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### **Tūhoe-Waikaremoana Maori Trust Board purchases back Tuhoe land**

“The Tūhoe-Waikaremoana Māori Trust Board has taken advantage of the economic recession to purchase back another dairy farm at Opouriao” announced the Trust Chairman Te Toka Temara.

“The Trust Board has a long term strategy to create a model modern dairy farm to assist economic development in the Ruatoki valley. The purchase will enable the Trust to amalgamate three less efficient milking sheds into one efficient large rotary milking parlour capable of milking up to 2000 cows. The new farm also enables 100ha of neighbouring Maori land to become part of the model dairy farm,” says Mr. Temara.

“The dairy project has been very successful. The Trust has lifted milk supply on the existing farm by 25 percent. Even before this purchase the Trust’s dairy operation is one of the most efficient in the Bay of Plenty. This new purchase will enable further significant increases in production. Even at the present disappointing milk this farm purchase is a sound long term investment.”

“The Trust intends making further investments to improve the farm’s production and to lift the farm to the highest environmental standards.”

“We intend to use the farm to create opportunities to provide training for Tūhoe to be able to enter the dairy industry.”

“The purchase has great cultural significance for all Tūhoe. The farm is at the heart of the land that the Waitangi Tribunal has recently ruled was illegally confiscated from Tūhoe. Tūhoe has never received a Waitangi settlement. The Trust Board is the oldest in the iwi and built an asset that will benefit all Tūhoe. Tūhoe is buying back the confiscated land with our own money.

“This purchase means Tūhoe now own land from the hills to the Whakatane River at the entrance to the Ruatoki North valley. Tūhoe are taking back ownership of our land and control of our economic destiny”.