



Forest & Birders, with local residents protecting Papamoa beach from the Tauranga District Council. Photo: New Zealand Herald

Outfall draws a storm of protest

NINETY Forest and Bird members from Te Puke and Tauranga, plus local residents, staged a beach protest over the proposed

stormwater outfall at Papamoa. The 1200mm drain would be in the middle of an area designated as wilderness by the Tauranga District Council and would create an eyesore along the unspoiled beach.

A petition was sent to the District Council asking it to consider other options for stormwater disposal, including re-creating the natural drainage system which existed behind the beachfront, or for the outfall

to be put underground at an area of the beach zoned for development.



Waitaki Branch members viewing the Royal spoonbills on Maukiekie Island off Moeraki Peninsula. The colony is one of the largest in New Zealand with 60-80 birds. The island is Maori owned and "tapu" so the birds are undisturbed.

Moeraki helicopter grounded

THE PROPOSED SIGHTSEEING helicopter flights over Moeraki, site of the famous boulders, was turned down recently after an appeal to the Planning Tribunal by a coalition of local residents including Forest and Bird's Waitaki Branch.

They were concerned that the low level flights would disturb breeding colonies of royal spoonbills and various shag species on Maukiekie Island, just offshore, and the yellow-eyed penguin sanctuary at Katiki Point. The

application was originally approved by the Waitaki District Council despite 23 objections, including one by the Department of Conservation. A coalition was formed to pool resources for the appeal.

In its decision, the Tribunal said the Moeraki Boulders area is of national importance and that a helicopter scenic flight operation would have detrimental effects.

North Island weka recovery plan

PROJECT WEKA is the latest in a series of Forest and Bird projects sponsored by Trilogy Business Systems. The North Island weka has declined markedly in the last 10 years, and Forest and Bird, together with the Department of Conservation, have launched a recovery programme to try and reverse this situation. This mischeivous bird is an endearing sight in the bush and normally a plucky survivor of changing conditions. But for some reason, possibly due to severe drought, numbers are declining fast.

Ann Graeme, Forest and Bird Regional Field Officer, is in charge of this programme and so far has 10 people who are willing to undertake captive rearing of wekas to boost the numbers of wild wekas in the Central North Island. Forest and Bird members Andre Bakker and Judith Leonard of Lower Hutt are the first lucky people to receive a weka to care for under this programme.

"I had just finished the

'wekary', as we call it, and been given my permit from DoC when I heard that our female bird would be arriving almost immediately," said Andre.

"We are thrilled to have her here, and we have named her Winifred. She was very nervous for the first two days but now she is quite friendly and relaxed. I hope to have a partner for her soon so that we can begin the process of getting birds back into the wild."

Pictured are some of the team from Trilogy Business Systems Wellington welcoming Winifred on behalf of Trilogy - principal sponsor of the North Island Weka Recovery Project.

