



SOUTHERN  
LAKES  
SANCTUARY

# PROJECT UPDATE 2022



BY THE NUMBERS:

660,000  
hectare project area

60+

community  
trapping  
projects

2

Threatened or at-risk bat species

10k

TRAPS BY MID 2024

17

Threatened  
or at-risk  
bird species

155,400 ha  
of intensive predator  
control by mid 2024

11

Threatened or at-  
risk lizard species

# Kia ora!

It is my privilege to be the Chair of Southern Lakes Sanctuary Trust and work with such a dedicated group of founding conservation trusts and continue to bring the concept of the Sanctuary to life. Without the enduring work of the existing five Trusts and the Soho Properties landowner, laying the foundations over many years, this landscape scale project could not have been possible.

The mahi of SLS is to work alongside the founding groups and others to secure the existing predator control programme across 155,400 ha of inland Otago and reach into new areas to protect a greater range of our endangered species.

The long term goal is a sustainable network of predator control led by community action and building the skills and increasing the employment opportunities for Tangata Whenua and all New Zealanders to engage in conservation. This in turn will contribute to attaining the goal of Predator Free Aotearoa/NZ 2050. It's not hard to find motivation protecting our taonga.

Ngā mihi nui,  
Greg Lind, Chair  
**Southern Lakes Sanctuary**



**“The mahi of SLS is to work alongside the founding groups and others to secure the existing predator control programme across 155,400 ha of inland Otago.”**

## Kowai tatou

### WHO WE ARE

Southern Lakes Sanctuary is a landscape scale conservation project that unites the work of a consortium of six major conservation groups focused on a long-term goal of eradicating predators from the Southern Lakes region.

The SLS Trust collectively represents the mahi of hundreds of volunteers from over 60 community groups, landowners, and businesses who have been working for many years to protect and restore the declining biodiversity of our region.

An independent technical assessment by Wildlands Consultants concluded that once the Southern Lakes Sanctuary is established, the protection of “...**threatened indigenous wildlife would be achieved that has no equal in any other region in NZ.**”

## Kaupapa

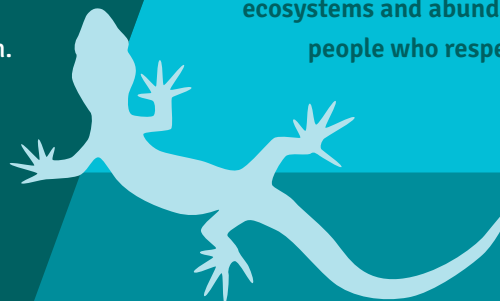
### COLLECTIVE VISION

A Southern Lakes Sanctuary of spectacular mountains, lakes and rivers, with thriving ecosystems and abundant wildlife enjoyed by people who respect this whenua puiaki.

## Tukanga

### OUR APPROACH

The Southern Lakes Sanctuary project will implement a phased approach to a long term goal of total eradication of predators within the 660,000 ha project area whilst providing a haven for our native taonga including the 30 Threatened / At-Risk species within its boundaries.



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# Kia ora!

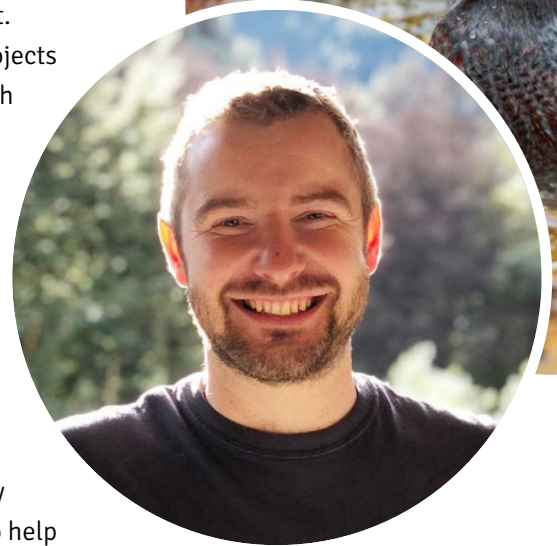
I am incredibly honoured to be leading this exciting and innovative project. Our district has been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and projects like ours provide a great sense of community, purpose and connection with the natural world, in addition to providing long term, secure jobs.

Our partner groups and their volunteers have been doing incredible mahi for many years, and our goal is to bring this all together and amplify it as we work towards a Queenstown Lakes region where our native wildlife can truly thrive. We are actively trying to hire from within our district and are building a highly skilled and passionate team.

I am very excited about 2022 and the challenges ahead and look forward to working closely with our partner groups and other stakeholders. I really believe that a Predator Free New Zealand is achievable and cannot wait to help to protect our part of the motu.

Nāku noa, nā,  
Paul Kavanagh, Project Director  
**Southern Lakes Sanctuary**

**“I am very excited about 2022 and the challenges ahead and look forward to working closely with our partner groups and other stakeholders.”**

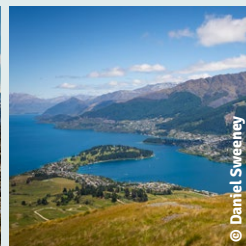
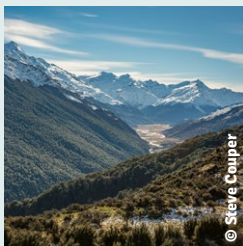
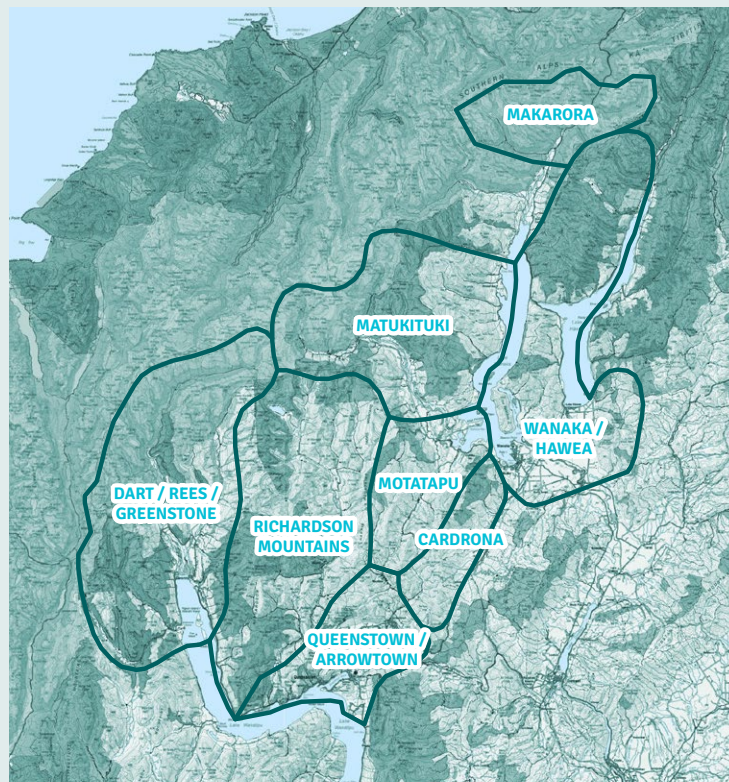


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# Project Area 660,000 hectares

**Few areas in New Zealand have as wide a range of habitat types and richness of native species as found in the Southern Lakes Sanctuary.**

Predator control within the Sanctuary is currently focussed on six core areas or 'Hubs', where the consortium partners work: the catchments of the Makarora, Matukituki, Motutapu and the Dart-Rees-Greenstone rivers, and the basins surrounding Queenstown-Arrowtown and Wānaka-Hāwea. In addition to intensifying work within these Hubs and connecting them via corridors, at least one new Hub will be established within the next few years, with further expansion planned thereafter (Cardrona & Richardson Mts).



# Project Developments

## GRANT SECURED

In September we secured a \$2,968,000 grant from the economic recovery package, Mahi mō te Taiao / Jobs for Nature, which has enabled us to take our first steps towards our larger goals and we are now fully operational.



## DATA GATHERING

Our initial focus is gathering baseline data including biodiversity monitoring to see what native wildlife is in some of our key areas. We are carrying out eDNA sampling on the tributaries of the Rees River. Who knows, perhaps we'll find evidence of South Island kōkako! We are also working on the mammoth task of auditing and calibrating all 6,000+ traps in the district.

## REMARKABLE NEW LINE

SLS have helped the Queenstown Climbing Club and Whakatipu Wildlife Trust establish a new trapping line at Wye Creek. It could well be NZ's highest, running 12km from Lake Whakatipu at 308m, with the last trap sitting under Single Cone at 2,080m. Well done to the dedicated team who put all 100+ traps out and who will be checking them, with a 12 hour round trip!



## TEAM BUILDING

Our project really kicked into gear in November 2021 when we hired our Project Director. We are continuing to build a highly skilled and passionate team from around the district, including field crew, planners, biodiversity coordinators, communications and trapping specialists. We have 10 staff hired with additional roles being filled within the near future.



# Project Plan: Jobs for Nature

## YEAR ONE (END 06.22)

**NEW TRAPS:**  
1,065

**TRAP TOTAL:**  
7,489

**SUPPRESSION AREA:**  
97,500 ha

Establish baseline monitoring, trap audit, assessment and calibration.  
Grow knowledge and innovation.

## YEAR TWO (END 06.23)

**NEW TRAPS:**  
1,155

**TRAP TOTAL:**  
8,644

**SUPPRESSION AREA:**  
121,100 ha

Connect two Hubs, develop plan for new Cardrona Valley Hub, long-term operational plan.

## YEAR THREE (END 06.24)

**NEW TRAPS:**  
1,818

**TRAP TOTAL:**  
10,462

**SUPPRESSION AREA:**  
155,400 ha

Establish Cardrona Hub, assess biodiversity and trapping gains, secure funding for long-term plan.

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## ONWARDS TO 2050

Continue on our mission of completely eradicating predators within the Southern Lakes Sanctuary, in alignment with the goals of Predator Free 2050.

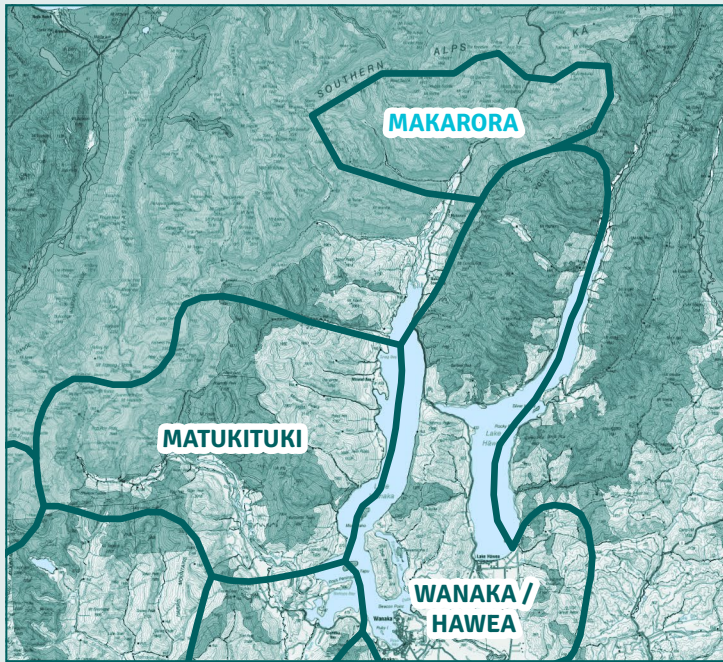
## Suppression or eradication?

We aim to eventually eradicate predator species from the Southern Lakes Sanctuary, however the general suppression of their numbers is the first, short term priority.





## PARTNER PROFILE: Forest & Bird, Central Otago Lakes Branch



The Central Otago-Lakes Branch of Forest and Bird established trapping lines in the Makarora valley in the late 1990s, to protect a small Mohua population. Since then, the trapping programme has expanded greatly, but remains a volunteer operation. This work is undertaken under the Makarora Predator Control Operational Plan, a partnership between the Department of Conservation and Forest and Bird, to protect and restore indigenous plants and fauna under threat in the Makarora valley. The purpose, objectives, and milestones are still focussed on Mohua, with secondary goals of protecting other bush birds and remnant areas of mixed podocarp forest.

**Project Area:** Makarora

**No of Traps:** ≈ 700

### **At Risk / Threatened Bird Species:**

Mohua, yellow-crowned kākārīki, kea, kākā, rock wren, Black-billed gull, black-fronted tern, banded dotterel, wrybill



## PARTNER PROFILE: Matukituki Catchment Animal Pest Control Project



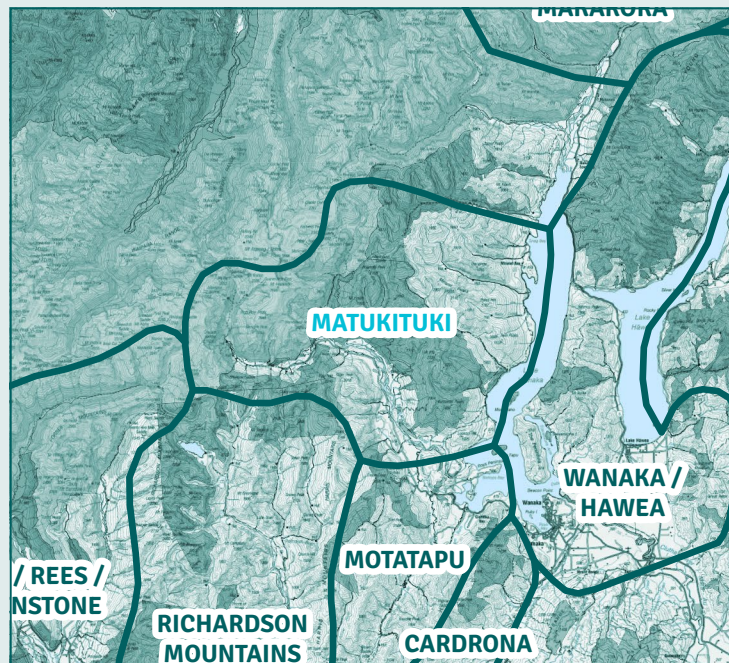
The Matukituki Catchment Animal Pest Control Project is a coalition of four community groups, nine landowners, and four local tourism businesses. These groups run trap lines along or adjacent to almost the entire length of the Matukituki River. This trapping encompasses a diverse range of habitats ranging from alpine snow tussock and beech forest in the West and East Matukituki, to braided river habitat adjacent to pastoral grassland in the lower reaches.

**Project Area:** Matukituki

**No of Traps:** ≈ 2,250

### At Risk / Threatened Bird Species:

Black-billed gull, black-fronted tern, banded dotterel, kārearea, kea, kākā, yellow-crowned kākārīki, South Island robin, whio, wrybill, marsh crane







## **PARTNER PROFILE:** **Routeburn Dart** **Wildlife Trust**

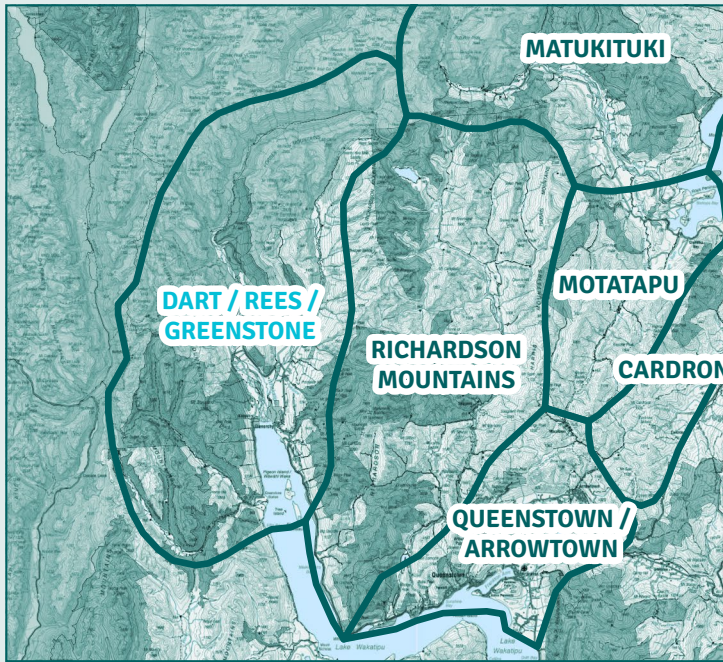
Since 2013, the Routeburn Dart Wildlife Trust has taken up the challenge to protect a host of species in the Routeburn and Dart Valleys. In partnership with the Department of Conservation, tourism operators, the local community and generous sponsors, the trust runs multiple trap-lines near Glenorchy – from the valley floor to the alpine zone. Projects include protecting Rock Wren in the Harris Saddle and Hollyford Valley, trapping both sides of Lake Wakatipu to stop the invasion of hedgehogs and trapping in and around the Dart and Rees braided rivers to protect native river bird species.

**Project Area:** Dart-Rees-Greenstone

**No of Traps:** ≈ 790

### **At Risk / Threatened Bird Species:**

Wrybill, black-fronted tern, black-billed gull, banded dotterel, mohua, kea, kākā, yellow-crowned kākārīki, rock wren



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## PARTNER PROFILE: SOHO Properties Ltd



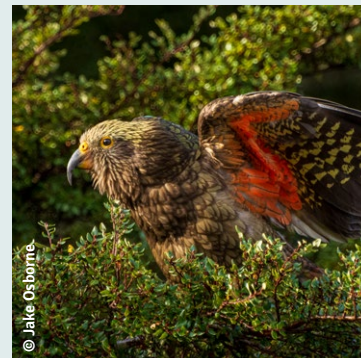
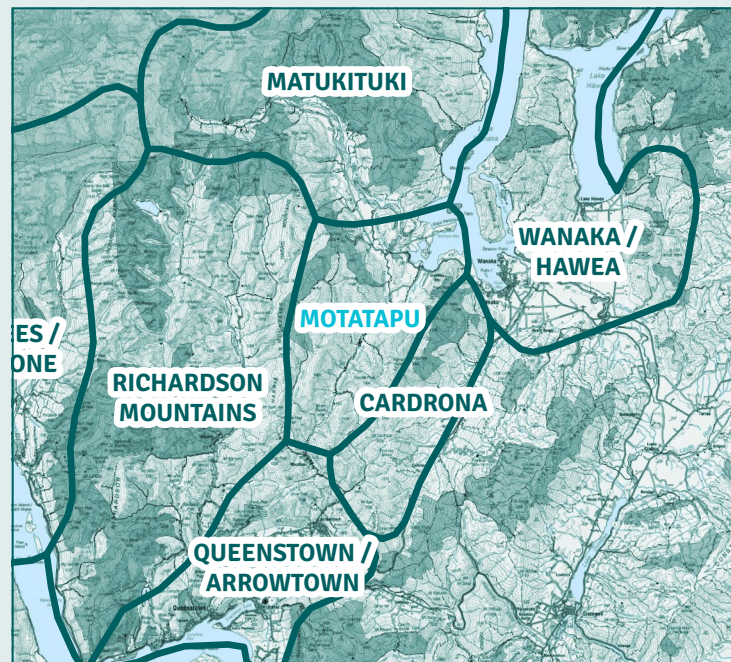
Motatapu Station is one of four high country working sheep stations located west of Wānaka owned by Soho Property Ltd. The four properties are largely protected by way of QEII covenants established in 2015 which, combined with the Soho, Glencoe, and Coronet Peak Stations, comprises a 53,000 hectare area where natural values on private land are protected in perpetuity. The Mahu Whenua programme is supported by a long-term vision for restored ecosystems and the recovery of biodiversity. Restoration of habitat paired with predator control provides a comprehensive approach to the Station's conservation programme.

**Project Area:** Motatapu

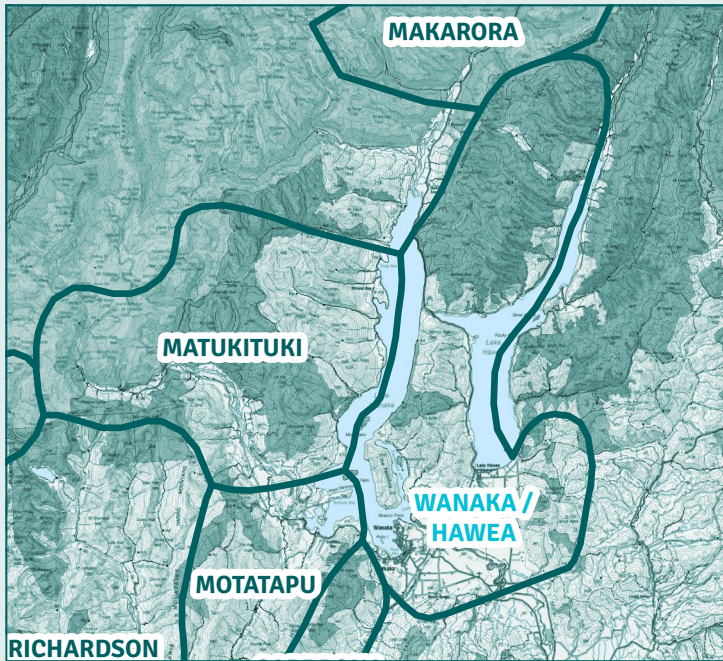
**No of Traps:** ≈ 700

**At Risk / Threatened Bird Species:**

Kārearea, kea, rock wren, fernbird, grey duck







## PARTNER PROFILE: Wānaka Backyard Trapping

Wānaka Backyard Trapping was formed by volunteers in early 2018 with the mission of protecting populations of local indigenous wildlife such as birds, skinks, geckos and invertebrates. WBT are working toward this goal in several ways: through predator trapping, raising community awareness and empowering locals to get involved and learn new skills. Seven volunteer groups maintain nine traplines on public land from Lake Wānaka to Lake Hāwea to Luggate, adjacent to waterways or in regenerating scrubland. More than 40 locals have traps in their urban and peri-urban backyards. WBT run education initiatives, training workshops and events to promote, connect and support local trapping efforts.

**Project Area:** Wānaka-Hāwea

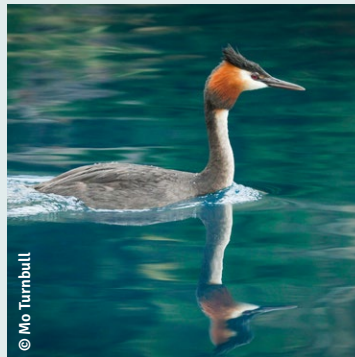
**Current Traps:** ≈ 340

**At Risk / Threatened Bird Species:**

Black-fronted tern, black-billed gull, banded dotterel, Australasian crested grebe, kārearea



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## PARTNER PROFILE: Whakatipu Wildlife Trust



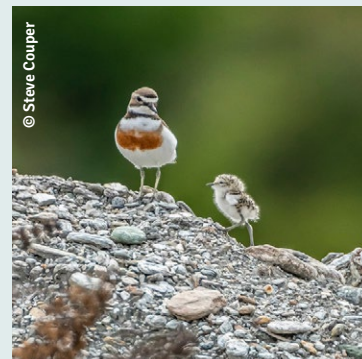
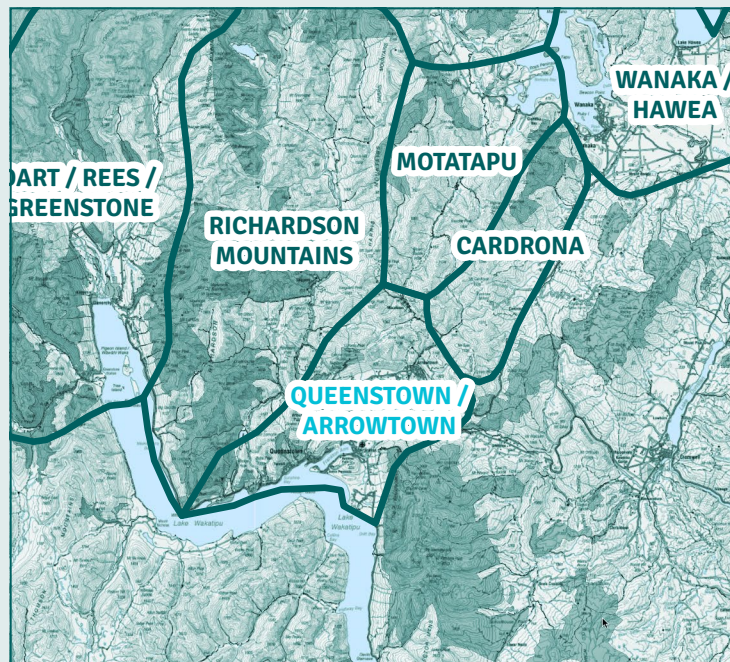
The Whakatipu Wildlife Trust (WWT) was formed in 2017 at the request of both the Department of Conservation and the Queenstown Lakes District Council to serve as an umbrella organisation to connect, grow, and support the region's predator-free efforts. The trust coordinates the efforts of over 45 trapping groups who are engaged in activities to help make the Queenstown Lakes District predator-free. The Trust's vision is to encourage growth, support the efforts of new groups and to help to educate the wider community on how we can all play a part in helping our native wildlife to flourish.

**Project Area:** Queenstown-Arrowtown

**No of Traps:** ≈ 2,800

**At Risk / Threatened Bird Species:**

Banded dotterel, black-billed gull, black-fronted tern, kārearea, kea, Australasian crested grebe, marsh crake







## Our community

**Community is what makes our project truly unique.** The level of community support for conservation across our district is unparalleled, evidenced by the involvement of over 60 predator control groups.

Every group consists of committed volunteers who each play a vital role in achieving the wider goal of a predator free Southern Lakes Sanctuary.

**We need everyone to get us there!**

## GET INVOLVED

We are looking for new partners to help us achieve a Southern Lakes Sanctuary with thriving ecosystems and abundant wildlife. Get in touch via the details below and let's discuss the incredible opportunities that lay ahead.

Email: [kiaora@southernlakessanctuary.org.nz](mailto:kiaora@southernlakessanctuary.org.nz)



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## OUR CONSORTIUM MEMBERS:



## THANKS TO OUR PROJECT PARTNERS:

