

3: *Progress of Claimants*

Central North Island

The settlement of the Central North Island (CNI) claims remains a key area of work. A major programme of research, encompassing 14 separate projects across the three CNI Inquiry Districts, is currently underway. It is due for completion by 30 September 2004. Along with the Trust's Land History and Alienation Database, it is expected that this research will significantly assist CNI claimants to establish the necessary evidential base to advance their claims against the Crown.

The Trust is currently working with four iwi that have now had their mandates recognised by the Crown (Ngati Tuwharetoa, Ngati Manawa, Ngati Whare and Te Arawa). The fifth CNI iwi, Ngai Tuhoe, is continuing internal discussion. Until such time as this occurs, the Trust will engage with Ngai Tuhoe in the Urewera Waitangi Tribunal hearing process.

Over the next year, it is expected that mandated CNI iwi will sign their Terms of Negotiations and commence active negotiations with the Crown. The Trust expects these negotiations to be well advanced by March 2005. The first stage of the CNI Research programme will be completed by October 2004.

In July 2005, it is expected that mandated CNI iwi will sign their Terms of Negotiations and commence active negotiations with the Crown.

Gisborne

The Trust supported two groups (Ngai Tamanuhiri and Te Pou A Haokai, who brought together five groups) to complete their Deed of Mandate. These were submitted to the crown in march 2004.

Ngati Apa

Claimants chose to undertake the direct negotiations process because the wait for Waitangi Tribunal hearings was so long and because the bulk of their evidential base was already substantially completed (with CFRT assistance). They recently submitted a Deed of Mandate to the Crown.

Ngati Awa

The Trust supported Ngati Awa through their governance restructuring and ratification process and awaits the passage of the Ngati Awa settlement legislation.

Northland

On 6 June 2003, the Northland team consulted widely in the Northland Hearing Districts to identify the preferred pathway to settlement of each.

The Trust has provided direct assistance to the following groups and hearing districts: Te Rarawa, Ngati Kahu, the Bay of Islands and Hokianga. CFRT is assisting remaining groups to develop the organisational characteristics required by the Trust for direct assistance.

In December 2003, Trust staff met with representatives of claimant collectives for the Bay of Islands, Hokianga, Whangaroa, Whangarei and Mahurangi Inquiry Districts and agreement was reached to commence scoping of research requirements across these districts. District-wide research scoping is currently underway to identify research needs and accommodate both Waitangi Tribunal and Office of Treaty Settlement requirements depending on the path taken by Northland claimants. It is envisaged that a comprehensive plan to complete outstanding research requirements for these districts will be agreed in mid 2004.

Oral and Traditional research training workshops have been held with eight claimant groups in order to identify thematic issues and support a combined thematic/district approach to research with the Trust. The collectives are currently in the process of planning or implementing their approach to research.

Te Tau Ihu

Claimant groups have successfully completed their presentation of evidence at Waitangi Tribunal hearings, in two years rather than the eight year schedule originally proposed. Eight groups came together to pursue a collective approach to Waitangi Tribunal hearings, which were completed at the end of 2003.

The Trust's transparent approach to funding and negotiations resulted in each iwi knowing that resources were equally shared and all had equal standing.

The Trust also supported the preparation of substantial historical reports on behalf of Te Tau Ihu claimants and completed mapping work.

Urewera

The Waitangi Tribunal began hearing Urewera claims in November 2003. Three weeks of hearings have been completed, with a further eight hearings scheduled for 2004 – 2005. The Trust made a major contribution to the Urewera casebook and a number of CFRT commissioned/funded witnesses will be presenting evidence during the course of this Inquiry. The Trust has completed Historical Overview Mapping for this hearing district.

Wairarapa ki Tararua

The Waitangi Tribunal began hearing Wairarapa ki Tararua claims in March 2004 and a further eight hearings have been scheduled during 2004 – 2005. The Trust commissioned a substantial proportion of the historical and technical reports to be presented as part of this inquiry and has completed Historical Overview Mapping for this hearing district.

Wairoa

On 6 June 2003, the Wairoa Working Group (WWG) agreed to explore the opportunity to enter into direct negotiations to resolve their claims against the Crown.

The Trust contracted the WWG to submit a Deed of Mandate to OTS by 31 March 2004. The WWG have requested an additional four months in which to submit their Deed of Mandate.

With Trust assistance, their evidential base will be completed in 2004 – 2005.

Whanganui

The Trust has worked closely with the four Whanganui clusters and commissioned several significant historical reports for the claimant evidential base for presentation during Waitangi Tribunal hearings in July 2005. The Trust will complete its contribution to the Whanganui casebook by the end of 2004.

Land History Alienation Database

Information from the Land History Alienation Database (LHAD) has been available to Central North Island claimants groups since the end of April this year. The LHAD project traces the history of approximately 3 million acres of land in the CNI and will provide data to support the claims of CNI groups. It has involved the capture of over 80,000 events affecting 18,000 blocks of land from data sourced directly by Trust researchers from the Crown records at the Maori Land Court in Rotorua and Whanganui, the LINZ online and physical archives in Hamilton and Wellington, and the National Archive in Wellington.