Whirinaki Forest

Date: 29/06/2020 – 01/07/2020

Participants: Emma Tyson (Leader), Seán Thomson, Jacob Paul, Sahmay Abplanalp Ellis, Emma Hjorth, Ellen Jose

For six keen trampers, their Whirinaki adventure started at 7:30am on a Monday morning, when before hopping in their cars to start their drive they trustingly sampled a wild Auckland leaf than was assured to be edible. Although all participants managed to make it to the start of the track, the team arrived with only seven out of the eight tires they began their journey with; a problem, the team decided, that could be dealt with later. Spirits were high as they began their journey along the flat and scenic route to Central Whirinaki Hut. Whio and waterfalls were pointed at in delight as the group made their way toward Vern’s camp, where rain started falling and the trampers shared around snacks. From here, it began to get colder and darker and I’m not gonna lie, spirits did experience a drop. Upon arriving at their destination, the group welcomed the sight of the hut and consumed the most delicious pasta that had ever past their lips, followed by delightful brownies and average at best jokes.

On the second day of their journey, the trampers were once again joined along the river by Whio as they set off for Mangamate hut. Unfortunately for the team, they never reached their destination, as a combination of looming tire changes, problematic knees, unfortunate illnesses and very cold feet (both literally and metaphorically) saw them return to their old friend Central Whirinaki hut. Caves were visited and explored, and the firewood pile was well and truly restocked.

On the third day, the weary trampers said goodbye to their new-found home and successfully changed tyres before setting off on their return journey to Auckland. In celebration of their cold and whio filled journey, the group stopped for Duck Island ice cream (would absolutely recommend) to conclude their adventure. Fun and friendships were made, and warmer socks were bought upon return.