
Joint statement

Mouri stone laid at Shelly Bay to mark beginning of healing and unification process

Tribal members of Taranaki Whānui have gathered at Shelly Bay to lay a mouri stone as part of a healing and unification process for the iwi.

The ceremony known as Te Whakatō Mouri was attended by iwi leaders of Te Atiawa Taranaki Whānui, the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, Mau Whenua and uri (tribal members).

Mau Whenua leader Dr Catherine Love says the placing of the Mouri stone is the foundation on which to build a positive future, with the shared kaupapa of rangatiratanga through holding land for future generations.

“We are not giving up our fight for the whenua here, however we are excited by the steps that the Trust has taken to uphold our kaupapa moving forward.”

PNBST Chair Kara Puketapu-Dentice said Te Whakatō Mouri is about settling the whenua (land) and a time for healing and hope for the iwi.

“This kaupapa is about the future sustainability and intergenerational wellbeing of our people and respecting our forebears and past leaders.

“We acknowledge the raruraru and different views over Shelly Bay, which provides a basis for learning and growing as we move forward together.”

Trustees have also committed to more meaningful and regular engagement with uri as part of their leadership role.

Mau Whenua will change focus from their 16-month long occupation of Shelly Bay, while maintaining their challenge to the legitimacy of the sale of the land by former Trustees including through their legal case.

“We are delighted that we have been able to work with the Trust under the tikanga of Te Raukura and they are taking steps that see them picking up the longstanding kaupapa of rangatiratanga through holding land.”

Mau Whenua spokeswoman Shamia Makarini says we will together continue to fight the wider whawhai by holding the Crown to account for injustices to mana whenua.

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