

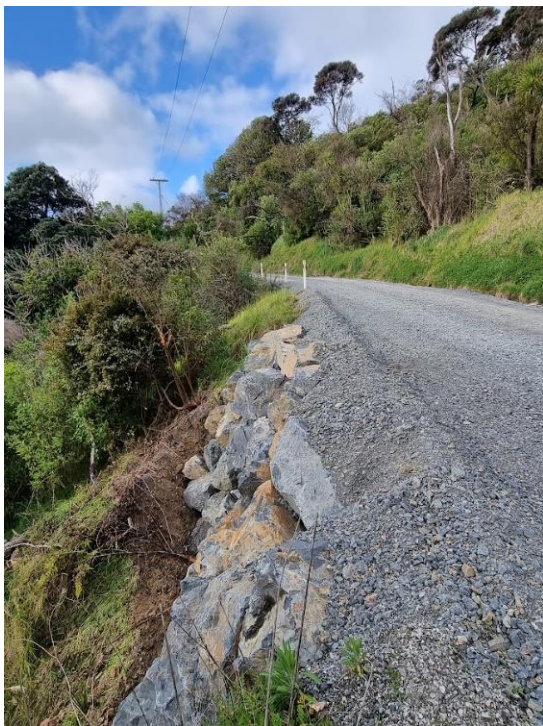


Community Newsletter from the Committee of the Mahurangi East Residents & Ratepayers Association

October 2023

www.scottslanding.org

Road Repairs Underway



You will have noticed that works to repair and improve the unsealed section of Ridge Road have started. MERRA has made on-going efforts via Auckland Transport and the Rodney Local Board to get this work happening.

AT assures us that the drainage improvements, stabilising and sealing of the gravel section of Ridge Road will be completed before the holiday season. We have lobbied to get the carpark included once the beautiful new seawall is completed.

Slow Please



You will have no doubt noticed the signs that MERRA has recently installed on Ridge Road to remind drivers to keep their speed down on our local roads which are shared with walkers and cyclists. The Committee thanks Stuart Windross for creating the new signage.

Slow down and enjoy the drive!

Preparing for a Dry Summer?

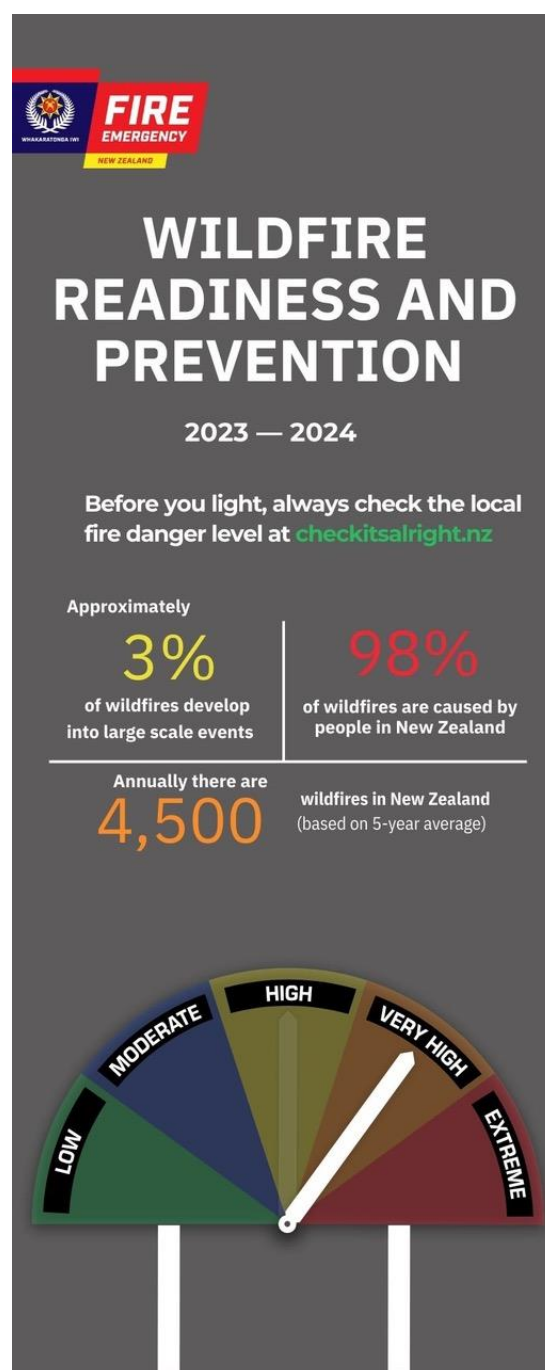
Following record levels of rainfall for the first part of 2023, the shift to an El Niño weather pattern is expected to lead to hotter and drier than normal conditions for north-eastern areas of New Zealand as we head towards summer. Depending on how this plays out (every El Niño is different), we may be in for a different set of challenges this summer, with the possibility of less water flowing into our tanks.

A dry windy summer also brings an increased wild fire risk, particularly in remote and treed locations like Scotts Landing. The graphic from FENZ highlights the need for vigilance.

A reminder also that MERRA maintains a first response fire trailer manned by volunteers, which has been used successfully in the past to quell or limit fires pending the arrival of the fire service from Snells Beach. Being local, it can mobilise in a matter of minutes.

In the event of a fire, FIRST CALL 111 TO ACTIVATE THE SNELL'S BEACH FIRE SERVICE and then call some people on the fire list, which can be downloaded [HERE](#). We recommend that you print it out and keep it handy, or copy into your phone contacts.

If you would like to join the fire party (and its monthly practices) please get in touch via merra.secretary@gmail.com.



Welcome to New Residents

MERRA regularly holds a morning tea to welcome new residents to Scotts Landing, and we are planning to hold the next event in early December, numbers permitting. If you are new to our community, or know someone who is and would like to attend, please contact merra.localnetwork@gmail.com.

Weed of the Month #1: Arum Lily



It may look pretty in full bloom, but the arum lily is a plant pest which is toxic to livestock and highly invasive. If left unchecked, arum lilies can form dense patches and exclude other plant species. They thrive in wetlands, riparian margins, drains, damp ground, pasture, forest, and coastal sandy habitats. With the wet winter weather they have really taken off in some parts of the peninsula.

If you have any at your place, you can help to stop them spreading by, as a minimum, cutting off the seed heads and placing them in the rubbish.

Ideally, it is best to get rid of the plant altogether. While it is possible to dig them out and dispose of the rhizomes, it can be difficult to remove all of the material. A quicker and effective alternative for small infestations is to cut the stump and paste the freshly cut base of stems with metsulfuron gel.

For more details, check out the [Conservation Auckland website](#).

Calling All Bird Experts!



As part of a planned refresh of the Scotts Landing website, and building on the success of the Historical Trail ([see link here](#)), the MERRA Committee is looking at compiling information on local flora and fauna, with a specific focus on our abundant bird-life on the peninsula.

We're keen to hear from any locals with a good knowledge of bird life who may be able to help us put together some short illustrated descriptions. If that sounds like you, please drop us a line at merra.web@gmail.com.

Weed of the Month #2: Boneseed



Boneseed (*Osteospermum Moniliferum*) is a bushy, semi-woody, much branched shrub or small tree (<2-3 m) with ribbed and woolly young stems that become smooth as they mature. Smooth, leathery, bright-green leaves (70 x 35 mm) have irregularly toothed edges and are arranged alternately on the stems. Bright yellow daisy-like flowers (25-30 mm diameter) are produced from September to February and are followed by hard oval green fruit (6-9 mm) which ripen to black and each contain a hard seed.

It thrives in disturbed sites and coastal habitats, and outcompetes native plants in open habitats. It also alters plant community composition, promotes weeds, and increases fire risk.

How can we control it? It is very easy to hand-pull specimens up to 1m high. Cut and paste using any paste available, as it is susceptible to all stump pastes available. Follow up sites where larger trees are removed as they keep coming back for a couple of years.

For more information, see weedbusters.org.nz.

New Generator Trailer



MERRA now has a new generator trailer thanks to great work from Bruce Trethewy and Stuart Windross, and support from Kevin Wilson at Gubbs Motors, (for steel and fabrication), Scott Perkins (for a beautiful paint job on the chassis and addition of safety chain), and Ken and Rhonda Jordan (for donation of a jockey wheel).

The new trailer is part of our Community Response Group equipment which is available to residents to use in the case of power cuts. MERRA is currently exploring options for expanding the number of generators that we can make available.

During an extended outage a roster will be set up; contact Peter Seers on 021 373 835.

Subscription Renewals

Many thanks to those who have paid their MERRA subscription for 2023-24. If you haven't yet done so, it's never too late to join or renew your membership.

For just \$20 per household, your subscription enables MERRA to continue its work to support our Scott's Landing community through activities such as fire and emergency response, animal and plant pest control and community advocacy. Financial members also benefit from free entry to the annual picnic.

Payment can be made direct to the MERRA bank account which is 02-0480-0033353-00 (BNZ Warkworth). Please include your street address as a reference. Additional donations are always welcome.