

Media release – Monday 18 May 2020

Photographs show successful regeneration in Tiromoana Bush

Photographs taken in Tiromoana Bush since the restoration project began fifteen years ago in 2004 show how successfully the bush is regenerating. Tiromoana Bush re-opened on Friday 8 May after being closed due to the fire risk over the summer months and the Covid-19 Lockdown.

Transwaste Canterbury Ltd (Transwaste), who owns Tiromoana Bush and the adjacent Kate Valley Landfill, are funding the restoration project. Transwaste Chairman Mr. Gill Cox says the photographs provide proof that the native forest is successfully regenerating.

‘Comparing photographs of the same area of Tiromoana Bush taken 15 years apart shows without a doubt the positive impact the restoration project, including tree planting and pest control, has had on the native forest’, says Mr Cox. ‘Not only has the vegetation increased in stature and spread, but where once the Kate Stream would run dry in summer there’s now a flourishing 12-hectare wetland, supporting a range of flora and fauna.’

In 2004, at the time when sheep and cattle grazing was first excluded, sites throughout the bush were chosen as photo locations. Images were collected to provide an accurate record of Tiromoana Bush before the restoration project commenced. At the end of each year photographs are taken at the same sites to provide a continuous record of the changes taking place.

The regular photography is one aspect of the restoration project planned and managed by Dr David Norton, a Professor of Forestry at the University of Canterbury’s Te Kura Ngahere | School of Forestry, and author of *The Tiromoana Bush Restoration Management Plan*. Professor Norton says while detailed measurements of plant regrowth are also important to monitor change, photo-points can show more general changes in land cover.

‘As change in natural systems is usually quite slow, it can be difficult to remember just how much change has occurred’, says Professor Norton. ‘The photos provide a really objective reference. Best of all you don’t need detailed measuring instruments or training to be able to compare two photographs and see what’s changed.’

Professor Norton says massive changes have occurred in Tiromoana Bush since the restoration project began. He says the photographs are an incredible advocacy tool to show people what’s being achieved, even if they’ve never visited Tiromoana Bush before.

‘The photographs show expansion of woody vegetation across what was previously farmed grassland including both natural regeneration and restoration plantings’, says Professor Norton. ‘The development of the wetlands is also very apparent, and I can also see in some photos how individual plants have recovered.’

The re-opening of the Tiromoana Bush Walkway is supported by a new free Walkway Guide, available at the information stand at the car park, and website (tiromoanawalkways.nz). A booklet about the bush restoration project is also available at the website (tiromoanabush.nz), which has been re-designed to include more information, background reports and photographs.