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Above: Visitors to Coal Island

Left: Brendan Thow (left) and Gaven Burgess form Alpine Choppers with a Haast Tokoeka on Coal Island.

Photos: Don Goodhue

Haast Tokoeka Release

The vision becomes reality

On the 16th of December the vision of creating a safe haven for endangered species became reality when 7 Haast Tokoeka were released on Coal Island. The 7 kiwi released were the first of around 30 that the Department of Conservation expect to release on the island over the next two years.

These kiwi started life in a sanctuary on the West Coast and were raised in a DOC facility in Canterbury. They were later transferred to Rona Island on Lake Manapouri where they awaited the final leg of their journey to Coal Island. At one year of age they have grown to about 2/3 of their adult weight and are not expected to breed for another 3 years. The release included 6 males and 1 female. The young kiwi were raised as part of the Bank of New Zealand Operation Nest egg project and the Rona Island habitat is

part of the Pomona Island Trust project on Lake Manapouri.

The release was attended by a number of Trustees, volunteers, sponsors, members of the DOC Haast Kiwi Team, sponsors and media. For many it was their first visit to Coal Island and the birdlife put on a fitting reception with a number of kaka putting in an appearance during proceedings.

While the introduction of kiwi marks a major milestone for the Trust, it also heralds the start of another stage in the restoration of the island. It is hoped that these kiwi will become the basis of breeding colony that will eventually be able to provide birds to populate other areas. To all of the volunteers, sponsors and supporters who have helped to get this far - a big thank you

New Sponsor

Alpine Choppers join the Coal Island team

In September 2009, the South West Helicopters company was sold. South West Helicopters had provided helicopter support for the Trust's work since the Trust was formed in 2004. They also provided administrative support through their Te Anau office. The Trust would like to thank the former owners of South West Helicopters for their support.

In December, Alpine Choppers approached the Trust with a generous sponsorship offer. As well as providing helicopter support for work on Coal Island, with their home base in Queenstown, Alpine Choppers are able to promote the Trust's work the Queenstown tourist market.

In recognition of the contribution that Alpine's sponsorship will make to the Trust's work. They have been offered a Trustee position on the Trust.



*Above: Alpine Choppers Squirrel at Moonlight Point, Coal Island.
Photo: Trish King*



*Coal Island Haast Tokoeka release
Photos: Trish King and Don Goodhue*

Changes to Trust Administration

To reduce operating costs, some changes are being made to the Trust's administration. From April 2010 the newsletter will be distributed to supporters and sponsors by email rather than by post as hard copy.

From January 2010 the Trust will no longer have the facility to accept payments by credit card. In the future payments to the trust can be made by cheque or internet banking.

These changes will let the Trust make better use of its funds - for the ongoing work on the island rather than administration.

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