

Living Springs

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Creating a Space for Our
Threatened Ecologies





Projects

1. Allandale Stream Restoration Programme

Southern Tributary

Lower Reaches of the Allandale Stream

Western Tributary

White Gate Paddocks

Northern Tributary

2. Plant 100 Totara's

3. Predator-Free Allandale

4. Propagation Nursery

5. Looking Forward



Towards an Eco-Sanctuary

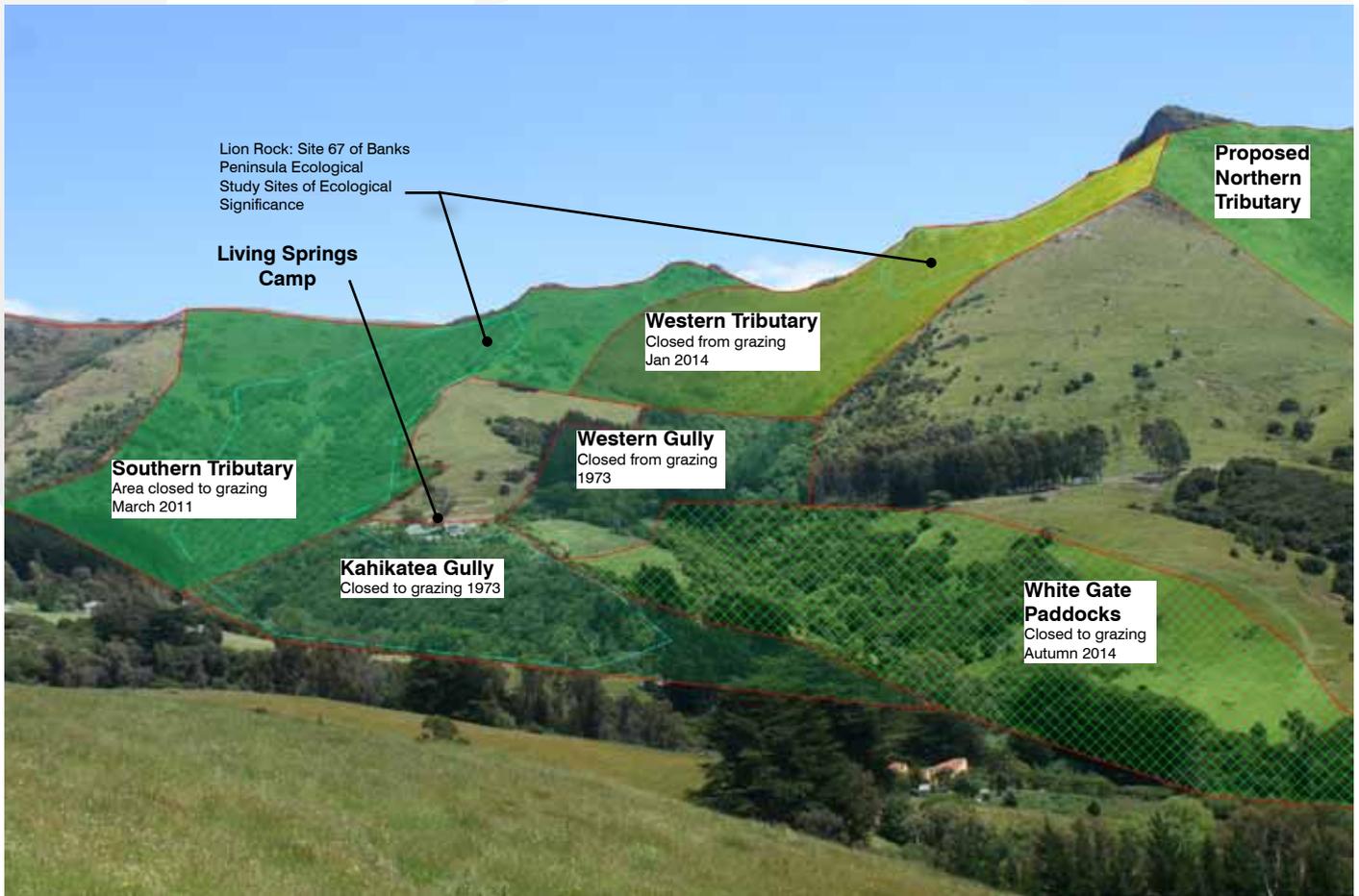
The move towards an Eco-Sanctuary on this unique 450 hectare property is an evolving one and had its inception forty years ago with a number of comprehensive tree planting programmes in the early years of Living Springs. There has been a considerable momentum shift in recent years with the Allandale Stream Restoration programme beginning in 2011 and then enlarging to include the 'Plant a Hundred Totaras' initiative and "Predator Free Allandale" concept in 2013/14. Out of this base in 2014 began to emerge the idea of a Living Springs Eco –Sanctuary.



1976



2014



1. Allandale Stream Restoration Programme

This is a large scale project involving protection of the waterways of the Allandale catchment from the Crater to the Sea (Ki Uta Ki Tai) involving extensive livestock fencing and riparian planting to enhance water quality in the Allandale stream and encourage the development of aquatic stream life.



The Southern Tributary

In March 2011 the headlands of the southern tributary an area of approximately 41 hectares and containing significant areas of native trees and flora was retired from livestock grazing with fencing assistance from the Transpower Trust. This tributary continues down into the area below the camp facility which was in turn retired and extensively planted forty years ago meaning that most of the southern tributary was now retired from livestock grazing. The area also contains a giant Kahikatea tree estimate to be around 800 years old.

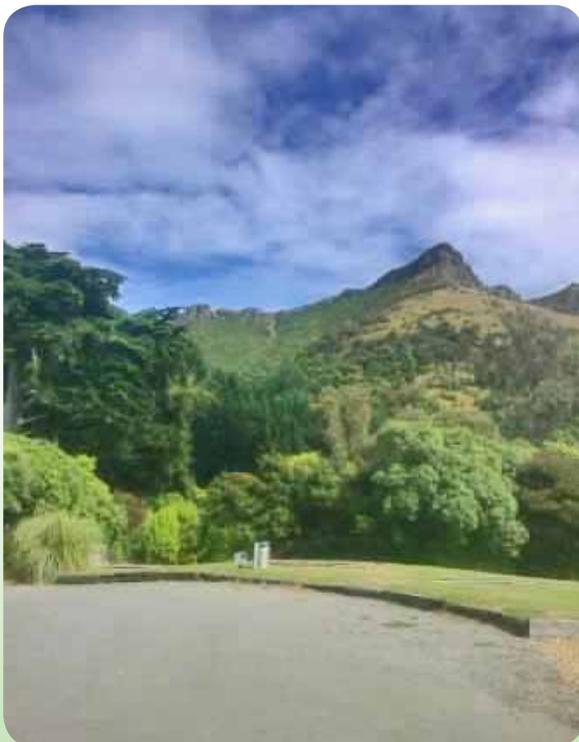
The Lower Reaches of the Allandale Stream

In the autumn of 2012 the lower reaches of the Allandale Stream were cleared of willows and other exotic trees, fenced off and retired from livestock access with financial assistance from eCan and labour assistance from MSD through a Task Force Green project. A planting programme of 1700 native trees and grasses took place during the winter of 2012.



The Western Tributary

In early 2014 a 500 metre fence running down from a bluff below Lion Rock was installed effectively retiring from livestock grazing a 32 hectare area that formed the headwaters of the western tributary. This area also included the Lion Rock an area identified by the Christchurch City Council as an Area of Ecological Significance and flowed down into the Bellbird Heights Valley which had been closed off for approximately 40 years.



White Gate Paddock (Part of Western Tributary)

In the autumn of 2014 a further 500 meters of livestock fencing retired the rest of the western tributary and during the winter months of that year over 5000 native trees and grasses were planted in this area. These projects received considerable financial assistance from the Canterbury Water Management Banks Peninsula Zone Committee and the Immediate Steps Funding Programme.



Community Support

The planting programmes of recent years have received significant community support with up to 30 volunteers per day responding to weekend working bees with 5000 trees and native grasses planted out in 2014 alone. As well special planting days have been carried out by the Girl Guides, Limited Service Volunteers and the good ladies from the women's prison.



The Northern Tributary

Planning involving fencing contractors and funding agencies is now underway regarding the retirement and planting of the Northern tributary.

“Living Springs demonstration of concern for protection and enhancement of the environment is a great example to the community. As a Ngai Tahu Kaumatua living in neighbouring Rapaki, and as an Environment Canterbury Commissioner with particular interests in biodiversity, I am pleased to record my support for Living Springs and its various positive activities to improve the environment.”

DONALD COUCH,
COMMISSIONER,
ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY

“What’s being done here is pretty impressive.” Richard Simpson, Chairman Banks Peninsula Water Management Zone Committee, July 2014.



800 year old Kahikatea tree at Living Springs



2. Plant 100 Totara's

The programme to plant a hundred Totaras a year for the next ten years began in January 2014. This is an attempt to restore for our children and grandchildren some of what was originally there. Reflecting on the knowledge that 99% of Banks Peninsula was originally covered in native flora including great podocarp forests containing Totara and Kahikatea and had by 1900 been reduced to 1% was a sobering thought .

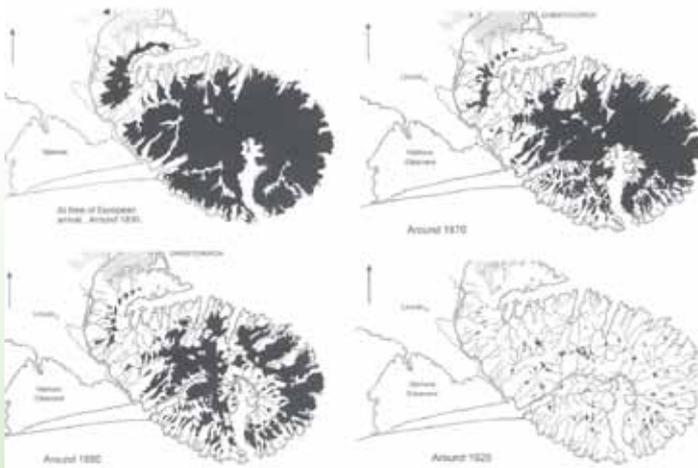


Diagram showing deforestation pattern of Banks Peninsula approx 1850-1920.

Source: Boffa Miskell Banks Peninsula Landscape Study.



Dead Totara's, Banks Peninsula

The first three hundred Totara seedlings were purchased from the DOC nursery in Motukarara in Jan 2014 and planting began in the winter of 2014. “We would like to believe that the children and young people who come today and are involved in the planting programmes will one day bring their kids and grandkids and walk through the great podocarp forests of Living Springs.”



300 Totara seedlings to be held in the nursery until ready for planting.

3. Predator Free Allandale

Over the years Living Springs has had various levels of consciousness of the need for predator control and in 2009 Grant Whitehead setup a series of bait stations mainly aimed at rats and opossums. In 2013 local resident Trevor Biggs planted the idea of a ‘Predator Free Allandale.’ It was like ‘an idea whose time had come’ and was immediately picked up on by Living Springs management as an aspirational concept to work towards. It was out of discussions around this area with James Young and others from the ecology department of Lincoln University that the concept of an Eco Sanctuary on the property at Living Springs began to emerge.

In mid 2014 Anna Colombus came on staff in a park ranger type role and whilst her role was considerably wider than predator control she did resurrect the bait station programme and began a stoat trapping programme in early 2015. Her role also includes nursery work, management of planting and tree establishment, invasive weed control as well as development and involvement in a number of educational programmes.



4. Propagation Nursery

With the direction Living Springs is going, the time is right to being to propagate it’s own plants to maintain a supply of seedlings grown from locally sourced seeds. There is an area that has been designated as a basic nursery with approximately 500 plants currently being grown on. There is scope for development and expertise input to make this an effective project.



5. Looking Forward

Whilst the developments to date have been in one sense organic and the future direction is still emerging Living Springs recognises the enormity of what could be and the unique position it is in to do something exceptional.

A. The enormity of what could be includes:

- The ability to offer the people of the region the opportunity to spend time in the great podocarp forests of old in a setting only 20 minutes from Christchurch.
- The ability for people to experience the wonder of a forest alive with birdsong.
- The ability to confront our visitors and guests with a world that has been effectively destroyed by human activity.
- An ability to give large numbers of people direct physical proximity – and even contact – with endangered species.
- The ability for our young people to hold a kiwi chick or a tiny indigenous frog in their hand and to experience literally a personal responsibility for its continued existence.
- The ability to raise our young people's commitment to the conservation cause

B. The unique position Living Springs is in to do something exceptional

- With a 450 hectare ecologically significant block of land already held in trust with the express intention of blessing those who come here.
- With an existing organisation and identity, expansive facilities and well established infrastructure.
- With forty years experience and a hard earned understanding of what it takes to be socially, financially and environmentally sustainable
- With an existing clientele including thousands of school children and young people taking up residence on the property every year.
- With an existing profile as a place where life is celebrated, knowledge is sought and thousands of people are refreshed, strengthened and inspired every year.





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