

Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board



**Annual Report for the year
ending 30 June 2012**



Cover photograph:
Aoraki/Mount Cook and Hooker Valley.
Mike Cuddihy, Department of Conservation.

Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board

Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2012

Presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority

Pursuant to Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987

ISSN: 1179-2469 (Online)

Serviced by:

Department of Conservation
Private Bag 4715
Christchurch Mail Centre
Christchurch 8140



Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2012

To: The Chairperson, New Zealand Conservation Authority, Wellington

This is the fourteenth annual report from the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board, as required under Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987.

Introduction

The Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board is a twelve-member citizen body appointed by the Minister of Conservation under the terms of the Conservation Act 1987, Part IIA and Section 6. It is a policy-making and advisory body for a range of activities on public conservation land and all other functions of the Department of Conservation.

The roles of the conservation board are set out in the Conservation Act 1987 as follows:

- To recommend the approval of conservation management strategies (in particular the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy)
- To approve conservation management plans
- To advise on how conservation management strategies and management plans will be put into practice
- To advise on proposed changes to the status of land areas of national and international significance
- To advise on proposals for new walkways
- To liaise with Fish and Game Councils on conservation matters
- To carry out other powers delegated to it by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act 1987 or any other act of parliament

The board is serviced by the Department of Conservation.

1. Membership

Board member	Attendance at meetings (max 6*)	From
Steve Lowndes (Chairman July/September)	2 (term finished at September meeting)	Banks Peninsula
Jan Finlayson (Chairperson November 2011 onwards)	6	Geraldine
Wiki Baker	5	Arowhenua
Joseph Hullen	2	Kaiapoi
Dr. John Keoghan	6	Rolleston
Mal Clarbrough	4	Christchurch
Mandy Waaka-Home	1	Arowhenua
Jimmy Wallace	4	Geraldine
David Round	6	Christchurch
Neil Hamilton	5	Loburn
Alan Grey	4	Christchurch

David Matheson	4 (November onwards)	Christchurch
Te Awhina Arahanga	4(November onwards)	Christchurch
Fiona Sloan	1 (term finished at September meeting)	Taumutu

*Due to a meeting on the 1st of July there were actually 6 meetings within the financial year.

In accordance with section 273 of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, four members are nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. They are Wiki Baker, Joseph Hullen, Mandy Waaka-Home and Te Awhina Arahanga (replaced Fiona Sloan).

2. Board budget

The board was slightly over its budget for the 2011/12 financial year. Some of the one day meetings involved a CMS planning meeting the day before, adding some additional costs for an overnight stay. Six meetings were held during the financial year, with two field trips, which is one more meeting than was held in 2010/11.

Because of its large geographical area, a large component of the board's budget is spent on travel costs incurred in bringing members together for meetings. Travel costs are managed by holding many of the meetings in Christchurch, which is closest to most Board members.

Because of the size and complexity of Canterbury Conservancy, additional work is often given to the board to undertake and no additional resourcing is provided. Requests for additional work come from the Department of Conservation and the Minister of Conservation for work associated with national park management plans and conservation management strategies.

The board acknowledges its budget is considerable in comparison with other boards. However, Canterbury is one of the largest conservancies in the country and the cost of providing good advice, coupled with on-the-ground inspections, is high. Board members are selected from throughout Canterbury to provide a conservancy-wide perspective and have to travel long distances to meetings.

3. Board district

The board's area of jurisdiction extends from the Conway and Clarence rivers in the north, and west to the main divide, including all of the Arthur's Pass National Park. The southern boundary is the catchment of the Waitaki River at Kurow, along the river to the east coast. The coastal boundary is the twelve-mile limit for marine reserves and the Exclusive Economic Zone for marine mammals.

The main features of public conservation land within the board's boundaries are:

- Two national parks (Aoraki/Mount Cook and Arthur's Pass)
- Part of one national reserve (Lewis Pass)

- Eight conservation parks (Craigieburn, Lake Sumner, Hanmer, Ahuriri, Korowai/Torlesse Tussocklands Park, Ruataniwha, Hakatere and Te Kahui Kaupeka, part of Hawea and part of Oteake.
- Hurunui and Hawdon predator-controlled areas (formerly part of Operation Ark)
- One marine reserve (Pōhatu) and one marine mammal sanctuary (Banks Peninsula)
- One gazetted walkway and 23 un-gazetted walkways
- A large number of recreation, scenic and historic reserves and stewardship areas
- Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere joint management with Ngāi Tahu

The Canterbury Conservancy directly administers 1,029,325 hectares including the 215 hectare Pōhatu Marine Reserve. This is 24 per cent of the Canterbury region.

□ **Conservation board meetings/field inspections**

The board conducted six meetings during the year as follows:

Date	Location
1 July 2011	Mahaanui Area Office, Christchurch
2 September 2011	Waimakariri Area Office, Rangiora
25 November 2011	The Hermitage, Aoraki/Mount Cook
10 February 2012	Ngati Moki Marae, Taumutu
13 April 2012	Domain Pavilion, Raukapuka
29 June 2012	Mahaanui Area Office, Christchurch

Field inspections

Two field inspections were conducted during the year as follows:

November 2011: Aoraki/Mount Cook Area

Board members visited concessionaire activities on the Tasman Glacier terminal lake and were taken out onto the lake in jet boats to view large chunks of ice that had calved off the glacier terminal face. They also visited the Hooker Valley to view construction of the new bridge and upgrade of the track.

April 2012: O Tu Wharekai

Board members inspected the old Hakatere buildings, looked at properties in various stages of tenure review, looked at nutrient-movement measurement plots, and visited Harrison's Bight.

Subcommittees:

NAME	FUNCTION	MEMBERSHIP
LAND	Tenure review, weeds and pests, wild animals	JOHN KEOGHAN Mal Clarbrough David Round Alan Grey David Matheson Te Awhina Arahanga Jan Finlayson*
WATER	Marine reserves, taiapure, marine mammals, coastal pollution, marine farms, wetlands, Canterbury Water Management Strategy	JOSEPH HULLEN Mandy Waaka-Home Alan Grey David Matheson Neil Hamilton Jan Finlayson*
IWI	Oversight and liaison	WIKI BAKER Mandy Waaka-Home Te Awhina Arahanga Jan Finlayson*
PLANNING	Conservation Management Strategy, Management Plans, District Plans, Resource Consents, Advocacy, Business Planning	JIMMY WALLACE Mal Clarbrough Dr John Keoghan David Round Neil Hamilton Jan Finlayson*
CONCESSIONS	Visitor management and development	MAL CLARBROUGH Wiki Baker John Keoghan Alan Grey Te Awhina Arahanga Jan Finlayson*
CMS PRIORITY SETTING COMMITTEE,	Board to work with DOC staff in setting priorities for providing annual reports on outputs to the Conservation Board.	Board: Full Board DOC Staff: Poma Palmer Andrew Grant Cheryl Colley
* Please note that the Board Chair, Jan Finalyson is an ex-officio member of each sub committee		

In addition to the above, one ministerial-appointed advisory committee was in operation during the year, the Pōhatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee, which is ongoing. The Chairman of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board is the board's representative on this committee. This committee did not meeting during the year.

POHATU MARINE RESERVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE	JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE	(Chair Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board) George Tikao (Onuku Marae) Rei Simon (Wairewa Runanga) Nigel Scott (TRONT) Shireen Helps (Land owner Flea Bay) Bob Meikle (Akaroa Harbour Recreational Fishers) Kath Reid (Akaroa Harbour Marine Protection Society) Alan Reid (Commercial Fishers) Peter Ramsden (Koukourarata Runanga) Eric Ryder (Christchurch City Council) Peter Langlands (Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society)
---	--------------------------	--

5. Board functions under Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987

The work carried out during the year under Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987 was as follows:

5.1 Conservation management strategies

“To recommend the approval by the Conservation Authority of Conservation Management Strategies, and the review and amendment of such strategies under the relevant enactment.” – 6M(1)(a)

The 2011/2012 year has seen further preparatory work on a review of the operative Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy. Ongoing Departmental business interruption caused by the 4 September 2010 and the 22 February 2011 Canterbury earthquakes has continued to have an effect upon the review of the Canterbury CMS but this work is now continuing with the Board providing comment to the Department on draft Place chapters of the CMS as required by the Conservancy Planner.

5.2 Conservation management plans

“To approve Conservation Management Plans, and the review and amendment of such Plans, under the relevant enactments.” – 6M(1)(b).

No management plans were reviewed, amended or approved during the 2011/2012 period.

5.3 Implementation

“To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director General on the implementation of Conservation Management Strategy and Conservation Management Plans for areas within the jurisdiction of the board.” – 6M(1)(c).

a) Conservation management strategy reporting

The board has appointed a separate committee made up of board members and DOC staff to identify key priorities and improve reporting on those priorities. A report on identified priorities is completed each year by the department, which the board then comments on. This report is separate from the annual report.

The purpose of these action points is to identify any particular concerns board members may have. Over time it is envisaged that this type of reporting will provide evidence of the success or otherwise of the Conservation Management Strategy. Of concern to the board is the lack of hard data available that would provide an indication of progress

made or ground lost in the department's work to conserve the native flora and fauna for all New Zealanders.

The priority action points are listed below:

1. Freshwater
2. Plant pests
3. Animal pests
3. Treaty issues
4. Visitor services
5. Visitor asset management programme
6. Endangered species
7. Ecological monitoring
8. Tenure review

b) Management plans

The implementation of reserve management plans has been generally superseded by the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy.

5.4 Change of status

“To advise the Conservation Authority or the Director General on any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance”. 6M(1)(d)(i)”

No areas of national or international importance have changed status or classification during the 2011/12 year.

5.5 Conservation advice

“Any other conservation matter relating to any areas within the jurisdiction of the Board”. 6M(1)(d)(ii).

In all previous reports, the issue of government funding for the department has always featured. This year is no exception. Biodiversity funding was once again available, although most of this is tagged for specific work, such as animal pests, weed control, species work and public awareness. The board fully supports the injection of more funding for this work.

Weed and pest issues are still evident in many areas, and the board's real concern about escalating wilding-tree infestation in the high-country areas still remains.

The board has voiced concern about predator control on a number of occasions. It was pleasing to see that Operation Ark continued to fund predator-control work in the Hawdon and Poulter valleys (Arthur's Pass National Park) and in the South Branch of the Hurunui River (Lake Sumner Forest Park).

Other conservation matters the board has given advice on to the department or NZCA are:

- Concessions
- Draft Aircraft Guidelines
- Use of 1080 poison

- Visitor Asset Management Programme
- Recreation management
- Tenure review – advice to the department; advocacy to LINZ
- Management plans
- Resource management issues and compliance – Mt Cass wind farm proposal, Hurunui Water Conservation Order, Hurunui Water Group’s application to erect a dam on the south branch of the Hurunui River and a weir on Lake Sumner.
- Draft Canterbury Water Management Strategy
- Proposal to establish a Game Animal Council
- Schedule 4 of the Conservation Act – mining on conservation land
- Biodiversity – pest control
- Land exchanges
- Local body planning
- Land and Water Regional Plan
- Canterbury Water Management Strategy draft Zone Implementation Programmes

5.6 Walkways

“To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on proposals for new walkways in any area within the jurisdiction of the Board”. (Section 6M(1)(e) Conservation Act 1987).

“A board may recommend that a walkway be declared over public or private land, after it has consulted with the owner/ administrator and the occupier of the land”. (Section 6(1) and 8(1) New Zealand Walkways Act 1990).

The passage of the Walking Access Act 2008 led to the establishment of the Walking Access Commission and repealed the board’s walkways function. A memorandum of understanding was entered into on Wednesday 24 June 2009 between the department and the Walking Access Commission. Extracts from the memorandum of understanding explain the new situation as follows:

Background

“A specific function of the Commission is the administration of walkways, which were formerly the responsibility of the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) under the New Zealand Walkways Act 1990. DOC remains responsible for informal walkways that were never formalised. Warranted officers under the Conservation Act are also deemed to be enforcement officers for the purposes of the Act.”

Preliminary

“Responsibility for walkways has been transferred to the New Zealand Walkways Access Commission. This was achieved by incorporating provisions of the New Zealand Walkways Act 1990 into the Walking Access Act 2008.”

3.2 *“The roles of the Director General of Conservation, Conservation Boards and the new Zealand Conservation Authority, other than that of controlling authority for specific walkways, have passed to the Commission. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is the monitoring department for the Commission, but will have no operational responsibilities under the legislation.”*

Actions

7.2 *“The Commission acknowledges that it will not have any responsibility for tracks described as walkways that have not been gazetted under the New Zealand Walkways Act 1990 or its predecessor. These may continue to be described as walkways and use the walkways logo, subject to any review that DOC or the Commission may undertake. DOC will advise the Commission of any intention to discontinue the use of the term walkway. The administrator of these un-gazetted walkways will continue to be the responsibility of DOC.”*

Canterbury has one gazetted walkway, the Waihao River Walkway, which has passed to the Commission. Operational management of that walkway remains with the Waimate District Council.

Liaison with Fish and Game Councils

“To liaise with Fish and Game Councils on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board” – (Section 6M(1)(f) Conservation Act 1987).

Communication with the North Canterbury and Central South Island Fish and Game Councils has continued during the earlier year with the exchange of agenda and minutes. This ceased with a change of personnel within the Department as the new Board Support Officer was unaware of the liaison arrangement. Fiona Musson and Wiki Baker were appointed to liaise with each game council and keep the board informed on issues. The main issues of common interest have been the Canterbury Water Management Strategy, Water Conservation Orders, and the Land and Water Forum.

Delegated functions

“To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act”. (Section 6M(1)(g) Conservation Act 1987)

The Minister has not delegated powers or functions under this sub-section.

5.7 Other functions

“Every board shall have such other functions as are conferred on it by or under this Act or any other Act”. – 6M(2)

The board ensures that its decisions and recommendations are consistent with the requirements of section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987.

6 Powers of the board under Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987

6.1 *“Every Board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions”*. 6N(1).

The board has focused its efforts during the year on:

- Tenure review
- Recreation concession applications
- Weed and pest control
- Local and regional policy and planning
- Meridian’s proposal for a wind farm at Mt Cass
- Preparation of the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy for review
- Canterbury Water Management Strategy and draft Zone Implementation Plans

- Heli-hunting
- Resource Management Act interface with the Conservation Act
- Wild Animal Recovery Operations (WARO)
- Amendments to the Arthur's Pass and Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park (see Section 8.2 and appendices to this report)

The department and board have worked together throughout the year and tried to address each of the aforementioned issues, as dictated by available resourcing.

The board has tried to focus on policy issues and became involved in management issues only when comments or advice were requested by the department.

6.2 “Without limiting the generality of sub-section (1) of this section each board may” 6N(2).

6.2.1 “Advocate its interest at any public forum or in any statutory planning process”. 6N(2)(a).

There are 10 district plans within the board's area of jurisdiction.

The relevant committees continually monitor resource consents and take appropriate action if conservation values are threatened.

The board made submissions or commented on:

- Heli-hunting
- Thar Control Management Plan
- The Poulter Valley Mountain Bike Trial
- Tenure review
- Water consent applications for the upper and lower Waitaki River
- Wild animal control
- Concession applications
- Mining on public conservation land
- Mt Cass wind farm proposal by Mainpower
- Draft Zone Implementation Plans under the Canterbury Water Management Strategy

6.2.2 “Appoint committees from members and other suitable persons and delegate to them functions and powers”.

Each committee of the board has the power to act on behalf of the board in accordance with its delegation, and any decisions made are ratified at the following board meeting.

One advisory committee has been appointed by the Minister of Conservation to operate under the agency of the board. This is the Pōhatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee, which is a joint Section 6N(2)(b) and 56(2) Conservation Act committee. That committee is chaired by the Chairman of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board, Jan Finlayson.

Functions delegated from the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board

The Pōhatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee holds the status of a committee of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board and has delegated to it the following functions and powers of the board in relation to the Pōhatu Marine Reserve.

- (i) Section 6M(1)(b) of the Conservation Act 1987, subject to the committee liaising with the full board regarding the content of any proposed Conservation Plan for Pōhatu Marine Reserve, before exercise of that function. (For avoidance of doubt, this is to be taken to also include the other options specified in subsection 17G(2)(b) and (c) of the Act, and subsection 17G(3)(a) and (c) shall also apply to the committee in the exercise of this section);
- (ii) Section 6M(1)(c) of the Act;
- (iii) Section 6M(1)(d)(ii) of the Act;
- (iv) Section 6N(2)(a) of the Act, except for participation in statutory planning processes;
- (v) Section 17G(1) in relation to the procedure for the preparation of the Pōhatu Marine Reserve Conservation Management Plan.

Committee Members	
Jan Finlayson (Chairperson)	Chair of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board. Appointed to the committee upon the retirement of Steve Lowndes, the previous chair of the board and committee.
George Tikao	Ōnuku Marae
Nigel Scott	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
Graeme Grennell	Koukourārata Rūnanga
Kath Reid	Akaroa Harbour Marine Protection Society
Shireen Helps	Landowner in Flea Bay, adjacent to the Pōhatu Marine Reserve.
Peter Langlands	Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society's representative
Bob Meikle	Akaroa Harbour Recreational Fishers Club. The club, supported by the local Māori community and commercial fishers, was the applicant for this marine reserve.
Alan Reid	Commercial fisher
Ray Voller	Ministry of Fisheries
Rei Simon	Wairewa Rūnanga
Eric Ryder	Banks Peninsula Community Board

Rohe/Iwi links

Pōhatu Pā or Flea Bay was the traditional home to Tūtakāhīkura and his people in pre-European times. The rich flora and fauna was a good source for mahinga kai – food gathering. Māori people gathered fish, seabirds, shellfish and freshwater fish.

Today's descendants of Tūtakāhīkura are Kāi Tahu, Te Rūnaka o Koukourārata (Port Levy). They actively support Pōhatu as a marine reserve adjoining Banks Peninsula (Horomaka)

Pōhatu acts as a nest (kōhanga) for replenishing fish stocks, providing a key element in the integrated sustainable management of fish resources on Banks Peninsula.

Committee meetings

The committee did not hold a meeting this year.

Management of the reserve

Pōhatu Marine Reserve is situated on the south-eastern side of Banks Peninsula at Flea Bay. Pōhatu Marine Reserve was established in May 1999. It comprises 215 hectares and stretches from Redcliffe Point to Ounu-hau Point (south of Duke Head) (Refer to figure 1). Hector's dolphin/upokohue, yellow-eyed penguin/hoiho, white-flipped penguin/kororā and New Zealand fur seal/kekeno either live within the reserve or visit the reserve and so have been included in this report.

Flea Bay is approximately 30 metres deep at the heads and 5-6 metres deep further in. The bottom of the bay is filled with one metre of silt. The bay is exposed to southerlies, and the water is often murky.

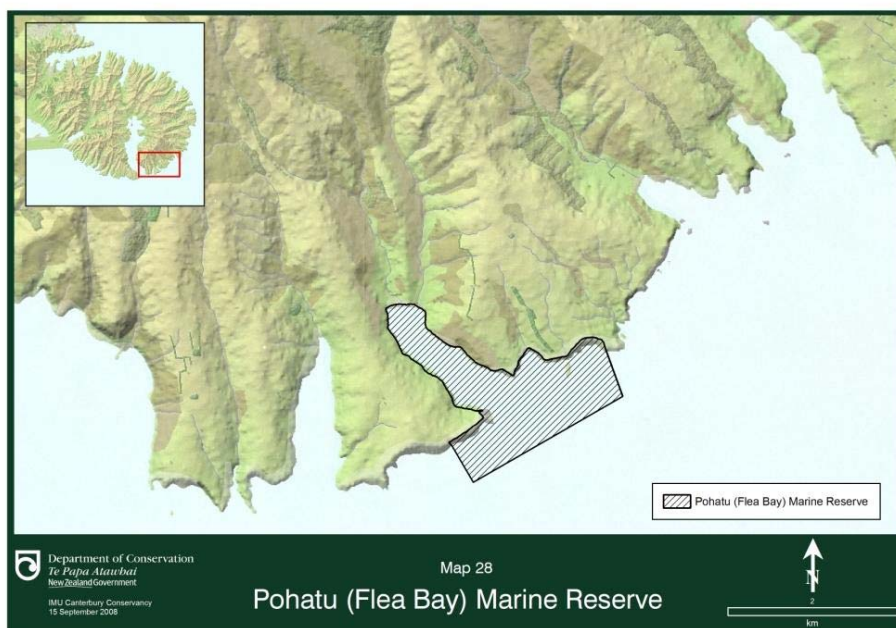


Figure 1: Pōhatu Marine Reserve

The reserve is surrounded by a Marine Mammal Sanctuary (MMS), which extends from Waipara River to the Rakaia River, and out to a distance of twelve nautical miles. The MMS was altered in November 2008 and the area contained within the reserve increased over four-fold (figure 2). New Zealand's first marine mammal sanctuary, it was created around Banks Peninsula in 1988, to protect Hector's dolphins/upokohue (*Cephalorhynchus hectori*) from bycatch in set nets.

Current restrictions inside the marine mammal sanctuary relate to seismic surveying, which will reduce the impact from any prospecting and provide for improved protection. Fisheries regulations are also in place along the east coast of the South Island (see the section below, under threat management plan, for more information).

The set-net ban also helps reduce the risk of entanglement of other marine species, such as the endangered yellow-eyed penguin, white-flippered penguin and New Zealand fur seal.

Pōhatu Marine Reserve Biological Monitoring Plan

No information has been received from the Mahaanui Area regarding biological monitoring of the Pōhatu Marine Reserve during the 2001/12 financial year.

Shorelife

Visible at low tide:

- Mussels/kūtai, limpets/ngākihi, chiton, sea tulips/kāeo, whelks, crabs/pāpaka, cats eyes/pūpū, barnacles/koromāungaunga, periwinkles/ngaeti, tubeworms, brown, green and red seaweed/rimurimu.
- Spotted shags/kawau, terns/tara, tītī and gulls/tara.

Threatened species

(a) **Hector's dolphin**

Hector's dolphin/upokohue is the smallest marine dolphin in the world (maximum length 145 cm) and is found only in New Zealand's inshore waters. It is naturally inquisitive and people-friendly and loves to bow ride and play in the wake of boats.

Threat management plan

The Department of Conservation (DOC) and the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) jointly developed a non-statutory Hector's and Maui's Dolphin Threat Management Plan (TMP) to address the national decline in these dolphins. Certain fishing activities were identified as the most significant threat to Hector's dolphins; thus measures were taken to minimise these risks. The plan came into force on 1 October 2008 and considerably restricts both recreational and commercial set-netting activities along the east coast of the South Island.

For the South Island east coast (Cape Jackson in the Marlborough Sounds to Slope Point in the Catlins), commercial and amateur set netting is now banned out to four nautical miles offshore, with the following exceptions:

- commercial and recreational set netting allowed to one nautical mile offshore around the Kaikoura Canyon;
- set netting for flounder permitted between 1 April and 30 September in existing defined flounder areas around Banks Peninsula and Queen Charlotte Sound, using defined nets.

Trawling is also banned to two nautical miles offshore. (Flatfish nets with defined low-headline heights are still permitted).

New boundaries for the Banks Peninsula Marine Mammal Sanctuary (see figure 2) also came into effect on 4 November 2008. The new area of the Marine Mammal Sanctuary now encompasses approximately 413,000 hectares and covers 389.31 km of coastline and includes restrictions on seismic surveying.

Moratorium on Hector's dolphin permits

Because of the current lack of information about the effects of tourism on Hector's dolphins and the need to adequately protect dolphins, a moratorium on Hector's dolphin

permits for the Lyttelton and Akaroa Harbour Operational Areas is in place until 1 May 2012.

A new round of marine-mammal-watching permits has begun, with invitations to apply for permits being sent to existing operators.

Emmanuella Martinez, a PhD candidate from Massey University, has completed a four-year project to help address the need for information on the effects of tourism on Hector's dolphin in Akaroa Harbour. Her report indicates that while there is no evidence of any displacement of Hector's dolphin from the harbour, there is evidence of short-term behavioural changes in the presence of vessels in the harbour. In short, the dolphins are displaying more milling and socialising behaviour and less diving and feeding behaviour in the presence of vessels 86% of the time between 6.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. Of this, commercial vessels comprise 22% of the traffic and 70% of the encounters, which last, on average, 14 minutes. Recreational vessels make up 73% of the traffic and 25% of the encounters, lasting an average of 8 minutes. Akaroa has by far the highest marine-mammal permitted activity in New Zealand.

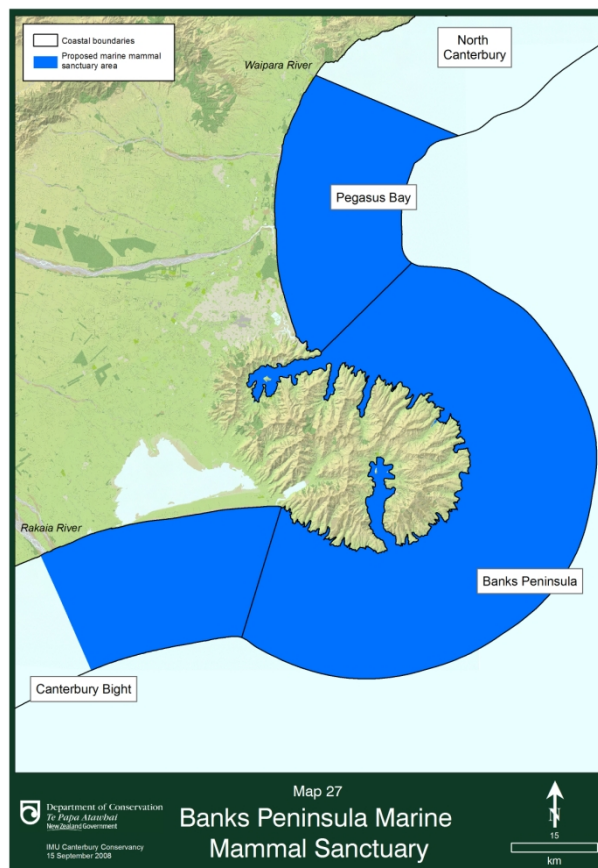


Figure 2: Banks Peninsula Marine Mammal Sanctuary
(Note: the area contained within the MMS in blue is now in effect, i.e. not proposed).

- (b) **Yellow-eyed penguin/hoiho and white-flipped penguin/kororā**
Pōhatu (Flea) Bay is a natural breeding site for both penguin species. The remoteness and steep bluffs provide some protection from disturbance and predators.

White-flipped penguin/kororā are a strong sub-species of *Eudyptula minor* (little blue penguin) that is endemic to the Canterbury coast. They are in decline on Banks Peninsula and are under threat from ferrets, cats and stoats.

It is estimated that there are 893 pair in Pōhatu Pa – Flea Bay – (2004 census, Cashman). In a 2000-02 survey undertaken by Challies and Burleigh, the total Banks Peninsula population was estimated at 2112 pairs.

Pōhatu and neighbouring Stony Bay are the only sites on Banks Peninsula where kororā nest on hillsides, up to 200 metres in altitude. The remainder are confined to debris slopes and caves at the foot of cliffs or on shorelines.

Hoiho are less common, mostly breeding further south on the Otago Peninsula and in the Catlins. There are only a few breeding pairs on Banks Peninsula and most are in the Pōhatu Marine Reserve. Being small (they stand around 50 cm tall) and flightless they are at risk from predators, such as cats, stoats and ferrets.

Other marine life

- Massive crayfish/kōura – up to five kilograms (ten pounds) take sanctuary in the deep volcanic rocks;
- Blue moki – some up to six kilograms;
- Forty species of reef fish – such as wrasse, trumpeter, blue cod/rāwaru, and leather jackets/kōkiri;
- Groper/hāpuku;
- Butterfish/mararī (a vegetarian seaweed eater) and large banded wrasse swim amongst the kelp forests
- Pāua and rockfish

The Pōhatu Marine Reserve continues its important role in preserving the marine biodiversity of the region. The focus of the committee has been to implement sound management practices for the reserve. Public awareness of the seaward boundary continues to create the biggest problem for the Department of Conservation.

Increased surveillance, a multi-agency response to compliance issues, increased public awareness and education on the positive effects of the reserve on biodiversity, and increased fish stocks in the surrounding waters, are all important outcomes for the committee.

Seal-diet study

Area and conservancy staff completed a project to gain information on the diet of NZ fur seals around Banks Peninsula. The project was carried out to help the department understand the interaction between fur seals and fisheries, as diet analysis has not been carried out on Banks Peninsula fur seals to date.

Comment from the Pōhatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee

This was the thirteenth year of the Pōhatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee's existence. Due to a number of extenuating circumstances, including the Christchurch earthquakes and internal Departmental changes in Board and Committee servicing, the Pōhatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee has not met this year.

6.3 Draft general policies

“The Conservation Authority may consult any conservation board about the draft of a general policy after receiving submissions on it” (Section 17b(3)(1)(ii) Conservation Act 1987).

The General Policy for National Parks and the Conservation General Policy were adopted in May 2005.

6.4 Freshwater fisheries management plans

Draft freshwater fisheries management plans are to be prepared by the department *“in consultation with the Conservation Boards affected by them”* (Section 17K(1)(a) Conservation Act 1987).

No such plans affecting the board’s district are in preparation at this time.

6.5 Reduction of width of, or exemption from, marginal strips

“The Minister of Conservation shall consult the relevant Conservation Board about any proposal made by a Crown Land disposal agency to reduce the width of, or provide an exemption from, a marginal strip, and on being satisfied that it is reasonable in the circumstances to do so, the relevant conservation board...may request the Minister to publicly notify the proposal”. (Section 24BA Conservation Act 1987).

No applications were considered.

7 Responsibilities under other sections of the Conservation Act 1987

7.1 “Co-opting members of the Board” 6Q(1)

No one was co-opted onto the board during this financial year.

7.2 “Advice on granting lease or licence in the absence of a CMS or CMP”

No advice was given during the year.

8 Board functions under the National Parks Act 1980

8.1 “The board is responsible, in conjunction with the Department, for preparing draft reviews of management plans, for hearing and deciding on public submissions on any draft review and for recommending any review to the New Zealand Conservation Authority for approval”. Sections 30(a) and 45-47.

There are two national parks in the board’s area of jurisdiction. Each national park has a management plan which is reviewed at 10-year intervals.

The Arthur’s Pass National Park Management Plan has been reviewed and was approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority on 13 December 2007.

The Aoraki Mt Cook National Park Management Plan was approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority on 14 April 2004.

8.2 “Advise on any other matter relating to National Parks [Section 30(f)(iii)].

a) Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park

The board continues to advise the department on the issuing of guiding, tramping, heli-skiing, hunting and other concessions in the park.

An amendment to the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan was approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority and came into effect on the 13th of June 2012. This amendment covered the following aspects of the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan:

- Realignment and upgrade of the Tasman Valley Road
- The Alps to Ocean cycleway which traverses part of the National Park off formed roads.
- Watercraft concession activity on the Tasman Lake

A copy of the amendment in its entirety as approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority is included in the Appendices to this report.

b) Arthur's Pass National Park

The board has an ongoing interest in the Arthur's Pass National Park and the activities and facilities there, especially the visitor services, recreational facilities and opportunities. It also receives regular reports from West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservancy on the portion of the park that it manages and is often alerted to any negative impacts on conservation values within the park by the Arthur's Pass Association, which acts as a public 'watchdog' for the park.

An amendment to the Arthur's Pass National Park Management Plan was approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority and came into effect on the 13th of June 2012. The amendment covered the following aspects of the Arthur's Pass National Park Management Plan:

- Mountain biking activity in the Poulter Valley, including concession activity.
- Allowing for the use of an alternative track for Departmental ATV use as and when required.

A copy of the amendment in its entirety as approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority is included in the Appendices to this report.

9 Liaison

The board has appointed various members to liaise with outside agencies and the department's Canterbury Conservancy Area offices as follows:

Liaison Persons

Organisation	Liaison Person
Otago Conservation Board	David Round
West Coast Conservation Board	Dr John Keoghan
Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board	Joseph Hullen
Fish and Game (1) North Canterbury	Dave Matheson
Fish and Game (2) Central South Island	Wiki Baker

Mount Cook Museum Trust	Te Awhina Arahanga
Ngāi Tahu	Te Awhina Arahanga
Environment Canterbury	Jan Finlayson (Chairperson)
New Zealand Conservation Authority	Jan Finlayson (Chairperson)
Pohatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee	Jan Finlayson (Chairperson)
Aoraki and Twizel Areas	Mandy Waaka-Home
Raukapuka Area	Jan Finlayson
Mahaanui Area	Joseph Hullen
Waimakariri Area	Joseph Hullen
Himalayan Tahr Control Plan Implementation Group	Dr. John Keoghan

9.1 Other conservation boards

The conservancy's immediate neighbours are the Otago, West Coast *Tai Poutini* and Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Boards. The chairman and liaison members monitor minutes of the various boards for issues of common interest.

9.2 Community

The board has continued to involve the community in its work. It holds meetings around the Canterbury area and the public is encouraged to participate in public forums at these meetings. This is seen as successful, with a number of people from local communities taking the opportunity to bring their concerns to the board. The board seeks to represent the public interest and continues to strive to learn the views of the public. It would like to encourage more people to take advantage of the opportunity to address the board during the public forum at its meetings.

During field inspections the board also takes the opportunity to meet members of local communities in their own environments and to observe and discuss issues. This is seen as an essential part of the board's work to forge good-neighbour relationships with the community, board and department.

9.3 District and regional councils

The board has continued to develop a good relationship with councils. Councillors and district mayors are invited to attend meetings and local issues often appear on the board's agenda.

9.4 Iwi

Ngāi Tahu nominates four members of the board. They are individually selected by their Papatipu Rūnanga, and their status as representatives of local hapū is endorsed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Board minutes are circulated and conservation issues of concern feature regularly on meeting agenda of both organisations. The Ngāi Tahu-nominated members of the board ensure a Ngāi Tahu perspective is considered before any final conclusions are reached.

9.5 Non-governmental organisations

The board has continued to foster regular meetings with non-governmental organisations, when appropriate.

During the 2011/2012 year, one Southern Associates Meeting was held in Timaru on the 18th of October 2011. A good number of people from conservation and recreation organisations attended this meeting.

Chairperson's Report

The Canterbury Conservancy continues to work under the influence of the combined shockwaves of earthquakes and ongoing institutional reform, which have meant enormous pressure and some communication difficulties. Many highly-skilled and devoted staff are gone and the deficits their departures leave will range from the immediate to the long-playing and from the very apparent to the subtle. On the positive side of the ledger, important resources have been retrieved from the central Christchurch premises, but the Conservancy office is unable to move to its new home on Moorhouse Avenue until next year, remaining, for now, in the Antarctic Centre.

Brenda Preston, our Board Support Officer, and Cheryl Colley, Community Relations Manager, are no longer with the department due to restructuring, and we are sorry for the commitment and wisdom lost when they went. Megan Hieatt has taken on the support role, short term, and Graeme Ayres is in the reconfigured community relations position. Their energy and good humour have helped keep transition to the new circumstances as smooth as possible for the Board.

The post-election landscape has some clarity now. Cost-cutting and moulding to an economic framework are thematic. Peter Dunne's re-election for United Future has meant that his Game Animal Council Bill is likely to be enacted before the end of this parliamentary term, but it hasn't spelt the end of heli-hunting as he had wished. Unhappily, this activity continues and could end up less restricted than it presently is, because new game animal law may allow it to be reoriented around Herds of Special Interest, where constraints will be less robust.

Conservation Management planning is moving ahead in timely and well-finessed fashion, exceeding the as-resources-allow approach agreed for Canterbury. The Board has worked on a number of Places with a view to being true to the Acts and policies that guide conservation. We are very aware of the need for this Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy to be useful to conservation throughout its life and that it must require outcomes that are positive for conservation in measurable ways. Poma Palmer's excellent knowledge and writing skills are serving the Conservancy very well.

Management Plans for Arthur's Pass and Aoraki Mount Cook National Parks were amended after thorough processes of engagement with the public. The changes are affirming and respectful of the special character of our national parks.

The Environment Canterbury Act and the Canterbury Water Management Strategy continue to contribute to the uncertainty of the future of our natural environment. Overnight, two years ago, water conservation orders were set aside. Recent hearings on a power company's proposal to change the flow of the Rakaia River have been disquieting; points of reference for dialogue are more resource-focussed than the multifarious and subtle ones of water conservation orders. The Board continues to make submissions on the draft Zone Implementation Programmes of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy. They vary, but overall, a relentless focus on widespread irrigation, and process capture by industry groups, remain the nexus of our concern that the Strategy may not deliver the enduring, environmentally-prioritised results agreed.

As I write this, the season's first preliminary proposal for crown pastoral tenure review is hot off the press. An initial reading suggests that, as for many proposals the land committee has advised on, in a variety of ways, future public and environmental interests are not catered to as well as

they should be. Tenure review continues to be a matter of high importance to the Board, and I thank the land committee for the care and open-mindedness they bring to each proposal.

Concession applications coming to our notice have dwindled in number, we understand, due to the earthquakes' effects on business in Canterbury, and because aspiring concessionaires are increasingly careful to design proposals that conform with departmental standards. For several years, the Board has advocated for a stronger, conservation-oriented business sense to pervade permissions activities, and now, more than ever, this is needed, as we witness the effects of funding shrinkage on conservation, and absorb governmental claims about the benefits of commercial-conservation linkage. Objectives around such linking are clear in the operative Statement of Intent. We continue to believe that, where possible, concessionaires should return good conservation value to the public, and to the natural environments they operate in, over and above what their commercial operations dictate.

The Mackenzie remains an area of great interest and activity. The processes of Guy Salmon's forum are all but complete and the playing-out of the eventual agreement is something we will watch closely. Waitaki water continues to be contested. Reviews of tenure of The Wolds and Maryburn pastoral leases have gone to ground following widespread criticism of their preliminary proposals, and we celebrated the long-awaited release of the Landcare report on Balmoral Station.

Te Waka o Aoraki, our annually-awarded Canterbury-Aoraki Conservation Board Award for the recognition and encouragement of conservation initiatives in Canterbury, normally awarded in September, is to be celebrated in November this year. The organisational review meant obstacles appeared in its path, but we are now calling for nominations and intend that the honour and fanfare that usually accompany the award are as strong and meaningful as ever.

With great emotion, we farewelled Ngai Tahu Board member Wikitoria Baker, who has been a steadfast and thoroughly committed member since conservation boards were promulgated. Her advocacy for conservation and Te Waka o Aoraki, and her invaluable institutional knowledge will be sadly missed.

Teoti Jardine has joined us as a member. He is a man of wide-ranging view and experience and we warmly anticipate the contributions he will make to Board activities.

Board members contribute to conservation in a multitude of ways through their connections and with their range of talents and skills. Thank you to all.



Jan Finlayson.

21 August 2012.

APPENDICES

Appendix One - Approved Amendment to Arthur's Pass National Park Management Plan 2007

Appendix Two - Approved Amendment to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan 2004

Appendix One – Approved Amendment to Arthur’s Pass National Park Management Plan 2007 [As approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority on 13 June 2012]

On page 57:

6.2.2.1 Hawdon and Poulter valleys and the Kakariki Karaka/Orange-Fronted Parakeet Programme

Methods 6.2.2.1(a) & (b) vi.(b) now reads “keep ATV use to the ex-4WD track in the Poulter valley and the true-right bush track to the north of Casey Stream, but also use a secondary true-left valley track if essential.”

On page 113:

6.3.6 Roads, Parking Areas and Vehicles

Policy 6.3.6(c) now reads “To allow non-motorised mountain bike use within the Poulter River valley where their use is confined to the track up the Poulter valley from the Park boundary at Mt Brown Creek to Casey Stream, then through the bush track north of Casey Stream, then back onto the former vehicle track up-valley to the site of the Trust/Poulter Hut.

Policy 6.3.6(d) now reads “Concessions may be granted for concessionaire mountain bike use as in Policy 6.3.6(c), but should not be granted for any mountain bike sporting event.”

Policies 6.3.6(e) and 6.3.6(f) are now deleted.

On page 114:

Explanation 6.3.6(c) & (d) now reads:

The General Policy allows for non-motorised mountain bike use on roads or routes within national parks, in accordance with an approved management plan, where adverse effects on national park values can be minimised, the track standard is suitable, and the benefit, use and enjoyment of other people can be protected.

The Poulter valley has been promoted by Mountain Bike New Zealand Inc. as one of a few potential biking opportunities within national parks. Its suitability is assisted by a 13 km track before reaching the Park boundary, with this track and the Park track providing a 54 km return ride along an existing Park management 4WD vehicle track. Primary use is likely as a day trip.

Mountain bike use up-valley of Trust/Poulter Hut, or on the Binser and Casey Saddle side-tracks, is not to be allowed as these areas and tracks have well-established public use patterns for walking and the benefit, use and enjoyment for these other people would not be protected by allowing bike use.

The mountain biking opportunity being created is essentially for day trip activity with limited overnight stays at Casey Hut or Trust/Poulter Hut, (noting Method 6.2.2.1(a) & (b)5). This should minimise any adverse affects on the benefit, use and enjoyment of the current public use within the valley. There are many opportunities for concessionaire-led mountain biking and for sports events outside the Park.

On page 116, Method 6.3.6(e) is now deleted.

Approved Amendment to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan 2004 [As approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority on 13 June 2012]

1.1 Management Planning, additional paragraph at end of 1.1, page 13:

In 2012 amendments on three issues were made to the Plan, using the same process except for the first bullet point as above, as in accordance with Section 46(4) of the National Parks Act.

2 Management Issues and Objectives, heading amended, page 35:

2 Management Issues, Objectives and Outcomes

2.3 Outcomes, additional section, page 40:

Since 2005 the General Policy for National Parks has required planned outcomes for places within national park management plans. The scale of the amendments made to the Plan in 2012 was such that an outcome statement for the lower Tasman valley was considered required. Note that this outcome statement only applies to the valley area within the Park.

Outcomes for the Lower Tasman Valley (see Figure 3A)

Lower Tasman Valley

From the Park boundary, the Park is clearly managed as part of a World Heritage Area, a premier destination for New Zealand, and for the dramatic approach to the mountain Aoraki/Mount Cook and its alpine setting. SH80, extending into the Park, is managed with regard to these national park values.

The valley showcases outstanding examples of New Zealand's glacial, braided river and indigenous vegetation succession processes at work. These processes are readily visible and are interpreted to visitors using SH80, Park roads, foot tracks, lake boating, and aircraft.

Views across the valley floor away from the Airport and Unwin Lodge are of an uncluttered landscape where the indigenous revegetation is slowly recovering following the cessation of stock grazing.

The lower Tasman valley houses the Aoraki/Mount Cook Airport and air traffic and aircraft noise is noticeable. The Department continues to work with aircraft operators to reduce adverse effects on the Park experience of on-ground and on-Tasman Lake visitors.

A cycle track from the Aoraki/Mount Cook Village to the Airport, as one end of an Alps to Ocean Cycle Trail to Oamaru, provides for non-powered vehicle access across the wide valley floor seldom visited by walkers.

Tasman Valley Road and cycle track, and Blue Lakes car park

Leaving SH80, visitors experience a slowing in their entry to the Park, on a road designed and managed as part of the national park experience, not just as a route to an end-destination. Frequent traffic can be expected during the peak visitor season, and periodic road closures due to snow and other natural events outside of this period.

A cycle track provides for non-powered vehicle access safely separated from the road and its traffic noise, from the Hooker Corner to the Wakefield Falls carpark, then is managed to share with pedestrians a track to the Blue Lakes carpark, and beyond that to share a 4WD vehicle track towards Husky Flat. It is

accepted that natural rockfall, avalanche and erosion events will periodically and may in time fully close this 4WD track for vehicles.

The Wakefield Falls and Blue Lakes carpark sit unobtrusively within the landscape, and are managed to avoid impacts on successional shrub-lands and threatened species, Blue Stream, and the moraine topography.

To reduce road and carpark traffic, concessionaire passengers are bussed from Aoraki/Mount Cook Village or a carpark near to SH80. Other traffic reduction measures are implemented if required to maintain a high-quality visitor experience and to keep vehicle numbers and vehicle sizes within the capacity of the road and Wakefield Falls and Blue Lakes carpark.

Walking tracks and Blue Lakes

Walking only, from the Blue Lakes car park through an icon visitor destination site, visitors use a well-designed and maintained primary loop walking track between the carpark, Blue Lakes, the Tasman Lake lookout and the lake-edge, with a side track to the Lake outlet. Visitors experience a terminal moraine landscape with successional vegetation, and dramatic views of Tasman Glacier and Lake, the up-valley mountains and Aoraki/Mount Cook, and the down-valley incised then braided Tasman River flowing to Lake Pukaki.

Frequent encounters with other visitors may occur but will be reduced by a sinuous track sympathetic to the varied topography and vegetation of the glacial moraine site, and by encouragement of a one-way walking circuit.

Visitors walking along the carpark to lake-edge combined pedestrian and vehicle track may encounter concessionaire vehicles carrying fuel and equipment only, but such vehicle use seeks to avoid such encounters.

The visual amenity, lake-edge vegetation, water quality and ecology of the Blue Lakes and their surrounds are managed as more-intimate scenic highlights within the wider glacial moraine landscape.

At the Tasman Lake edge all structures and ancillary features and activities appear coherent and blend into their largely bare-rock moraine landscape setting. Visitor access to the lake-water edge is managed to minimise conflict between concessionaire and other visitor activities.

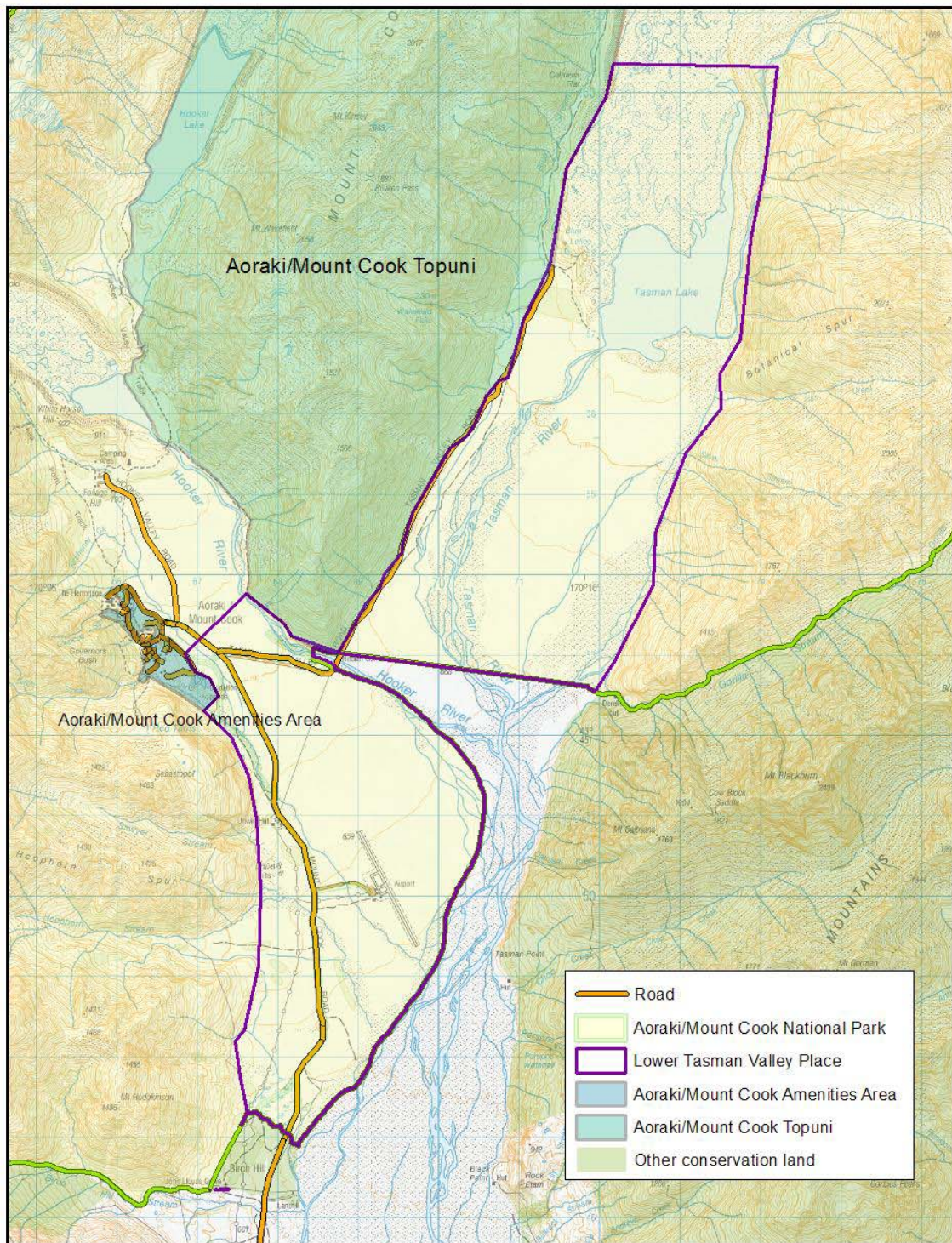
Tasman Lake

Visitors to Tasman Lake, both in watercraft and on land, while being aware of watercraft on the lake, will have an overall experience of an un-crowded lake.

Watercraft visitors will have a safe and awe-inspiring experience of the dynamic glacial lake, iceberg, moraine and wider alpine environment. Working from a confined lake-edge site, only two concessionaire operations offer this safe experience through either powered or non-powered open-watercraft. Powered watercraft will operate quietly and at managed speeds.

Watercraft sizes and passenger capacities are chosen to maintain a low visual impact from lake-edge viewing sites, to emphasize the difference in scale of visitors and their transport with the scale of the glacial and mountain landscape, and for ease of transport to and from the lake.

Figure 3A



	<p>Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan amendment Lower Tasman Valley</p>	
<p>Conservation unit data is current as of 4/07/2011. Map background by Geographix.</p>		<p>New Zealand Government</p>

FILE: G:\GIS\Projects\Canterbury\Community_Relations\Planners\Aoraki Mt Cook Management Plan\AMC\MP amendment October 2011.mxd

Canterbury Conservancy 06/10/2011

4.2.1 Access within the Park

Explanation 4.2.1(a) (Additional paragraph, as second paragraph, page 70)

Visitor increases on the popular tracks to and/or past Blue Lakes requires particular management attention to avoid the loss of the natural values of these vulnerable waterbodies and their surrounds.

Method 4.2.1(a) (Additional bullet point, page 71)

Assess proposals for the maintenance, further development or upgrading of Park access, having particular regard to:

- impacts on the visual amenity, lake-edge soils and vegetation, water quality and ecology of the Blue Lakes;

4.2.4 Roads, Parking Areas and Vehicles

(Heading amended, page 79)

4.2.4 Roads, Parking Areas and Vehicles (including Watercraft)

Policies (Additional policies, page 79.)

4.2.4(a)A1 The realignment of the Tasman Valley Road so that it is entirely on the valley floor should be permitted.

4.2.4(a)A2 Vehicle speed limits that reflect the Park setting and visitor safety needs should be sought for roads passing through or within the Park.

4.2.4(a)A3 Traffic reduction measures for the Tasman Valley Road including requiring concessionaire passengers using the road to be concessionaire-transported, and the management of vehicle numbers and vehicle sizes within the capacity of the road and Wakefield Falls and Blue Lakes carparks, should be instigated.

4.2.4(a)A4 The use of powered watercraft should not be permitted except:

- by a single concessionaire using watercraft quietly on Tasman Lake for the carrying of passengers, with watercraft limited to a single-deck, maximum 15 passenger capacity, at speeds in accordance with an approved safety plan,
- by a single concessionaire using powered watercraft for safety support only while operating non-powered watercraft on Tasman Lake, or
- to enable research and monitoring in accordance with 4.3.11 Research and Monitoring.

4.2.4(a)A5 Non-powered, non-concessionaire watercraft may be used on Tasman Lake where carriage of the watercraft from the Tasman Valley Road to the lake does not involve a vehicle.

Policy 4.2.4(b) (Policy amended)

Vehicles should not be permitted to move off a formed road except:

- in emergency or search and rescue situations, or
- for Park management purposes, approved research, or to service public utilities, only where no reasonable alternative access is available, or
- on a combined pedestrian and vehicle track from the Blue Lakes carpark to and on the vehicle manoeuvring areas at the Tasman Lake shore, for the purpose of servicing the lake boating

concessionaire activity only, but not for the transport of passengers and minimising interactions with visitors, or

- to service concessionaire facilities, where the formation of a road or vehicle track is not required and will not develop through use, or
- for bicycles using a Aoraki/Mount Cook Village to Airport cycle track (part of the Alps to Ocean Cycle Trail), or the Hooker Corner to Blue Lakes carpark cycle track, subject to both these tracks meeting the requirements of 4.1.10 Management of Adverse Effects, or
- to follow a 4WD vehicle track in the Godley valley to a defined vehicle end-point at Separation Stream, or
- to follow a 4WD vehicle track in the Tasman Valley from the Blue Lakes carpark to Husky Flat, until such time as the track is closed due to natural events, or
- as otherwise provided for by the park Bylaws.

Additional Explanations (page 80.)

4.2.4(a)A1 A 1.8 km section of the Tasman Valley Road crosses the ‘bluffs’ with a narrow, winding road, exposed to avalanches and rock-falls, that is difficult to maintain. With traffic volumes increasing, the road requires upgrading for public safety and maintenance cost reasons. Upgrading the current road would have a high environmental impact, still have exposure to geotechnical risks, and still have high maintenance costs. After extensive investigation an alternative route on the river flats was approved in 2012.

4.2.4(a)A2 SH80 extends into the Park and finishes at a “T” intersection with the Village loop-road, having just passed side-road intersections for the airport, the Tasman Valley and Hooker Valley Roads, and crossed three one-way bridges. On this stretch of SH80 self-drive visitors to the Park frequently stop to take photographs and consult route guides, before turning off onto the lower-speed side-roads. A less rapid transition from the SH80 open-road limit, to the lower-speed roads, is desirable, followed by low-speed travel on the Park roads to enable and encourage Park appreciation with safety.

4.2.4(a)A3 The Tasman Valley Road is expected to experience increased traffic following road upgrading. While the road may have the capacity to handle this there are Park natural value constraints which could, at least seasonally, require traffic management to avoid loss of a high-quality visitor experience along the road and at the limited parking areas.

4.2.4(a)A4 & A5 A low level of recreational non-powered watercraft activity has occurred on the pro-glacial lakes within the Park for many years. Since the 1990s, as the Mueller and Tasman Lakes have enlarged, concessionaires have established guided powered watercraft operations on Tasman Lake and guided kayaking on both lakes, providing a new recreational opportunity and means for interpreting to visitors the very dynamic glacial lake and landscape. On Tasman Lake, quietly operated powered watercraft are considered suitable within the “Backcountry accessible-motorised” visitor management setting where there is already an element of noise from overhead aircraft. Other lakes though lie within the “Backcountry remote” setting (e.g. Godley valley) and/or in areas (e.g. Mueller and Hooker valleys) where natural quiet is desired and aircraft or other engine noise is sought to be avoided.

The limitation on the number of concessionaires reflects the confined lake-edge site which they and other visitors must share for facilities and the movement of visitors, boats and vehicles.

A low level of non-powered watercraft use may continue within the Park and this is appropriate provided there is no breach of allowable vehicle or aircraft access provisions to transport the watercraft. The Department will inform non-guided park visitors of the risks involved with watercraft use on very cold water and wind-swept lakes, in accordance with Policy 4.2.8(a).

Explanations 4.2.4(a) and 4.2.4(c), and Method 4.2.4(a)(4) (Explanations amended, pages 80 & 81)

References to “Transfund”, “Transit New Zealand” and “Transfund New Zealand”, amended to Land Transport New Zealand.

Explanation 4.2.4(b) (Additional explanation, page 81)

From the late 1990s a growing Tasman Lake concessionaire watercraft activity sought limited vehicle access for the safe transport of motor-boat fuel and equipment, and for vehicle manoeuvring at the lake-edge. This resulted in the formation of a combined walking and vehicle track and lake-edge tracks and platforms. While these concessionaire activities are adding to visitor opportunities within the Park, constraints on the tracking and vehicle use are required to avoid adverse effects on the Park’s natural values and on visitor experiences.

Method 4.2.4(a) (Subclause 4 amended, page 81)

4. Through liaison with Land Transport New Zealand, the Department will seek a reduction in the open-road speed limit for SH80 from in the vicinity of the Tasman Valley Road turn-offs, to the SH80 end, and will also seek the ongoing retention of the “special purposes road” funding for the Tasman Valley Road.

Method 4.2.4(a)A1 (Additional method, page 81.)

Realignment and/or upgrading of the Tasman Valley Road, in accordance with 4.1.2 Landscape Management and specific landscape and engineering design will ensure that:

- the location and orientation of the road should align with and be sympathetic to local natural patterns, particularly those relating to landform, water courses and vegetation;
- the extent of disturbed areas is kept to a minimum, including those effects occurring during road and bridge construction, particularly avoiding the roadside moss fields;
- for the purposes of restoration of disturbed areas, vegetation and surface rock material is retrieved, saved and re-used where practical;
- the former ‘bluffs’ road route is restored to a more natural hill-slope form where practical, especially at the more visible end stretches, and all structures are removed; and
- measures are taken to prevent vehicles moving off the completed road.

Method 4.2.4(a)A2 (Additional method, page 81)

Vehicle speed limits on the Hooker and Tasman Valley Roads should not exceed:

- 70 kph on the Tasman Valley Road from SH80 to the Hooker River bridge, then 50 kph thereafter, and
- 50 kph on the Hooker Valley Road.

Method 4.2.4(b) (Additional sub-clause to method, page 82)

Tracks and vehicle manoeuvring areas for concessionaire vehicles moving from the Blue Lakes car park to and around the Tasman Lake edge, shall meet the requirements of 4.1.2 Landscape Management and specific landscape design, and the Department’s Track Construction and Maintenance Guidelines.

4.3.3 Aircraft and Airports

Explanation P.4.3.3(b) (Penultimate paragraph amended, page 109)

Scenic flights are a significant means of use and enjoyment of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. The flights are for scenic observation, which implies gentler flying, not thrill-seeking (see 1.3.5.2). Scenic over-flights of the Park operate with both helicopters and fixed-wing planes from outside the Park. Ski

planes and helicopters land at specified glacier snowfield and ridge-top sites. Aircraft are also used for access to mountain huts for climbers, to glaciers for skiers, for heli-skiing, and in support of approved watercraft concessionaire operations at Tasman Lake.

Table 1: Lower Tasman/Hooker Aircraft (Table amended, “Lower Tasman & Lower Hooker valleys” column, “permitted uses/activities” row, page 118)

Scenic over-flights, Tasman Lake watercraft concessions equipment positioning.

References (Amend, page 223)

Delete “National Parks and Reserves Authority. 1983....” and add
New Zealand Conservation Authority. 2005. General Policy for National Parks. Department of Conservation for the New Zealand Conservation Authority, Wellington.