

TRC Community Hack Day 2018

By Samantha McCulloch

On 10 March 2018, the Touw River Conservancy (TRC) hosted a community hacking event at the old municipal servitude in Wilderness Heights. This was the same site that the Kaaimans to Touw River Eco-Restoration Forum (KTT) hosted the hacking event in 2015.

The event was well attended by members of the TRC, as well as members from Nelson Mandela Universities' Green Campus Forum, Natural Resource Management Department and the Sustainability Research Unit (SRU). Before the hacking commenced botanical enthusiasts from the conservancy and the university were set the task to identify what indigenous plant species were recurring in the area, as well as any new invasive species.



Figure 1: Community members reflecting on their hard work. KTT Community Hacking Event 2015 (Photo: P Rixom)

While troubling to see that the site has a new category 1a invader, Madeira Vine (*Anredera cordifolia*) creeping in, it was also encouraging to note that many indigenous plant species are recurring.



Figure 2: The old municipal servitude after follow up clearing. TRC Community Hacking Event 2018 (Photo: S. McCulloch)

The happy hackers focused on follow up clearing from the previous event, making sure to treat all the stumps with a good dose of herbicide, and clearing of biomass. The large amount of biomass on site was a challenge and huge potential fire risk. Much of the biomass was delivered to the local community for fire wood and the large amounts of small woody material was dealt with by chipping services kindly

sponsored by Flack Contractors and Chipper for Hire. The day left everyone feeling tired but satisfied from the days efforts. While the old servitude still has a long way to go, it is fantastic to see how much difference a few short hours of community spirit and elbow grease can make.