



NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2016

## Welcome from Owhaoko B&D landowners!

The new season is in full swing and we trust the first hunting groups have enjoyed their experience.

You are receiving this email from the Owhaoko B&D block Trust. As landowners, we also receive the booking contacts for access to our land. This is the first of a biannual newsletter to hunters - keeping you up-to-date with what's happening on the B&D blocks.

The Trust takes the responsibility of looking after its lands seriously and in most years some form of activity takes place that is aimed at looking after its guests and the environment. During pre-season we visited each hut, confirmed a maintenance program that Helisika completed, and started planning for future developments.

### Otutu Island

A small team involving retired Plumber, builder, and helper spent a few days-in-between hunts, giving the place a major overhaul - mouldy or leaking roof and wall panels replaced, water tank moved away from the building and a new meat safe installed. Because of the constant dampness, and the floor resting on the ground, the prospect of a new hut built off the ground is being considered



*Other changes you might notice since your last visit –*

### Golden Hills Strip

The hut is now warm and comfortable with replaced panels. Mouldy walls have been replaced. A new meat safe has been built and the water tank moved away from the building.



**Golden Hills** – will get a repaint over the summer.

**Gorge Tops** – is in reasonable condition and will look to keep it maintained. Might consider shifting water tank way from Building

### Haumingi Bush

This new hut is comfortable and looking great. This cabin design is the base model for future hut replacements.

We'll put lino on the kitchen floor to keep it tidy and maybe relocate the old



hut at the back for another use.



**Please help us keep the huts tidy for the next occupants.**

Both Tin Kettle and Te Wake Tops needed a fair amount of rubbish taken away and a general tidy up from the last season.

**Tin Kettle**

Planned improvements to Tin Kettle will be to reposition the sleeping hut nearer the eating area, replacing the outdoor area with something new – possibly a mix of indoor/outdoor. The eating area is to be linked by covered walkway to hut.

**Te Wake Tops** – has had a replacement roof and is now waterproof. The location is not entirely ideal, so we are looking to move this to a more suitable spot. Low on the priority though



**Deer Management**

We are looking at a deer management strategy aimed at reducing deer numbers to a more sustainable level.

The result hoped for is an increase in the survival rate of new plant seedlings, and an improvement in the quality of the deer, including that of mature stags.

**Preservation of Golden Hills old Shepherd's Hut**

During 2017/18 our program includes preservation of the old shepherd's hut near Golden Hills.

This hut is part of the history Ngamatea Station from the late 1800's and will be a place of interest to visitors on the wilderness trail



Options often recommended are chopper culls, or maybe a concentrated effort by hunters.

***We welcome your thoughts on what we should do.***

**Eco-tourism Development Opportunities**

A number of opportunities are on the table for developing eco-tourism activities on B&D block.

These include –

- Wilderness walk between huts
- Mountain bike trails

A new cabin with flush toilet and hot water.

**Bees and honey**

Over summer, the land is home to millions of bees which produce premium Mānuka honey.

Over 1200 hives are choppered into the dense mānuka bush over December and January then lifted out by chopper in mid-February.



## Hunting Statistics retrieved from your access permits



*May 2015 to May 2016*

Monthly records are collated of the number of hunters and total kills per hut location visited.

Golden Hills (42), Golden Hills Strip (52) and Otutu Island (57) hunting blocks yield the highest out of the total 190 deer killed.

### Hunting Gallery on our Website

Do you have photos of hunting on B&D blocks that you would like to share with us? Or even some shots of the extraordinary landscape views?

We'd love to add to our website photo gallery and share the odd trophy in our newsletters. You get to see our lands up-close and more frequently than we do over the main hunting season so send us some pics of deer, hunting or just chilling at the huts. Anyone have past photos of the old Golden Hills hut?



*With permission of Bevan Davidson – Golden Hills & Strip lookout*

If you have any comments regarding this newsletter or other matters, please feel free to contact me



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*However, if you do not wish to receive future newsletters, please return email saying "no".*