



SIRCET

For people,
for environment

Stewart Island/Rakiura Community & Environment Trust

Annual Report

1st July 2021 – 30th June 2022



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Chairperson's Report

Shona Sangster SIRCET 1 July 2021- 30 June 2022

Ka whati te tai, ka pao te torea – when the tide goes out, the oystercatcher strikes.

The last year has seen SIRCET striking while the iron is hot. We have had the Restoring Rakiura project going for one year now and what a busy and productive year it has been. At this time last year we had just hired our first two staff for the project, Keri and Rose. Since then we have filled another 15 roles. Over the year we have given employment to more than 20 people. Those that have left us have gone on to jobs with the likes of ICC, DOC and RealNZ. Recruitment is an ongoing activity for us now, but I think we can be really proud of the skills and experience we are giving people. We are living up to the Jobs for Nature ethos, a fact remarked on by Reg Kemper when he came for his very successful quality assurance visit. I want to express our appreciation for Kev Carter, Sinead Mulhearn and Nicole Sutton for their help and support from the Department of Conservation. Most importantly, a huge thank you is due to Keri, to Rose and to Al for their massive efforts in running such a large project and managing so many staff. You should all be incredibly proud of your achievements. Al will be stepping down from his Project Manager role to spend time caring for George. I think it's wonderful that you have chosen to do this and look at it as George's first year in development as a future member of the SIRCET team. And we hope to welcome Al back as trustee and staff liaison.

Looking to the future, we have one more year of the Restoring Rakiura project to go and the need to seek funding for after that project is going to be a number one priority. On that note I'm pleased to welcome Emma Simpson Boyce to the SIRCET family as our Community Liaison. This role has been vacant for a while so it will be great to have Emma on board, and key to making the link to our next funding opportunities.

Last year I thought we were busy as trustees, but this year has by far eclipsed it. Thank you to all our trustees who have answered emails, attended meetings, interviewed applicants, come up with strategy, and hustled hard for housing solutions! I'd like to recognize our Treasurer, Anita for her willingness to take on all sorts of new roles while still remaining a dedicated financial whiz; Emma for all her work on getting the logo just right, her patience with us all was a minor miracle! Ulva for taking on minutes when required and for being an excellent interviewer and advocate for us; Wayne for his valuable experience and thoughtful contributions. To finish, I want to pay tribute to Jim, our longest serving trustee who is stepping down this year. He has been our historical memory, always kept a keen eye on the budget, a workhorse whenever something needed to be built or shifted, and just one of the nicest people you could ever meet. We will miss you very very much but after 20 years we agree that he does deserve a break. He's only been trying to stand down for the last 5 or 10 years! So a million thank yous Jim for your dedicated service.

We thank the Department for their support and look forward to furthering conservation on Rakiura together. We would also like to thank the Mamaku Point Trust, Predator Free Rakiura and RMLT for their support and the University of Otago Marine Sciences department and our other landlords for their help with accommodation. As always, the final thanks go to volunteers, the heart and soul of this great organisation.

Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project is currently Restoring Rakiura Jobs for Nature Funded Project

The Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project (HMBHRP) has been SIRCET's primary project focusing on pest control and species monitoring on Ackers Peninsula. Pest control initially started in 2003 at Ackers Point to protect sooty shearwater/tītī and little penguin/korora colonies and has since expanded to protect 210 hectares from Ackers Point to Golden Bay Road, Oban. With 2 year funding from Jobs for Nature (JFN) our project is now Restoring Rakiura and will enable an extension of trapping area in the Horseshoe Point area and will also extend to Backyard Trapping in 2022/2023. As Restoring Rakiura we are also combining our previous War on Weeds into this as we continue with Barberry Control throughout the wider township area.

SIRCET's project goals are:

- To increase the native bird population within the Halfmoon Bay area;
- To provide a safe habitat for re-introduction and survival for Stewart Island species (both plants and animals); and
- To educate and involve the community in conservation activities

July 2021 started with employment of a Project Manager and Project Administrator and by the end of October they were joined by 3 Team Leaders and 12 Field Staff. Many of these were island locals who had been previously underemployed along with several staff moving to the island from other parts of the country. Acquiring office space and accommodation for these staff was our first logistics exercise. We are grateful for the opportunity to rent the old Pearlers Building from Rakiura Slip Trust for our amazing office space and to the few locals who have rented their houses to us for staff accommodation. Also, we would like to mention the help from Mamaku Point and Otago University for access to accommodation as needed.

The JFN team this year:

Project Manager July to March – Rose Hanley-Nichols

Project Manager May to June – Alasdair Burns

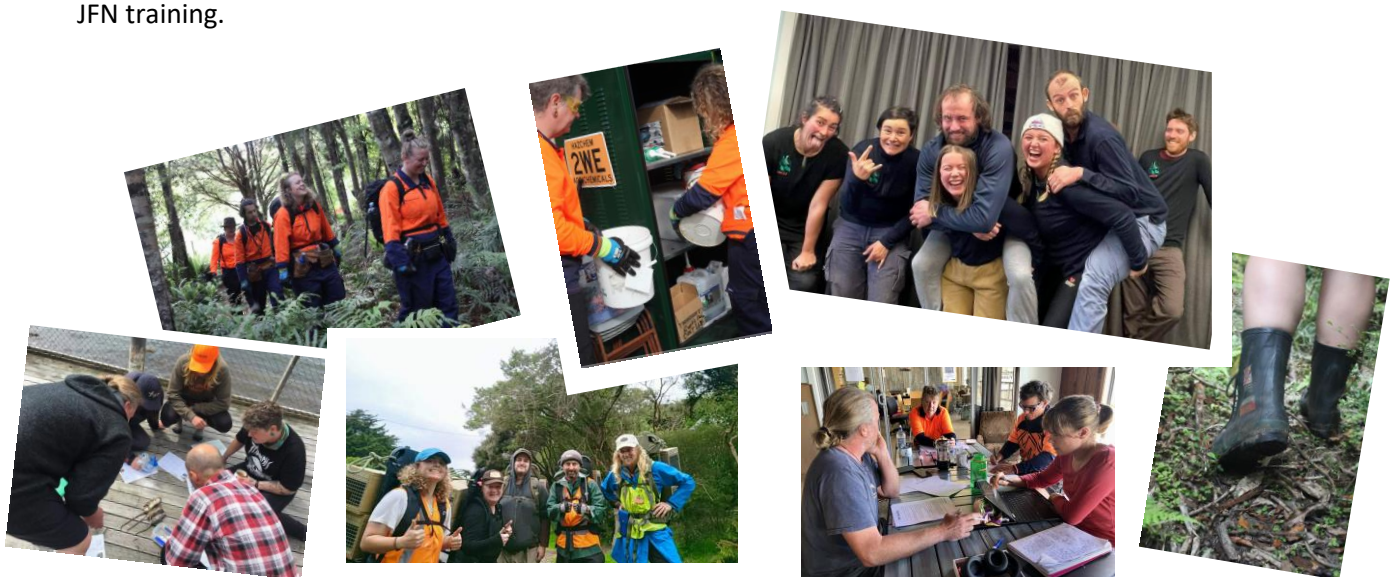
Project Administrator – Keri Antoniak

Field Team Leaders – Ser Kilduff, H Walker, Tomas Blazek

Field Team Members – Initially - Jimmy Tulloch, Olivia Bayne, Winiata Edwards, Jack Dobbins, Ruby Young, Lufasaitu Faleauto, Karen Bowman, Marco Tairoa, Owen Peattie, Jonathan Poll, Sahmay Ellis, Dani Burling-Claridge.

Field Team Members – additional employed as others left – Chanty Olive, Joe Fox, Karen Davis, Natalie Subritzky, Mareikura Tawhara

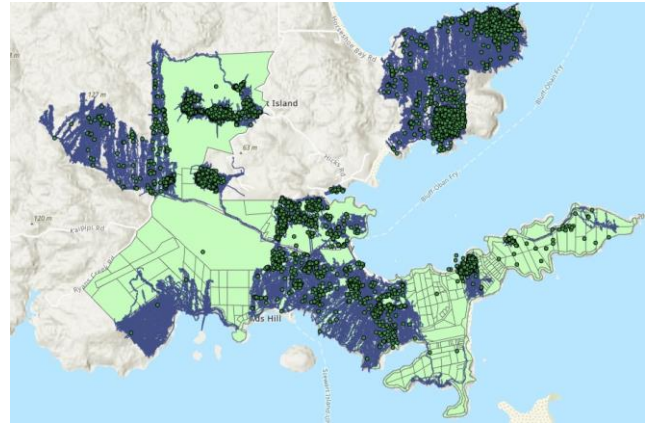
Great to see the team grow with the project. Some that left went to other employment helped by the JFN training.



Darwin's Barberry Control

The JFN team are continuing from our War on Weeds project and have throughout the year done an excellent job of covering the ground over 420ha of land with the number of weeds removed at over 250,000 plants. We still use the grid search, cut and paste method throughout to ensure full coverage and efficient kills. We haven't worked throughout the winter on this before, but it has not been as bad as we thought, and the ground continued to be covered effectively. See track and kill map below for the coverage throughout the township, Horseshoe Point, Paterson Hill, Fern Gully North, and part of Jones property on Back Road.

A big thank you to all the landowners that have given us permission to date to work on their land. We still have a few to contact to enable a full coverage is achieved in the next year.



Animal Pest Control

Our JFN team have tidied up the rat and possum control lines in our original core, buffer and community zones by marking them clearly and cleaning all the old victor traps and reorganising the Trappinator possum traps.

Replacement of the Victor's with box traps including some DOC200's and some BT200's (all stainless steel and tanalised timber for longevity) has begun. We have been trialling the new Supervisor Max rat traps (also stainless) as these can be set on trees to get those rats that prefer to stay off the ground. The Goodnature A24 self-resetting traps have been rebaited and regassed and we have seen results under these. Traps checks are currently being done weekly, most lines now done by the JFN team though we have still some keen volunteers doing their own lines and a big thank you to them for that.

Cat traps have only been set a few times this year as we have been concentrating on the other species. However, we now have Encounter Solutions Celium network (gratefully funded by Lotteries Commission) active and cat traps in place. This network allows us to see from the comfort of our office if the traps have been set off so we should be able to have these set more times than ever before.

Trapping Results

	2021/2022	2020/2021
Rats	1,748	1,719
Possums	16	10
Cats	1	7

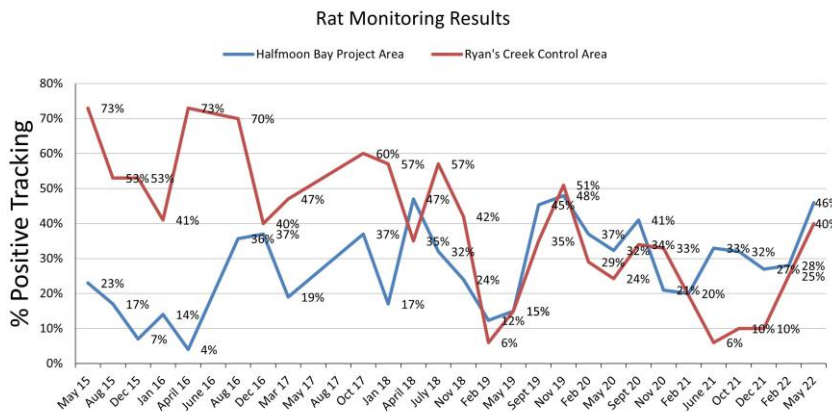


Pest Monitoring

Rats

Quarterly rat monitoring has continued throughout the year on 11 lines within our project area and 2 control lines outside the trapped area. We became aware of some private trapping at Ryan's Creek so a decision was made to move the control lines from there to Lee Bay. The last monitor for the year was done using these lines.

6 new lines have also been set up at Horseshoe Point and these will be included in our monitoring next year.

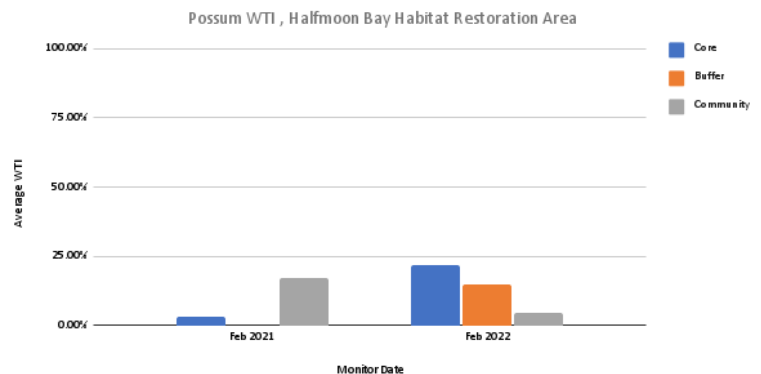


With extra trapping effort we were starting to get the tracking results down but the effects of the current mast has sent the numbers up recently.

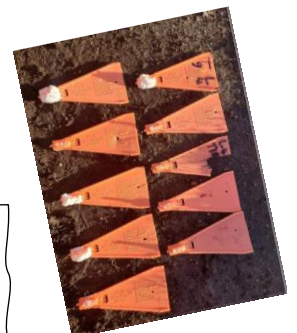
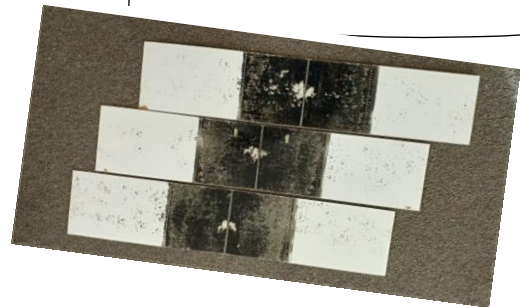
Possums

In 2020 a decision was made to change our possum monitoring method from RTC to wax chew tags. This method is easier for the Trust to carry out and has less stringent weather requirements. They also provide a more accurate estimate of possum abundance especially at low densities.

9 lines of 10 tags per line were done in the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration area in February 2021. In February 2022, with extra staff, we changed this to have 20 lines of 10 tags each. This could be one reason why this graph is showing higher numbers of possums than last year. Ongoing these lines will continue to be done the same which will produce a more robust picture of the possum numbers in this area.



Horseshoe Point has also had a pre trapping monitor run in June 2022 prior to the Trapinators being placed on a 100m x 100m soft grid in July. Results from this came in at a whopping 78% tracking.

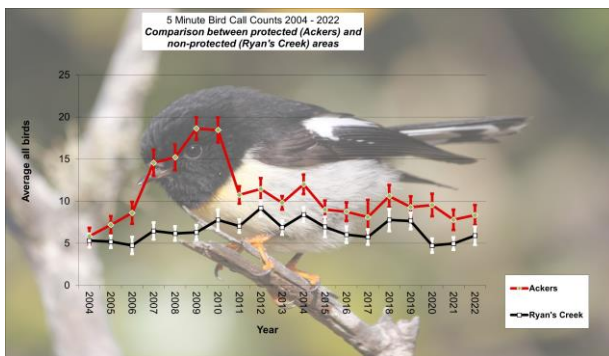


Species Monitoring

Forest Bird Monitoring

The annual forest bird monitoring using a five-minute bird call count was conducted in April 2022 in the Project area at Acker's Point and in Ryan's Creek area, which is a similar Stewart Island Forest environment but where there is less intensive pest control.

The results show an increase in the number of birds heard at both areas. For the first time in the 12 years this count has been done a Rifleman was encountered at Ackers Point along with only the second recording of both Morepork and Brown Creeper.



Little Blue Penguins/Kororā

SIRCET continue to work together with Halfmoon Bay School to monitor kororā using trail cameras and hope to compare the results with our previous monitoring method of slow walk counts. We are delighted to learn that there are much greater numbers of kororā than we have previously thought.

The video camera observations of pest animals by the children have also been able to guide the trapping efforts. The ownership and hard work put into this project by the committed Halfmoon Bay pupils has been magnificent and we thank them for this.



Night Bird Monitoring

SIRCET undertake night call count monitoring of Weka, Kiwi, and Ruru within the Project area, and also in a control area to provide information on species population health.

All 3 birds are present in the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project (HMBHRP) area. Kiwi are self-introduced and along with Ruru appear to be increasing in number.

Night bird and kiwi call counts were not performed in 2022, and due to time constraints only 4 out of the 8 sites were completed in May 2021. We have secured funding to review the process which it hoped to be done before the counts in the next financial year.



Sooty Shearwater/Tītī Monitoring

SIRCET had been undertaking monitoring of Sooty Shearwater/muttonbird/tītī colony on Ackers Point since 2004 to gauge the response of this colony to the community pest control operation in the area. Nesting success is our main measure, and this has been monitored using mark-recapture (banding) and burrow scoping. Since 2018 the Board of Trustees has chosen not to undertake the same monitoring as past years

The Trust continues to believe that monitoring Tītī at Acker's Point is important and worthwhile. A review of the Project Outline for this monitoring work would be very helpful and funding for future work is being sought.

Bats

Bat monitoring also took place in 2019 for the first time. No bat monitoring has been carried out since, but SIRCET would like to re-establish this to do alongside the night bird monitoring to see if any trends or patterns can be seen over time.

Community Native Plant Nursery

During this year the nursery had some great input from several sponsors to enhance it. Mamaku Point downsized their nursery and generously gifted nursery planter boxes, pots and other nursery gear that were surplus to their needs.

Through donations made by the Four Square Supermarket and the public and we were able to engage local builder Daniel Meads to turn the old concrete water tank into a roofed potting shed with work benches and shelves.

The Community Partnership Fund also provided funds to upgrade the nursery area so with the help of Real NZ a shade house was built. Real NZ brought a team of their people including a qualified builder for a day to construct this.

Along with these major renovations the local community volunteers along with SIRCET staff have made great efforts to tidy up the nursery, weed, re-pot and label plants. A selection of plants is still available at the Rakiura Environment Centre for purchase and many of the plants potted are earmarked for the Butterfields Beach project to be planted in September 2022.



Environmental Education

The local Halfmoon Bay School has continued with their trap line maintenance. The line is checked by students weekly with the help of 2 of our JFN staff following the resignation of our Community Liaison, Rose Bowman.

SIRCET also continued to host visiting school groups this year though due to Covid the numbers were down. Trustees and JFN staff have been doing some of these while we recruit for a new Community Liaison person who is to be funded by Stewart Island Visitor Levy fund for 2 years.

We also helped with the Penguin Nest box building with Halfmoon Bay School in May 2022.



Funding and Fundraising

2021-22 continued to be successful year for funding SIRCET. Our Jobs for Nature project costs covered much of our running costs, and for our other projects we continued to receive a variety of donations, sponsorships and grants.

The Town Gardens contract for Southland District Council continued for another year. Grants from Foodstuffs and SDC Community Partnership Fund enabled us to upgrade the nursery facilities.

Sponsor a Hectare and Adopt a Trap initiatives continue to provide some well needed funds to keep our community and school programmes funded. And further funding from Save the Kiwi kept the kiwi advocacy and avoidance training at the forefront of our community assignments.

Funding of \$11,451 was received from The NZ Lotteries Foundation. This paid for the first of our Celium Network Infrastructure which is the remote monitoring system that is to be set up. With this we will be notified immediately when traps are set off. Initially this will be used for the cat cage traps so they can be left undisturbed for longer times except when there is an animal inside.

Glowing Sky provided a set of merino shirts that have been logged and proudly worn by members of the team and Trust.

We thank all those who supported us financially this year, we couldn't run our projects without your support.



Pete Ross Automotive



Ulva's Guided Walks

Ulva Island Bird Sanctuary Stewart Island New Zealand
www.ulvas.co.nz ulva@ulvas.co.nz (64) 03 219 1216



Kiwi Advocacy Project

For the last few years Sandy King and Di Morris have been running a training session for local and visiting dogs to avoid kiwi. The aim of the training is to create negative association for the dog toward kiwi. Since 2014 this regular bi-annual calendar event for SIRCET is undertaken at Easter and Labour weekends. We encourage all those with dogs in the community or those who visit the island to take part. This is a free activity that is endorsed by Kiwis for Kiwi.

From earlier funding SIRCET have an 'E Kiwi' as well as electric collars which are still used on some dogs. The 'E kiwi' is an electronic device that has been developed by some clever technical folk at DOC in Wellington. If a dog is interested in the very distinctive smell of the 'E Kiwi' they receive an electric shock through the nose as they investigate and touch the fine wires that surround the lump of fluff and smell. This shock reinforces a negative association of kiwi smell as something to avoid! The shock for some dogs creates a strong reaction, some other dogs just seem to shrug it off. Sandy has been training specifically in the use of this tool and we are very grateful for her continued voluntary support.

In October 2021 we put through 34 dogs, January 2022 we had 13 dogs and in April 2022 we had 19 dogs, with each dog receiving a certificate and a treat!



Rakiura Environment Centre

The Environment Centre continues to be an important resource which enables SIRCET to be 'visible' to the local community and the thousands of visitors who come to Stewart Island each year. Glowing Sky Ltd generously provides this space for the trust to display and inform visitors of our activities and plans.

Information is continually updated and there are plans for next year to bring the Environment Centre interpretation up to date with our new logo.



Conservation Partners

SIRCET continue to work closely with a number of environmental groups and organisations.

Our relationship with the Department of Conservation (DOC) has only been strengthened by the Jobs for Nature/Mahi mō te Taiao funding.

Environment Southland continue to provide valuable ongoing support.

SIRCET also keeps in close contact with the Predator Free Rakiura group, Awarua Rūnaka and the Rakiura Māori Land Trust and these relationships are strong with letters of support in our funding applications.

SIRCET's quarterly meetings with Mamaku Point Conservation Trust have led to a much closer and mutually beneficial relationship and we thank Rachel, Roy, Ant and Ernie for all their help.

Also, thanks to RealNZ for the use of the shed below the Lodge which enabled us to build our traps undercover.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Volunteers

With the shift to a fully funded JFN programme some of our trapping volunteers are taking well-earned break and letting the team do the weekly checks. We still have a few valuable volunteers doing trap lines as well as nursery tasks, species monitoring, Kiwi Avoidance Training days, educational workshops, and Trust administration. During the 2021-22 year volunteers contributed over 1400 hours. Volunteers ranged from dedicated residents to visiting volunteers, DOC volunteers, visiting school groups and our own hard-working Trustees.

Thanks to our local volunteers: Asher Family, Antoni Manning, Bec Baxter, Ben Hopkins, Bevan Smith, Bill Watt, Daniel Meads, Emma Jenkinson, Hayden Cohen, Ian & Anita Herbert, Ian & Phillipa Wilson, Jennifer Jamieson, Jess Kany, Jules Retburg, Maggie George, Margaret Hopkins, Maya Stone, Nathan Jamieson, Nicky Johnstone, Rosie Bowman, Shona Sangster, Simon Moir, Sue Bennett, Wayne King, Yi Pei Chung, Willy Gamble.

Trustees

Thanks to our current year Trustees:

Shona Sangster (Chair), Anita Herbert (Treasurer), Wayne King, Alasdair Burns, Ulva Goodwillie, Jim Barrett and Emma Feenstra (not in photo)



Statement of Financial Performance for July 2021 to June 2022

	Jobs for Nature	Other Projects	Total
Income			
Sponsor a Hectare	\$0	\$6,460	\$6,460
Adopt a Trap	\$0	\$5,468	\$5,468
Donations Received	\$0	\$10,497	\$10,497
Grants Received	\$865,081	\$26,355	\$891,436
Covid Subsidies Received	\$10,318	\$0	\$10,318
Trap Sales Income	\$0	\$609	\$609
Total Income	\$875,399	\$49,389	\$924,788
Less Cost of Sales			
Bait	\$7,708	\$12	\$7,720
Computer Expenses	\$5,630	\$0	\$5,630
Employment Expenses	\$7,241	\$0	\$7,241
Field Supplies	\$47,804	\$7,505	\$55,309
Field Work - Contract	\$0	\$6,140	\$6,140
GIS Costs	\$3,200	\$0	\$3,200
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$17,667	\$0	\$17,667
Office Expenses - Rent, Power, Phones etc	\$32,485	\$35	\$32,519
Sundry Expenses	\$3,619	\$7,140	\$10,759
Training & Travel	\$15,310	\$188	\$15,498
Traps	\$57,727	\$7,761	\$65,487
Wages	\$639,702	\$7,044	\$646,747
Total Cost of Sales	\$838,093	\$35,825	\$873,918
Gross Profit	\$37,306	\$13,564	\$50,870
Interest Received	\$0	\$810	\$810
Less Other Expenses			
ACC Levies	\$4,054	\$577	\$4,631
Accounting and Audit Fees	\$1,513	\$2,745	\$4,258
Administration Expenses	\$30	\$3,210	\$3,240
Finance Charges	\$0	\$424	\$424
Depreciation	\$5,521	\$5,333	\$10,854
Insurance	\$2,177	\$0	\$2,177
Subscriptions	\$1,005	\$0	\$1,005
Total Operating Expenses	\$14,299	\$12,289	\$26,588
Net Profit	\$23,007	\$2,084	\$25,091

Statement of Resources and Commitments at 30 June 2022

ASB Current Accounts	\$336,292
ASB Term Deposits	\$60,000
Interest Accrued	\$285
	<hr/>
	\$396,577
Plant and Equipment	\$20,055
Total Assets	<hr/>
	\$416,632
Accounts Payable	\$66,136
Grants in Advance	\$185,544
Wage Commitments Payable	\$24,825
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	\$276,505
Accumulated Funds	<hr/>
	\$140,127

Note: The basis of account preparation has changed from Cash (Tier 4) to Accrual (Tier 3) Reporting for the Charities Commission hence there is now Depreciation shown, Commitments for future Accounts Payable and Grants in Advance are also now recognised.