

Media Statement

Rakiura Māori Lands Trust Strengthens Protections for Kiwi and Native Wildlife on Oneke

The Rakiura Māori Lands Trust (RMLT) reaffirms its commitment to the protection and conservation of taonga species on Oneke, Rakiura / Stewart Island—particularly the iconic Kiwi (*Apteryx australis lawryi*) and Hoiho (native penguin).

In response to increasing incidents of dogs harming kiwi, RMLT has introduced a strengthened policy strictly prohibiting dogs on Oneke, with limited exemptions. This proactive measure aims to prevent further harm and ensure the survival of these vulnerable native species.

Protecting kiwi is a shared responsibility. RMLT urges all whānau, visitors, and local stakeholders to support this policy and to report any non-compliance. Ongoing education and community engagement initiatives will continue to raise awareness of the importance of kiwi conservation.

Under the new policy, only dogs essential for conservation, biosecurity, or authorised pest control operations will be considered for access, with prior approval. In exceptional circumstances, domestic or hunting dogs that meet strict criteria—including Kiwi Aversion Training certification and prior RMLT approval—may also be granted exemptions.

Any unauthorised dogs found on Oneke will be removed immediately. Owners may face penalties, including restricted access to RMLT land, and further enforcement action may be taken in cases of harm to wildlife.

RMLT will continue to review and update this policy to ensure the highest level of protection for native wildlife on Oneke.

For more information, please contact:

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