achieving your intended objectives?

All objectives have been met, however the nature of this project is to continually advocate for the protection of braided river birds by lobbying policy makers, liaising with government bodies, iwi, and NGOs, and educating and engaging the community. New funding from WWF in 2015 will help us continue this role.

Lessons learned and innovations

Please describe any key lessons that you learned from the project and any innovative solutions that you developed as a response to these. We are keen to share best practice and would appreciate if you allowed us to share these innovations.

While braided rivers are the only ecosystem in the ten broadly targeted areas to have its own set of targets in the Canterbury Water Management Strategy, and while the environment is considered a first order priority in the CWMS, economic forces (primarily agricultural) have a significantly greater capacity, including legal, to influence policy. Without ongoing advocacy, braided river bird habitats will continue to decline.

One of the key things we have learned is that much more needs to be understood about the varied nature of predator guilds on rivers. We have started to work with gravel extractors to remove weeds and shape braided river islands/channels so that low flows are less likely to expose ground nesting birds to mammalian predators (see photos attached). These concepts are still being tested but lay the groundwork for working with rather than in opposition to commercial river users.

We are also in the early stages of developing relationships with irrigation companies and commercial river users to develop management strategies to enhance braided river bird habitats.

Probably the single most important takeaway message is that when it comes to waterways, to work around the element of 'us' (conservation groups) versus 'them' (irrigators and river users), engaging 'them' in ways their activities can enhance braided river bird habitats creates common ground that can be built upon. This is an aspect we are now actively pursuing through the Braided River Partnerships Project.

Community involvement

Please outline how you involved the wider community in your project (e.g. groups not currently involved in your project such as scout groups, schools, local marae etc.) and what benefits this brought.

- Working with Ashburton school to create signs to raise interest in and protect black-billed gulls
- Ashburton weed clearing (see photo) attracted existing and new interest from local residents
- Promoting exhibitions of photographic work of braided river birds (currently on display at Rangiora Library)
- Rangiora and Ashley schools and scouting groups (Waimakariri and Hurunui District), presentations and field trips to raise awareness. This is having a measureable effect through greater engagement of parents (see below).
- Rangiora trapping course attracted many new faces and notable interest from families and children (see photos); feedback indicates some will now develop a trapping programme for their own areas, such as adjacent to lifestyle blocks, and are now much more aware of the need to design specific pest management plans relevant to their situation.
- Presentations and advocacy for co-operation between braided river users has led to a surge in sign ups for e-newsletters, greater sharing of information, and interest from commercial river users to work with BRaid to monitor birds and help to develop management strategies.
- Interest from runanga in developing tourism information about tangoa bird species

Some of these (particularly runanga) are nascent involvement that BRaid will pursue in 2016.

Partnerships

Please describe how you worked in partnership with other groups or agencies in delivering this project. Please describe the benefits that this brought and plans to continue with these partnerships.

We have developed stronger relationships with professional ornithologists, research institutes, local government, the Department of Conservation, and river users. As a direct result, we conceived the Braided River Partnerships Project (BRPP) outlined in our application for funding from the Habitat Protection Fund 2015, and we have just received some funding from DOC to undertake this project, which is outlined here: <http://braid.org.nz/conservation/brpp/>

Work still to be completed

Please outline any planned work which was not completed and how you plan to complete this work, including funding sought.

All objectives have been met, however the nature of this project is to continually advocate for the protection of braided river birds by lobbying policy makers, liaising with government bodies, iwi, and NGOs, and educating and engaging the community.

Reports, publications and printed materials produces

Please outline and attach any reports, publications or printed materials that were produced as a direct result of HPF funding or connected with the project funded.

- Upper Waimakariri Bird Survey 2014 completed September 2015, http://braid.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Upper_waikam_bird_survey_2014.pdf
- 118 page website written as an online 'braided river encyclopaedia' www.braid.org, including:
 - 17 web pages on Canterbury braided rivers
 - 10 pages on specialty braided river birds
 - 11 on braided river plants/fish/bats/invertebrates
 - 9 on pest mammals and management/conservation strategies
 - 11 on invasive weeds and conservation strategies
 - 2 on predatory birds
 - 5 on human threats and climate change
 - The remaining pages include the role of and projects by DOC and ECan, river care and conservation groups, BRaid, and administrative pages
- Further 180 pages of blog and calendar entries and newsletters www.braid.org

Eradication feasible

Eradicating bovine tuberculosis from New Zealand is both feasible and economically justifiable.

That is the view of the Plan Governance Group that reviewed the National Pest Management Plan for handling Tb. The independent group comprises representatives from funding organisations, Ospi and stakeholders.

On October 2, it gave Primary Industries Minister Nathan Guy advice on proposed changes, saying they built on "the significant progress made by Ospi under the current Tb plan".

The group studied technical and scientific advice, consulted farmers, communities, and other interested parties, and took into account more than 400 submissions on its draft proposal.

"We were pleased that most submitters supported our proposed amendments to the Tb plan," group chairman Chris Kelly said.

"We have proposed that the Tb plan should focus on eradicating bovine tuberculosis from the country, with farmed cattle and deer being clear of the disease within around a decade.

"It will take longer to clear Tb from possums and other vectors in remote back country, but it is important that our farming sector can be rid of this serious disease as fast as possible," Mr Kelly said.

After Mr Guy decided on the proposal, it would be available on the website tbplanreview.co.nz, along with all supporting material. If he agreed with it, the amended Tb plan was expected to take effect on July 1, 2016.



Instruction... People keen to start trapping pests take a keen interest at a Braid workshop in Rangiora last Saturday.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

B Raid trapping very workshop popular

Stoats, feral cats, rats and hedgehogs in North Canterbury have every reason to be afraid after over 60 locals attended a trapping workshop at the Department of Conservation (DOC) Rangiora office last Saturday.

Organised by Braided River Aid (Braid), the two hour workshop covered why these predators were such a threat to our native birds, what local groups, individuals and DOC are doing to control them, different types of traps and hands-on practice at setting them.

Braid manager Sonny Whitelaw was thrilled to see such a great range of interested people turning up for the free workshop.

"We thought 30 would be very optimistic, but when people just kept arriving we knew this was something people really cared about."

"It was such a diverse group too, both young and old, experienced trappers and novices sharing their experiences. It

was particularly encouraging seeing interest from children and young people - our next generation of trappers," says Ms Whitelaw.

Another workshop is planned for South Canterbury at the DOC Geraldine office on October 31.

For Conservation Week Braid will be running a full-day workshop at the Lincoln Event Centre on

Tuesday, November 3, on saving our rare and threatened endemic birds unique to our braided rivers. For more information see their website www.braid.org.nz.

Braid and the Ashley Rakahuri Rivercare Group (ARRG) will also have a display and family activities at DoC's Conservation Week event at Wooded Gully, Mt Thomas Conservation area on Sunday, November 1, 11am to 3pm.

Braid is an umbrella organisation representing local rivercare groups throughout the South Island.



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Endangered Birds on Braided Rivers

BRAID  www.braid.org.nz

 Environment Canterbury Regional Council
Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri

 Department of Conservation
Te Papa Ataturu

 The Canterbury Community
Working together, making a difference

 WWF

 THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST
A Huihui Whakawhānui

Our iconic braided rivers are home to many threatened native birds

FREE Conservation Week course

Where: Lincoln Event Centre, Meijer Drive, Lincoln
When: 10am - 4pm Tuesday 03 Nov. (includes lunch)
Tutor: Professional ornithologist John Dowding
Details: <http://braid.org.nz/helpsaveus>
Book: <https://braided-river-birds.eventbrite.co.nz>
Contact: manager@braid.org.nz / Ph: 0226378931

You can help save us

Healthy bird populations are an indicator of healthy river ecosystems, which benefits everyone. Learn about these endangered birds and discover how you can help them.



Nationally
Endangered
black-fronted tern-
tārapiroe chicks
Photo: Steve Attwood

Trapping Workshops



The greatest **THREAT** to our **NATIVE BIRDS** are introduced predators - **ferrets stoats and weasels rats, hedgehogs and wild cats**. These **FREE** trapping workshops will show you the basics for reducing their numbers.

You CAN make a difference

When: 10am-12 midday Sat. 17 October

Where: Department of Conservation
32 River Road, **RANGIORA**

Book: <https://trap-rangiora.eventbrite.co.nz>

When: 10am-12 midday Sat. 31 October

Where: Department of Conservation
13 N Terrace Rd, **GERALDINE**

Book: <https://trap-geraldine.eventbrite.co.nz>



Contact: manager@braid.org.nz

More details: <http://braid.org.nz/trapping>

Braid 
www.braid.org.nz



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST
A study in conservation
Environment Canterbury Regional Council
Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri





**The rowing
race that
wasn't** P9



**Nuts over
chicken** P23

Northern Outlook

stuff.co.nz

Neighbourly
www.neighbourly.co.nz

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

NORTH CANTERBURY'S BEST READ COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Braided river birds threatened

JOEL INESON

Former Labour Party secretary Tim Barnett wants to generate conservation support for a bird that is "under extreme threat".

Barnett visited the Ashley River on Friday, along with Waimakariri District mayor David Ayers, to publicise the importance of protecting the wrybill, which only breeds on the braided rivers of the eastern South Island. He said the bird was an icon as it shared the "tough little battler" trait that New Zealanders pride themselves on.

"It stands up against summer heat and nor'wester storms to build its nest among the clean river stones, gambling that it can get its brood hatched and fledged before floods destroy the nest or

predators take the eggs or chicks."

Barnett said the wrybill "truly is a whole-of-New Zealand bird" as when its chicks were fledged the entire population flew north for winter in North Island harbours and estuaries. New Zealanders needed to realise the value of braided rivers to the local ecosystem, he said.

"Human activity, introduced weeds and especially introduced predators such as cats, rats, stoats and hedgehogs, are taking a devastating toll on the birds and it is only through human intervention and protection that they will survive."

The Ashley River was one of the only locations where wrybill population was still stable and potentially even growing.



Vote for the wrybill

The wrybill is the only bird in the world that has a bill that bends sideways, and it is always bent to the right.

It is one of the 52 birds nominated for this year's 2015 Bird of the Year, which is open to the public for voting until this Sunday, October 25.

From the fantail to the fiordland crested penguin, the public is able to have its say about which bird should win the New Zealand Forest

and Bird competition in the competitions tenth year.

The not-for-profit organisation's annual event highlights just how many of New Zealand's native birds need the public's help to sustain existence.

Birds like the kermadec storm petrel are critically endangered, totally endemic to a small part of the country, and vulnerable to mammalian predators.



The wrybill is among the many birds nominated for the New Zealand Forest and Bird 2015 Bird of the Year. From left: Eleanor Gunby, David Ayers and Tim Barnett.
PHOTO: SUPPLIED/AULDWOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

Voting chance

The wrybill was nominated for the Forest and Bird 2015 Bird of the Year and could be voted for at www.birdoftheyear.org.nz

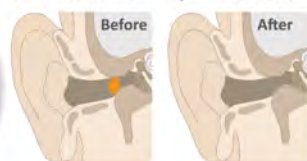
The wrybill is among the many birds nominated for the New Zealand Forest and Bird 2015 Bird of the Year.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED/AULDWOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

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The NEWS

Thursday August 27 2015 | Issue 664

**Hurunui
Kaikoura
Waimakariri**



**Quake recalled:
Devastating Sept
quake remembered.**
— page 4.



**Motor Torque:
A feast of cars on
show and at home.**
— pages 18 - 19.



**On target:
Ashley shooters
selected for NZ.**
— page 27.

Compromise reached to protect rare birds

By SHELLEY TOPP

A compromise has been reached to protect the rare and endangered native bird species nesting in the braided Ashley-Rakahuri Riverbed.

With the birds' breeding season about to begin a plan was needed to discourage four-wheel drive vehicles and trail bikes from driving in the Ashley-Rakahuri riverbed, damaging nests and harming birds and their chicks.

A move to restrict vehicle access from the beginning of September to the end of January was endorsed at a recent meeting between the Rangiora-based Ashley-Rakahuri Rivercare Group, Environment Canterbury (ECan) and the Combined 4WD Club.

Entrances will be blocked off using a digger or concrete blocks on tracks leading into the river, but they will be restored in the summer so people can get to swimming holes.

The Combined 4WD Club's president, Nigel Bannan, supports restricting vehicles from driving in the riverbed.

"We are as keen as everyone else to see the birds prosper," he says.

"To this end, we are working with ECan to select other sites for us to use while the birds are in the riverbeds."

An Ashley-Rakahuri Rivercare Group spokesman, Geoff Swales, said numbers of breeding birds were declining on most braided rivers, but not on the Ashley-Rakahuri.

"There is good evidence that this



Rare beauties ... an endangered black-billed gull nesting with its young chick along the Ashley-Rakahuri River near Rangiora in North Canterbury.

PHOTO: STEVE ATTWOOD

improved situation is due to our predator trapping, and the reduction of disturbance by vehicles and people.

"Hence the moves to maintain restricted access during the bird-breeding season."

Signs notifying of restricted access will be put up alongside riverbed tracks by ECan's Ashley-Rakahuri Regional Park staff.

It is hoped that this initiative to

restrict vehicle access in the Ashley-Rakahuri riverbed can be replicated in other braided rivers throughout Canterbury.

The province is considered a global "hot-spot" for braided rivers, which are rare in the rest of the world.

This means that the native ecosystems they support are unique and deserve special attention.



Brothers ... Kaiapoi brothers Bruce (left), Alan and Roy Adams have been recognised for 115 years of combined service to the Kaiapoi Volunteer Fire Brigade.

PHOTO: DAVID HILL

Service milestone

By DAVID HILL

Three Kaiapoi brothers have clocked up more than 100 years of service to their local fire brigade.

Bruce, Alan and Roy Adams were recently made "gold members" of the Kaiapoi Volunteer Fire Brigade at a recent honours night, recognising a combined 115 years of service.

Big brother Bruce was the first to join and completed 42 years service, while Alan completed 27 years - both serving as chief fire officer. Roy is still active and has completed 46 years service, holding the rank of senior fireman driver.

"I think Bruce knocked around with friends who were members of the brigade, so he joined and then Alan joined a year or so later and I just

followed on," Roy says.

"It's very enjoyable and it's about the community service. It wasn't planned that way (to do 46 years), but while the body's good I'll keep doing it."

Roy says there have been a number of changes in the last 46 years, with the brigade attending more motor vehicle accidents and medical call-outs. When he joined there were only 80 call-outs a year.

"Now we are doing 250-plus. In the last few years there has been a lot more medical stuff."

Roy believes such awards could become rare in the future.

"The way volunteer organisations are today and the lifestyle, people don't seem to hang round that long. People's jobs keep changing, so they just can't commit like they used to."



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Kaki may return to North Canterbury

CHARLIE MITCHELL

One of the world's rarest bird species may make a triumphant return to North Canterbury after coming dangerously close to extinction.

The black stilt, or kaki, is a critically endangered wading bird species found only in New Zealand.

It was once the most common stilt species in the country, but predators and habitat changes saw its population plummet to

DOC met with local groups such as Ngai Tahu and the Ashley-Rakahuri Rivercare Group to identify how a permanent kaki group could be established near the estuary.

just 23 adults in 1982.

Intensive conservation efforts have increased the population to about 130, but the species remains threatened by extinction, and it is the world's rarest wading bird.

The surviving kaki population is confined to the Mackenzie Basin in South Canterbury, where a Twizel-based breeding centre was set up to hand-rear kaki chicks for release into the wild.



The black stilt is the rarest wading bird on the planet.

The Department of Conservation (DOC) has confirmed it assessed an area around the lower Ashley river for the establishment of a potential new population.

PICTURE: STEVE ATTWOOD

It met with local groups such as Ngai Tahu and the Ashley-Rakahuri Rivercare Group to

identify how a permanent kaki group could be established near the estuary.

Ashley-Rakahuri Rivercare Group president Nick Ledger said about 40 birds could be released each year into the Ashley River site if it was selected.

"Everybody is in agreement the site we're proposing has potential," he said.

The estuary had fewer predators such as stoats, weasels and ferrets, and a less extreme climate than the Mackenzie basin, he said.

If the site was selected it could take many years for a breeding population to establish.

"You really need a couple of hundred birds in the wild, and they obviously can't do that straight away.

"I'd imagine they'd release 30 to 80 birds over a number of years and hopefully we can end up with a population of a couple of hundred.

"Hopefully it will become a self-sustaining, wild population."

DOC biodiversity ranger Cody Thyne said the Ashley river site had "potential" but it would be a while before a final decision was made.

It would continue to work with local groups to assess the site and identify how it could support kaki, such as increased predator control.

Last month two kaki disappeared from the Twizel breeding centre when heavy snow destroyed two aviaries. It was likely the birds were crushed, a DOC spokesperson said.