

Ngā Poutiriao ō Mauao - Operational Report February 2018

Ngā Poutiriao ō Mauao (Mauao Joint Administration Board)

13 February December 2018

Objective ID: A8451590



Tauranga City

Executive summary

Recommendation	That the Ngā Poutiriao ō Mauao: (a) Receives the operational report for February 2018.
Summary of issue	This report identifies the key operational issues and achievements over the reporting period October 2017 - February 2018. It identifies up and coming work of interest to Ngā Poutiriao ō Mauao, including ongoing visitor records and an up to date events calendar for Mauao, Main Beach and Pilot Bay Reserves.

Discussion

Pest control update

1. Rabbit control continues to be successful, with a night shooting total for 2017 of 722 rabbits, and many active burrows were eliminated. This sustained and progressive effort is having a noticeable impact on pasture and re-vegetation growth and therefore a positive impact on maintaining vegetation cover on sensitive archaeology. Low numbers of rats are still present. Two feral cats and one juvenile stoat were also controlled this period.
2. Plant pest control is ongoing and working well. The current focus is on the priority invasive weeds and amenity weeds in relation to track edges and high traffic areas. Aerial spraying of a large infestation of Japanese Honeysuckle was completed in November 2017. Staff and contractors are monitoring results to assess how effective this approach is in relation to the alternatives in the target area.

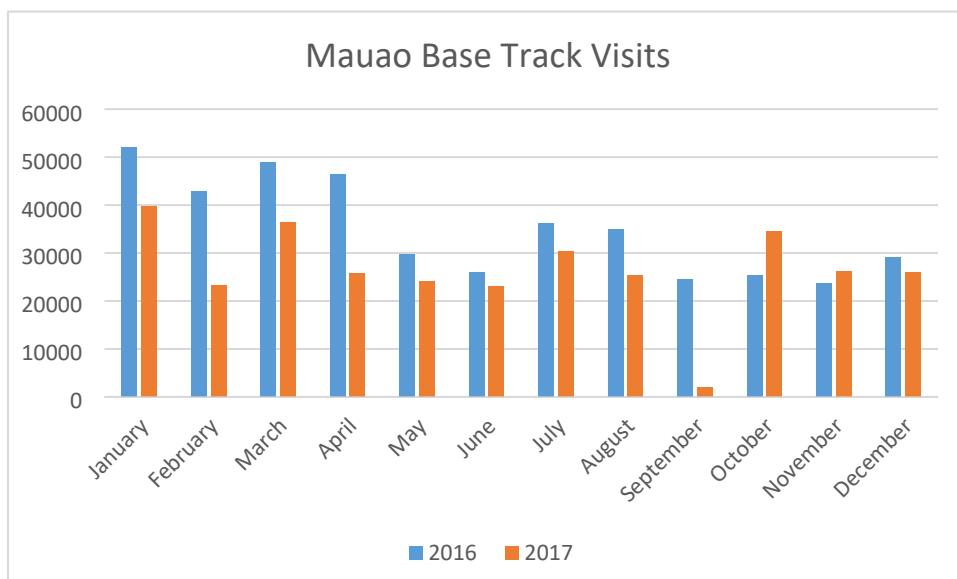
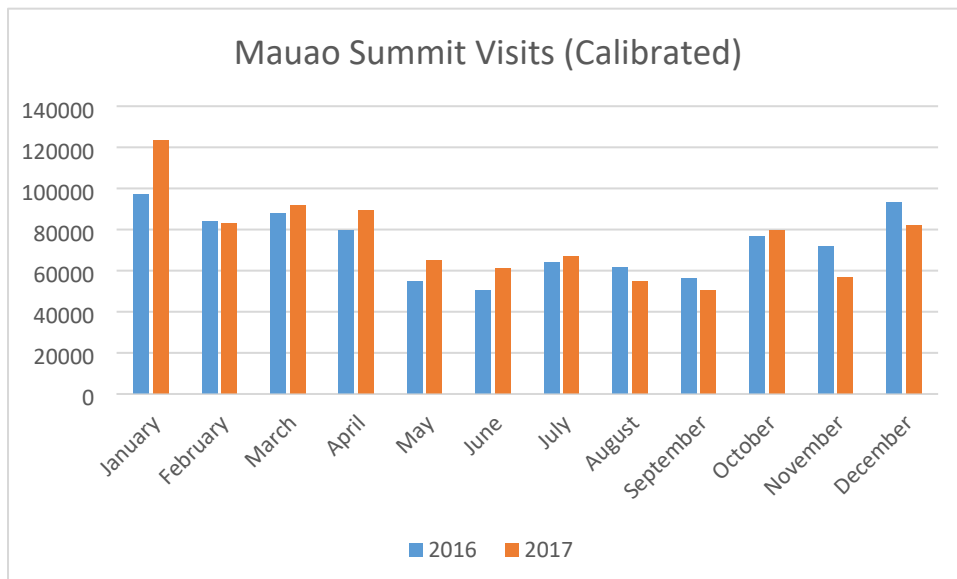
Visitor numbers

3.

	Summit visits (calibrated)	Base track visits	Total visits
2016	876,297	419,588	1,295,885
2017	905,621	318,046	1,223,667

See Appendix A for specific details.

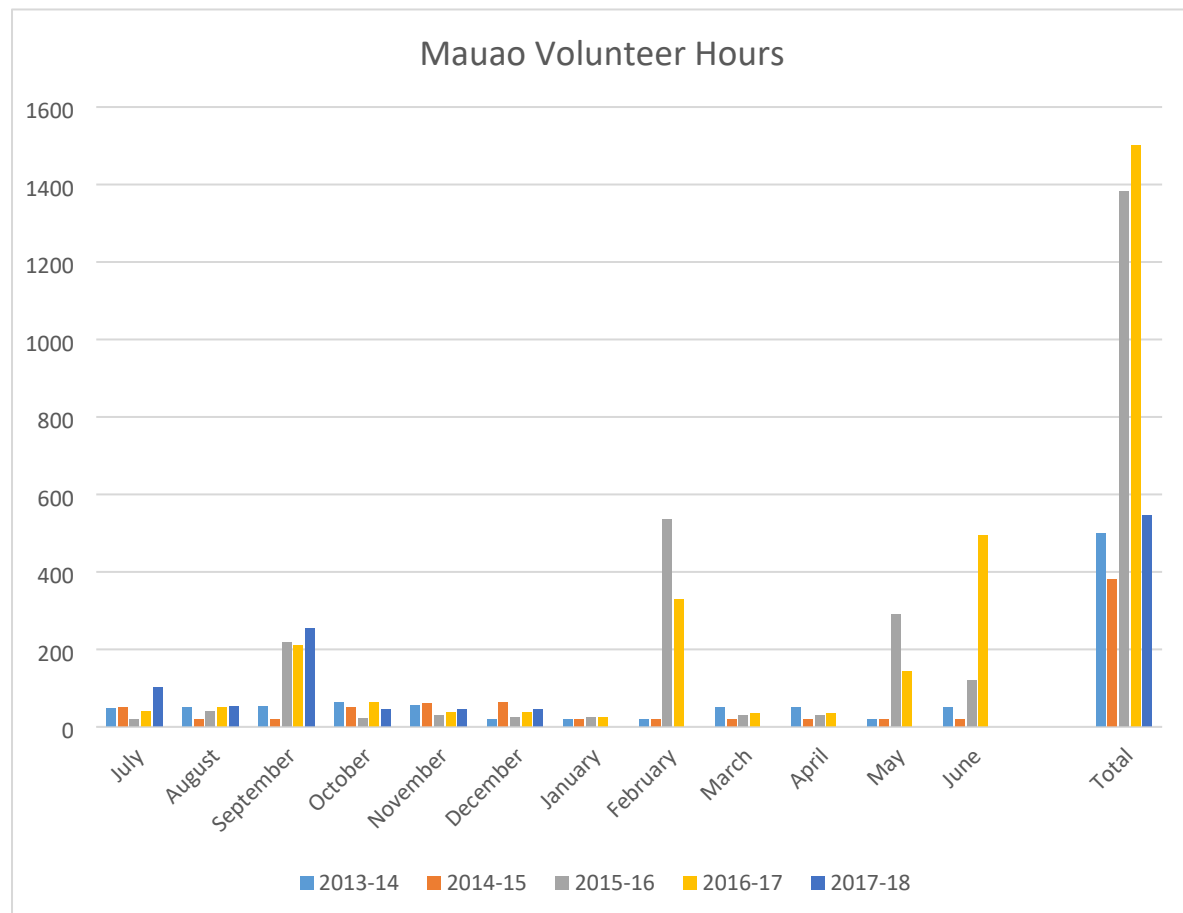
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Volunteer support

- Volunteer hours on Mauao are made up of a number of ongoing support groups and one off community events. The nature of the support includes the maintenance of animal pest control devices, revegetation planting, and rubbish removal. **Figure 1** shows the number of volunteer hours per month. The peaks are generally planting support and coastal clean ups.

5. Figure 1: Volunteer Support Hours Per Month



Upcoming events

- Refer to **Appendix B** for the Mauao 2018 Summer Events Calendar, for the approaching period.

Recent Successes

Heritage New Zealand Authority for Operational Activities

- This period, an onsite induction was held with the designated archaeologist, key operational staff and contractors who undertake work on Mauao. The induction was to inform all parties of the Heritage New Zealand Authority and its requirements in the ongoing management of maintenance activities, to ensure the protection of heritage values and features within the reserve, and adherence to the authority granted.
- Staff and the designated archaeologist also identified 10 key monitoring sites that will be used for photo point monitoring for the annual monitoring and reporting requirements of the authority. The sites selected cover the full range of issues and threats that have potential to impact on the archaeological and heritage values.

Threatened Plant Survey

- A baseline monitoring survey of threatened plant species on Mauao including *Psilotum nudum*, *Pimelea tomentosa*, *Zoysia pauciflora*, and *Tetragonia tetragoniodes* was completed this period to provide an understanding of the distribution, success and threats to known threatened plant species on the Maunga. See the report at **Appendix C** for specific details.

10. 47 *Psilotum nudum* plants were located during this survey, 39 of which were located immediately adjacent to the known climbing routes, a further eight were located on the bluffs not utilised for climbing and three plants were located at the base of the 'Drop Kick Whizzer' climbing route. These three are considered to be at risk from the climbing activity. Almost all of the plants occurred in the absence of other plants, generally located in the cracks and fissures of the rock face.
11. Seven patches of *Zoysia pauciflora* were located on the northern coastal margin.
12. No specimens of *Tetragonia tetragoniodes* were located in the 2017 survey. The previously known location from 2014 was impacted by the large slip that damaged the base track in April 2017.
13. No specimens of *Pimelia tomentosa* were found in the 2017 survey. The last known record was 2004. Being a relatively short lived shrub it is possible that this specimen was displaced by regeneration of taller indigenous vegetation.
14. The report also touches on the presence of some regionally uncommon species found in the reserve and provides recommendations and actions for the ongoing future management and monitoring of threatened plants on the Maunga.

Arborist Tree removal assessment

15. The city arborist team undertook a site visit this period to assess the condition of some of the large exotic trees that are planned for removal, to help the operational team prioritise this work over the coming years. While some of these trees are in poor condition, the team confirmed there is no immediate threat to the public from any of the trees surveyed using the QTRA assessment process. The city arborist recommendation is to continue with a staged removal of these trees to prevent damage to heritage features by uncontrolled failure over time. This work is covered by the Heritage New Zealand Authority and heritage specifications.

Planned Work for the coming period

Renewals priorities for Mauao 2017/2018

16. Resurfacing of the Oruahine track is planned for early March/ April 2018. This operation will involve the use of a helicopter for delivery of aggregate and material directly onto the track.
17. Three existing seats on the base track have been replaced due to storm damage and poor condition.
18. Some fencing replacement and improvements on the North Eastern side of the Maunga are planned for February / March to allow the necessary site preparation for planting in May 2018.

Mauao maintenance access assessment

19. Contractors recently raised concern regarding the safety of accessing the north paddock stockpile site and the reservoir area with 6-wheeler trucks for the ongoing maintenance activities within the reserve. An engineer was engaged to assess the access for this purpose and found that the two sections of road are suitable for vehicles of this type. Some recommendations were made for minor maintenance improvements and educating drivers on the desired turning radius to keep away from the outside edge of the track. These maintenance improvement will be worked into the existing maintenance programme.

Herpetofauna (reptile) Survey

20. A base line survey of reptiles present on Mauao was undertaken in November 2017 to provide an understanding of the presence and distribution of reptile species on Mauao, and any threats to their existence for consideration in the future management of the Maunga. The survey results are expected early in 2018.

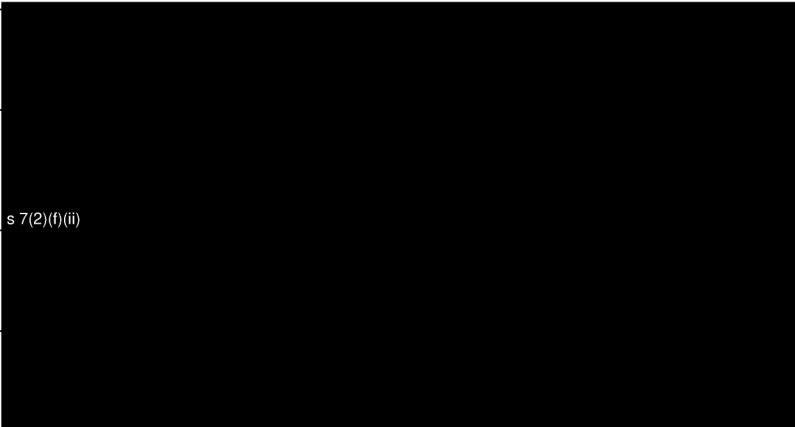
21. **Ongoing maintenance continues on the following aspects of the reserve:**

- restoration plantings
- plant and animal pest control
- stock and pasture management
- walkway maintenance
- sign and structure maintenance
- four wheel drive track maintenance
- geotechnical rock stability monitoring and scaling work

Appendices

No.	Title
A	Mauao 2017 track counter report <i>Objective Id: A8444933</i>
B	Mauao 2018 Summer Events Calendar <i>Objective Id: A8444937</i>
C	Mauao Threatened Plant Survey report – Wildlands <i>Objective Id: A8444942</i>

Signatories

Authors	 s 7(2)(f)(ii)	
Committee Lead Review		
Authorisers		