



Sustainable
Business
Network



Million Metres Streams 2024 Funding Report

Thank you to all our generous supporters

The Sustainable Business Network's (SBN) Million Metres Streams project is on a mission to restore Aotearoa New Zealand's rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands. Since 2014, we've raised more than \$5 million. That money has helped get more than 500,000 plants and trees into the ground across more than 45 project sites. This report includes first-hand updates from some of those projects focusing on 2024's achievements.

Funding for environmental initiatives is becoming harder to secure. Every dollar counts for environmental groups with catchment-wide ambitions.

A lot of work goes into planting trees, including sourcing seeds, growing seedlings, preparing sites, coordinating volunteers and maintaining planting sites. Project groups appreciate the flexibility of SBN funding that supports the full life cycle of tree planting and habitat restoration. For some groups in 2024 that included dealing with pūkeko and rabbits, working with a botanist to grow rare plants and responding to weather events.

When starting a restoration project, native pioneer species like manuka, toetoe and korimiko are planted as they thrive in bare ground and provide a nursery for other species. It's encouraging to see some of our established projects moving on to the next phase and planting canopy species including rimu, tōtara and pūriri.

The government's Jobs for Nature scheme came to an end in June 2024. That left a huge funding gap. Thank you for your generous support! This year, your donation helped plant 19,190 trees, across 61 planting days in four regions. 1,134 volunteers donated 27,899 hours to nine groups.

As well as supporting groups to plant trees, your donation helped mobilise communities to learn and take action. They also built connections and resilience.

Partnering with SBN offers value to community groups beyond just funding. That includes opportunities for networking with other restoration partners, support with additional project fundraising, knowledge sharing and promotion of their work.

On behalf of all the SBN Nature Project partners, we extend a heartfelt thanks to our generous donors and supporters. Every dollar counts as we fight to regenerate Aotearoa New Zealand for the wellbeing of future generations.

Ngā mihi
Stephanie Vercoe
Impact & Investment Lead

Million Metres Streams

Impact to date



\$5.1 Million

Fundraised



45

Community groups
involved



605k

Native plants and
trees planted

Conservation Volunteers NZ

The Papakura Stream Restoration Project

Overview & impact

Number of trees planted	4560
Area planted	2,200m ²
Metres planted	120
Number of volunteers	144
Volunteer hours	504
Number of planting days	2



The Papakura Stream Restoration project aims to improve the health of the stream and its wider catchment.

Over the past four years about 120,000 plants have been planted within the catchment. More than 1 tonne of rubbish has been removed from the environment and several hectares of weeds cleared. Thousands of volunteers have been involved. This ongoing multi-year project requires all the hands and help we can get.



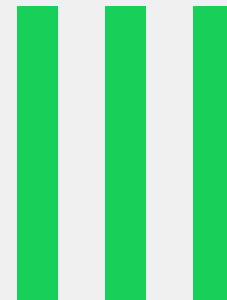
Project update



“The SBN donation enabled us to continue a four-year planting programme at Brookby Wildlife Habitat. The plantings on this site now cover the majority of a tributary that flows into the Papakura Stream and a large section of the stream itself. These plantings display the growth of native plants over different timescales. This allows us to show volunteers the future results of their efforts!

Our volunteers are educated on the wider project and its aspirations. They also learn about the plants and the benefits they provide for te taiao (nature) and other aspects of conservation. Each event finishes with a sausage sizzle to thank our volunteers for their invaluable support.

The landowner, Nicky Auld, was present at all planting events. It was important to have her on hand as she helped with the logistics, plant layout and engaged with volunteers. Nicky was extremely grateful to CVNZ and all the volunteers involved.”



BEFORE



AFTER



Conservation Volunteers NZ - The Papakura Stream Restoration Project



THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“The funding we received through SBN and its supporters has been invaluable to the work we have achieved on the Papakura Stream Restoration Project. Thank you so much.

The money has allowed us to continue spreading the word about the project to new landowners, project partners and funders. It has also provided educational experiences for many volunteers. In turn, we hope this inspires them to become guardians/kaitiaki for te taiao. Thank you so much for your support.

SBN has been brilliant to work with. Its team has been incredibly supportive and really understands the time and resource constraints faced by groups like ours working in the environmental charity sector. We look forward to continuing the relationship.”

Waiheke Resources Trust

Love Our Wetlands Project

Overview & impact*

Number of trees planted	5,497
Area planted	8,245m ²
Number of volunteers	403
Volunteer hours	1,457
Number of planting days	33



The Waiheke Resources Trust (WRT) is dedicated to the ecological restoration and protection of Waiheke Island's vital wetland habitats and surrounding environments. WRT's Love Our Wetlands Waiheke project started in 2014 with support from the Waiheke Local Board. Through its partnership with SBN, the project has expanded from four to seven restoration sites across the island.

This initiative engages the local community and volunteer groups to restore and protect these important wetlands, including Te Matuku, Te Whau, Matiatia Headland, Rangihoua, Okahuiti, Te Huruhi Bay, and Owahanake.



*These results relate to funding from SBN and other sources.

Project update



“Our 2024 planting season was a great success. The wetter weather allowed us to plant earlier and to continue planting later in the season, making our volunteer days much more exciting. It also gave our trees more time in the ground before summer. This reduced the need for weeding.

Canopy species are now being planted amongst our revegetated areas at many of our older sites. This is taking us a step further towards our long-term restoration goals.

In 2024 we also partnered with Auckland Council to support the planting of the Awaawaroa wetland. The specific site was chosen due to the breeding population of giant kokopū fish.”

THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“With the uncertainty of budget cuts for many environmental projects across the country, it's our partnerships with organisations like SBN and its members that help to keep us going year after year.

We appreciate the value you place on the regeneration of te taiao. It's through projects like this we can restore the mauri of the whenua and the awa. We are also strengthening the connection between people and place and with te taiao.

Thanks so much for your continued support SBN whanau!

Waiheke Resources Trust has worked with the team at Million Metres Streams for six years. We look forward to continuing this epic mahi together!”



Waiheke Resources Trust – Love our Wetlands Project

WAI Wānaka

Urban Catchments Project

Overview & impact

Number of trees planted	339
Area planted	339m ²
Metres planted	50m
Number of volunteers	66
Volunteer hours	198
Number of planting days	3



WAI Wānaka is a community group of passionate people with a shared vision of healthy ecosystems and community wellbeing for future generations.

The kaupapa is accelerating local action for fresh water through trust-based partnerships, connection and collaboration.



Overview

“At WAI Wānaka we are deeply committed to enhancing the health and resilience of our waterways and landscapes. Since first partnering with SBN, in 2017, the funds raised on your platform have helped us secure vital resources for both our rural and urban communities across the Upper Clutha. This money has gone towards native planting initiatives that help to restore biodiversity and improve the health of our freshwater.

This mahi comes under our Urban Catchments Programme. Over the past year we have supported the formation of several urban catchment groups. This has provided tangible and inclusive opportunities for people to actively contribute to protecting this special place. Our support and facilitation of urban catchment groups has proven to be an effective way to mobilise community effort, broaden community engagement and amplify impact.

Our planting efforts tend to be for pockets of riparian planting or wetlands centred around stormwater outflows.

All of the planting in 2024 was done in collaboration with Te Kākano, a local nursery that ran workshops to teach volunteers about best-practice planting.

We also collaborated with the Upper Clutha Wilding Tree Group which ran sessions on identifying and removing local pest plant species. Volunteers were taught how to make wire plant guards to protect new plants from rabbits.

Through our Urban Action Groups we are engaged more of the community and volunteers at our events. Our relationships with other environmental community groups and the council have become much stronger.”



Project update: Lakeside Road Enhancement Group

“We have two planting sites along the walking tracks on the eastern side of Lake Wānaka.

We had planned on infilling the previous year's planting but the lake level was too high due to significant rainfall.

We worked with the council to clear a new site that will be ready for planting in autumn 2025.

A community working bee included plant maintenance, weed control and planting a small area on high ground above the track.”

BEFORE**AFTER**

Project update: Beacon Point

BEFORE**AFTER**

“There are two locations for planting at Beacon Point.

In July, one along the stormwater outflow was cleared of invasive weeds and planted with riparian species. The plants are doing well despite high rabbit numbers in the area.

The second location is a wetland. Before planting we had to reduce the rabbit numbers. We worked with the residents to rabbit-proof their properties.

Rabbit fencing and pedestrian cattle stops were installed at both ends of the track. This provided a contained area for the council to carry out rabbit control.”

Urban Catchments Project



Completed rabbit fencing and cattle stops (complete with a doggy door) at the southern end of Beacon Point. Co-funded by council and community.



New lakeside sign explaining collaborative work undertaken by the community and highlighting the issues around stormwater.

WAI Wānaka - Urban Catchments Project

THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“Thank you to SBN for your continued support, especially as funding for environmental initiatives is becoming harder and harder to secure. It’s a tough space right now for environmental groups and every dollar counts. We really appreciate the support to buy plants. It provides a huge impact for restoring ecosystems. Also, the community gains a sense of pride and ownership for the areas they plant.”

A lot of work goes into preparing sites for planting. It is often more expensive than the planting itself and relies on someone to do the planning and coordination. Plant maintenance is also important and needs to be continued for some years after planting.”



WAI Wānaka – Urban Catchments Project

Matuku Link

Community wetland restoration in the Waitākere River Valley

Overview & impact

Number of planting days

10

Number of volunteers

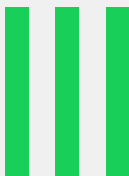
200+

Volunteer hours

22,000



Matuku Link is a 37-hectare bush and wetland project. Five hectares are former paddocks that have been revegetated with plants, eco-sourced and grown in an onsite nursery.



Project update

“The plants are doing great! Due to another wet autumn and winter, everything is growing well, including the weeds which we’re battling again. As we’ve been planting since autumn 2017, we’ve learned that, at most, plants and trees need three years of intense weed control by hand. After that they outgrow and suppress the surrounding weeds.

This was the first season we were able to plant some larger trees in specifically cut ‘light wells’ in the mānuka / kānuka groves. Swamp maire are thriving in these sheltered spaces.

We are continuing with infill planting after the die-back of some species following the cyclone in early 2023 that left the soil waterlogged for up to nine months.”



Matuku Link - Community wetland restoration



1. West Lynn Garden Club comes out to help.

2. Mandatory social morning teas for our weekly Tuesday working bee.

3. Making pellets with native seeds to distribute in the many slips.

4. A rainy winter working bee – and a very long string of blackberry!



THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“We’ve been incredibly grateful for the support of SBN and funders through MMS which helped us replant five hectares of degraded paddocks and return them to flourishing wetlands. This has created more habitat for our endangered native species like matuku (our namesake, also known as bittern), pāteke, (brown teal) as well as wētā, tuna (eels) and endangered insects like dragonflies and damselflies.

Thank you! Even the smallest donation helps to grow our plants, increase our wetlands, protect our native species and more.”

Matuku Link - Community wetland restoration

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei

Revegetation of Pourewa Reserve

Overview & impact

Number of trees planted	5,422
Area planted	11,190m ²
Number of volunteers	2,155
Volunteer hours	2,480
Number of planting days	4



Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei has a vision to regenerate much of its 34 hectares of land. This will bring a nucleus of fauna, including native birds, back into the city of Tāmaki Makaurau.

SBN funding enabled continued planting on the Pourewa site owned by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei according to a revegetation plan.

2024's planting was a continuation of the revegetation of Pourewa and riparian planting of the Pourewa stream.



Project update

“We have a large management unit that we are trying to prepare for planting. The kikuyu grass has five-plus years of growth making it super thick and difficult to scrub cut. We ended up mowing the areas we could access with a tractor or ride-on mower. However, there is still loads of work to be done. We are struggling to find enough staff and hours to work in this area and need more volunteer support. The community volunteer numbers for planting days were quite good. Numbers for the community day for planting preparation were poor.

We’re fortunate to have an ecologist in the team who has drawn up a strategic plan for our restoration project (Kō Te Pukaki 2040). Planting in 2024 was straightforward and we had quite a few staff on hand with plenty of skills, knowledge and experience to position plants and ready them for planting. Using plants grown in our nursery gave us flexibility. The main issue was having enough volunteers, or sufficient funding for staff, to prepare sites for planting.”



Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei – Revegetation of Pourewa Reserve



THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“He mihi ngākau aroha kia a koutou te whānau ō SBN mō tō koutou manaakitanga ki a mātou ngā uri o Tuperiri otirā ki te taiao e hora ake nei. A heartfelt acknowledgement from Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, the descendants of Tuperiri, to the SBN whānau for your generosity and support to us and the natural environment spread out before us all.

As Ahi Kaa for the central Tāmaki isthmus, Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei is pleased to be able to collaborate with SBN as we all strive for ways to regenerate the taiao with native plants/trees. With initiatives like Million Metres Streams, looking after the land will convert to looking after the moana, too. We want to forge and maintain long-term relationships with like-minded organisations.

This will see us care for the whenua for generations to come. We are kaitiaki of right now and we must support this kaupapa to ensure the whenua is thriving where trees, birds, insects and people can live together in harmony. He mihi tino kaha ki a rātou ngā tāngata e tautoko tonu ana ēnei ō ngā kaupapa whakahirahira pēnei ki tēnei. We strongly acknowledge the continued support of funders for this very important project.”

Waimakariri District Council in collaboration with the Silverstream Reserve Volunteer Group

Silverstream Reserve Project

Overview & impact

Number of trees planted	722
Area planted	1,800m ²
Number of volunteers	60 - 70
Volunteer hours	280
Number of planting days	5



Silverstream Reserve is a 52-hectare reserve. More than 19 hectares have been cleared and planted in natives. The project received SBN support through DOC's Partnering to Plant funding during Covid-19, alongside earlier Million Metres funding.

Replanted with more than 50,000 native plants, it features wetlands, drylands, and unique species like the rare gratiola sextendata and creeping pōhuehue. The reserve, significant to local Māori for mahinga kai, is also known for fishing.



Project update

“Funding provided by SBN supported the restoration of the ‘David’s Way’ nook of the reserve. This area was named in honour of David Birch, a local resident, who in 2008 secured the first public funding from DOC to clear exotic weeds in the reserve and plant natives. Years later, David continues to work in the reserve and is clearing the “David’s Way” area ahead of the planting team.

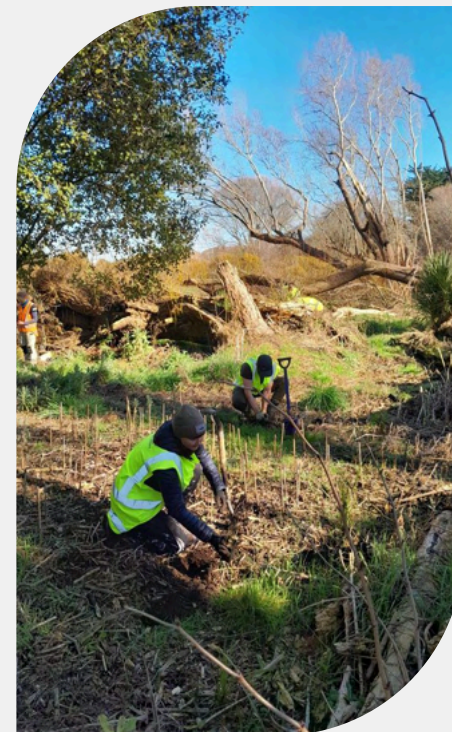
The riparian strip provides a great nursery for the establishment of native wetland species.

It has a willow canopy that diffuses the sun’s heat, rich humus-based soils and plentiful moisture. The plantings are looking healthy with seedlings in excellent condition. Weed control has been carried out. More is required as growth has been phenomenal.

Two visiting volunteer groups joined the Silverstream Volunteer Group for planting which sped up the process.

Good moist soil conditions made for easy planting.

We are continuing to plant various parts of the site with the local Clarkville School celebrating its 150-year anniversary with a full school planting downstream of this site. We will continue to clear and plant until the complete section of willow has been underplanted. One day native podocarps will replace the willow.”





THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“Thanks heaps for your support. We have worked with SBN since 2019.

We were privileged to have SBN gain Partnering to Plant funding for us through the Covid-19 period. The SBN staff have been a real pleasure to work with and they have contributed to Silverstream Reserve and other natural reserves of the Waimakariri District.

We look forward to this relationship and support in future years as well.”

Sinclair Wetlands

Te Nohoaka o Tukiauau



Overview & impact

Number of trees planted	1,000
Area planted	3,000m ²
Number of volunteers	60
Volunteer hours	180
Number of planting days	3

Te Nohoaka o Tukiauau/Sinclair Wetlands is a 315-hectare wetland system located south of Dunedin, part of a nationally important and regionally significant wetland complex in the Taieri Plains. The name Te Nohoaka o Tukiauau acknowledges “the dwelling place of Tukiauau”, an early Ngāti Mamoe chief. The area is now owned by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and is valued as a wāhi taonga (culturally significant site), for mahinga kai (traditional food and resources), conservation, recreation and education.



Project update

“Work is underway to restore this site.

Key goals include:

- restoring vegetation condition and healthy habitat
- maintaining water quality
- enhancing mahinga kai
- restoring the connection that local iwi have with their ancestral site

There is a mixture of river channels, pools, swamps and forested islands. Waterbirds are abundant and are a focus for visitors.

Management includes enhancing wetland habitats, controlling weeds and pests and replanting native forest on the ‘islands’ within the wetlands. This year’s SBN funding was used to purchase plants and plant guards.

The plants are growing well due to damp conditions. We have plenty of plants on hand if required for infill planting. We planted more than planned as volunteers worked quicker than expected. Having large volunteer groups worked well in a competitive but social atmosphere.”



Sinclair Wetlands – Te Nohoaka o Tukiauau



THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“We are grateful for the support from SBN and donors to help us achieve our vision. Te Nohoaka o Tukiauau will be a restored wetland ecosystem that is ecologically diverse and nationally known for sustainable practices, community involvement and as an important Ngāi Tahu mahinga kai.”

Sinclair Wetlands - Te Nohoaka o Tukiauau

Friends of Baring Head

Wainuiomata Project

Overview & impact

Number of trees planted	200
Number of volunteers	20
Volunteer hours	600



The Friends of Baring Head Trust was created as a way for the community to assist Greater Wellington in caring for Baring Head and to be involved in its management and development. The group has the long-term goal of restoring the lower reaches of the Wainuiomata River, bringing life back to Baring Head.

Over the past five years SBN has supported the planting of more than 13,000 native plants and trees. Now the project is focusing on increasing density in the areas that are sparsely planted. This will help increase the biodiversity of this incredible site.



Project update

“As the Greater Wellington Regional Council retired more land and used contractors to plant it in 2024, we took a different approach to the project this year. Our volunteers focused on planting rare plants in suitable areas along with infill planting.

Donated funds helped pay for a botanist in rare plants to collect seeds and cuttings and propagate plants. We will also pay him to accompany our project lead on an inspection of the plantings to see whether we can boost survival.

It was an unusually dry year with the park closed to volunteers over the summer due to high fire risk. As a result, we're expecting high plant losses. We will probably skip a planting season and focus on plant care and preparing sites to allow the plants in the nursery to get a bit bigger.

Older plantings are going well with estimates of a 95% survival rate. Growth rates vary considerably and are generally low because of the conditions. However, we now have canopy closure in a few areas and enough shelter to start putting in a wider range of species. The plantings are now clearly visible from the road and have changed the appearance of the river valley.”



Preparing and planting a small area that is now home to some rare species. The enclosure is to keep out hares.



“Plantings are barely visible in the hay paddock in late 2020, left. The cabbage tree on the right was one of a small group on the property when it was bought. Some of the older trees died but there was some natural resprouting underneath. The area is pretty dry. We tried to put the plants into areas of the old river channel that were marginally damper. Given how windy it can be, the growth in four years is pretty good.”



“The toetoe and flax, with some ngaio on drier sites, have really done well. You can also see the work that has been done on the road to provide access to the new tourism operation that the neighbours are putting in. The oxbow has been drying out more in recent years with the very dry summers, although there is always one deep pool that stays full, which is probably where the fish hide out over summer.”



THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“Working with SBN made the planting programme possible when the river was first fenced off. As well as funds for plants and mats, we also gained access to corporate groups that contributed hours of voluntary labour. It was great to see the enthusiasm for the area and the project grow as the corporate groups started to see their work making a visible difference.”

Looking south near Khyber Pass. The ngaio plants are now visible above the grass (and threatening to make that photo point redundant). The view north is now obscured by large flaxes.

Restore Hibiscus & Bays

Redwoods Site Restoration Project



Overview & impact

Number of trees planted	1,400
Number of volunteers	21
Number of planting days	1



Restore Hibiscus & Bays is a community-led initiative. It aims to bring together and support and grow the network of people and organisations working on restoration initiatives in the area.

There are three strategic focus areas:

- predator eradication
- pest plant control
- stream restoration

The project is facilitating coordinated and connected landscape-scale restoration by pursuing a catchment-based approach.

Project update

“Funding from SBN has significantly contributed to the restoration efforts at the Redwoods site at 24 Ferry Road, Arkles Bay. The donation funded a successful planting day involving 21 enthusiastic locals dedicated to improving this beautiful site. Together they planted more than 1400 plants. Some were involved earlier in clearing ginger from the area. Others provided home baking and morning tea.

While this is a private site, it is unique in that it incorporates 17 house lots within a large area of shared land, some of which is considered ecologically significant by Auckland Council and thus warrants a level of protection. The stream on this site drains directly into the Long Bay Marine Reserve.

The stream planting has several significant benefits. Native grasses have high tensile strength roots that stabilise the banks during storm events. This helps reduce erosion and limits sediment flow into the Weiti River and the Long Bay Marine Reserve. Stabilisation is crucial for maintaining water quality and protecting the marine ecosystem from the adverse effects of sedimentation.”



Restore Hibiscus & Bays - Redwoods Site Restoration Project

THANK YOU TO THE FUNDERS

“Thank you again for your support with this project. The funding from SBN has been instrumental in advancing our restoration efforts. The active involvement of the local community and additional support from Auckland Council will ensure the sustained success of this project.”



BEFORE



AFTER



Restore Hibiscus & Bays - Redwoods Site Restoration Project



Sustainable
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Manaaki whenua, manaaki tāngata, haere whakamua.

If we care for the land,
if we care for people,
we can move forward into the future.