



ENVIRONMENT

Kiwi kissed off to forest

Model and actress Rachel Hunter has helped release a juvenile kiwi chick into the wild in Hawke's Bay, the 100th to be hatched and released by private kiwi breeding project Forest Lifeforce Restoration Trust.

It is the sixth season the trust has used BNZ Operation Nest Egg which sees kiwi eggs rescued from the wild, incubated and the birds released once they are big enough to fend for themselves.

Fifty of the trust's 100 kiwi chicks have been released back into Maungataniwha

Native Forest, where the eggs came from, and 50 were relocated to the Cape Kidnappers and Ocean Beach Preserve.

Hunter, a keen and vocal advocate for conservation projects, was installed as the trust's patron at the weekend event.

The kiwi she released was named Takamoana, after an influential 19th century local Maori chief.

Conservation Department regional conservator Alan McKenzie said privately-funded conservation and regeneration projects were

"without doubt" the way of the future.

While DOC could maintain the status quo, the re-establishment of native species would need significant investment that the private sector could deliver, he said.

Maungataniwha Kiwi Project is a joint project run by the Forest Life Force Restoration Trust and the Cape Kidnappers and Ocean Beach Wildlife Preserve.

It receives funding from the BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust and is supported by DOC.

Fairfax NZ

