

Chatham Islands Conservation Board
Te Pou Atawhai O Rekohu Wharekauri



Annual Report
to the New Zealand Conservation Authority

1 July 2016 - 30 June 2017

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Front Cover Photo: Mangere Island
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1 INTRODUCTION

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board (the Board) is one of 15 statutory Conservation Boards appointed by the Minister under Section 6P of the Conservation Act 1987. The functions and powers of the Board are outlined in Sections 6M and 6N respectively. Each Conservation Board covers a geographically-defined area and comprises up to 12 members. The Chatham Islands Conservation Board consists of 7 members encompassing various sectors of the community.

The Board receive support from the local DOC office with Dave Carlton succeeding Connie Norgate in the role of Operations Manager and Jilleen Chandler providing secretarial services and support to the Board.

Meetings of the CICB are open to the public, and members of other conservation groups are often invited to attend. This with the addition of DOC staff ensured varied attendance at the meetings.

Over the 2016/17 year, five meetings were held at the following venues;

- Taiko Camp, Taiko Town
- Kaingaroa Club, Kaingaroa
- The Den, Waitangi
- Kopinga Marae

The Board this year responded to the Associate Minister of Conservation's letter of expectation, with a programme of CMS topic reviews, and a commitment to maintaining the board's already strong local conservation advocacy role.

Dinee Fleming advocated the Conservation Board had achieved some good work in 2016/17.

Di Gregory-Hunt greatly enjoys her work on the Board and is passionate about what they can achieve as a group.

All Board members agree on the importance of field trips, connecting them more with the areas within their district.

2 MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

The Board membership and meeting attendance during 2016 - 2017 was as follows:

Diane (Dinee) Fleming of Owenga, Chatham Islands *1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017*

Dinee is a farmer and a landowner, active in wetland restoration. This is Dinee's fourth year as Chairperson. With her wide understanding of the history, culture and economy of the Chathams Dinee brings strong balanced local knowledge to her Chairperson's role. She is of Hokotehi Moriori and Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri descent.

Diane (Di) Gregory-Hunt, Pitt Island *1 May 2014 to 30 June 2019*

Di is involved in farming. She is a member of the Pitt Island Reserves Committee and has been a member of the Pitt Island Reserves and Conservation Purposes Trust. Di has been active in many of the conservation projects on Pitt, including monitoring of nesting albatross and Chatham Island snipe. Di and her family have land protected under Conservation Covenants and are active in habitat restoration projects.

Mana Cracknell, of Kaingaroa, Chatham Islands *1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017*

Mana is a retired university academic. He has been involved in many environmental research projects in the Chatham Islands looking at biodiversity and beekeeping strategies. His outdoor recreation interests are gardening, fishing, bee-keeping and tree planting. Mana is of Rongomaiwahine, Ngati Kahungungu, Rangitane and Rongomaiwhenua-Moriori Iwi.

Susan Thorpe, of Owenga, Chatham Islands *1 May 2014 to 30 June 2019*

Susan is a director of a heritage consultancy company. She has research experience in archaeology, cultural heritage, and the environment, and enjoys being involved in ecological restoration projects. Her outdoor recreation interests are water sports, sailing, fishing, tree planting and gardening.

Amanda Seymour of Chatham Islands *1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018*

Mrs Seymour is a Chatham Island born farmer raising her young family on the Chathams. She has been active in many conservation projects, including the covenanting of forest areas on her farm, tree planting on Mangere Island, plant nursery work, and supporting the local school tree planting projects in local reserves.

Judy Kamo of Chatham Islands 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018

Mrs Kamo is of Ngati Mutunga and Ngai Tahu descent, is a member of Hokotehi Moriori Trust, a Maori Warden and 6th generation Pitt Islander. A mother of four, she has a farm with her husband John on the Chatham Islands, and works as a Senior Health Worker for Ha O Te Ora O Wharekauri. She has a strong interest in conservation and regeneration of our Island's ngahere. Whanau, rongoa, farming and gardening are important in her life.

Pauline Mackay of Chatham Islands 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018

Mrs Mackay has lived her whole life on the Chatham Islands, raising her family here and participating in and contributing to a wide range of community activities. She has just finished a 25 year term on the Norman Kirk Memorial Reserve committee. Her understanding of Chatham's whanau, people and heritage and their connection with conservation are important.

Board Member	Meetings attended
Dinee Fleming (Chairperson)	3/5
Mana Cracknell	3/5
Di Gregory-Hunt, Pitt Island	5/5
Susan Thorpe	3/5
Pauline McKay	3/4
Amanda Seymour	4/5
Judy Kamo	4/5



Photo: Board Members at Longbush Sanctuary, Gisborne
Photographer: Sarah Owen

3 THE BOARD'S DISTRICT

The Chatham Islands lie 860 km east of Christchurch, at 44° south in the path of the Roaring Forties and consist of eight islands of appreciable size. The total land area is 97,000 hectares of which main Chatham Island (90,000 ha) and Pitt Island (6,190 ha) are the largest. The Chathams straddle the international dateline: local time is 45 minutes ahead of the rest of New Zealand.

The Chatham Islands are an amazing collection of islands consisting of contrasts and extremes:

beautiful still sunny days with magical blue skies through to raging 45 knot storms that in their own way are awe-inspiring. For much of the year the climate is temperate – temperatures in the low twenties in midsummer but can drop close to 0 degrees in the winter with scattered hail and sleet and occasional snow.

Generally main Chatham Island is low-lying and comprises flat to rolling topography. The highest point on the island is only 299m. There are many swampy valley floors and extensive peatlands. The catchments are generally small and shallow but there are a few incised streams in the south. Here the land is at a higher altitude forming a tableland of deep peat covering basalt with a fertile coastal clay region which ends abruptly at impressive basalt bluffs. In the north there are scattered volcanic peaks and long stretches of sandy beach while the island has a large central lagoon of 20,000 ha and there are many moderate sized lakes.

Both the natural vegetation and fauna are highly modified and are reduced to remnants as a result of human occupation. Low forest once covered most of the islands. Approximately 10 % of the forest cover remains – most in the south of the main island.

Five main forest types are present featuring broad-leaved species and tarahinau (*Dracophyllum arboreum*). Much of the area has converted to bracken and shrubland and to a lesser extent pasture. There are extensive areas of restiad, sedge and heath wetlands.

The Chathams have the highest level of endemism of any New Zealand biogeographic region. Forty-one of the Chatham Islands 465 native plants, 18 of the 73 native birds, 8.5% of New Zealand's threatened freshwater fish. About 20% of the 800 insect species are endemic to the Chathams. One reptile is also endemic to these islands. The New Zealand Geo-Preservation Inventory lists 31 sites of nationally important geological interest. 700 archaeological sites are recorded and many more unrecorded.

The Department of Conservation has an Office at Te One on main Chatham with 12 permanent staff, with one staff member largely based on Pitt Island. Volunteers, staff and researchers are present on Rangatira (South East Island) and Mangere Island for periods during the year, undertaking species monitoring work during the breeding season of endangered bird species, and continuing with the habitat restoration programme.

There is a small amount of protected land (Crown and private covenants) in the Chathams - about 8% of Chatham, 30% of Pitt and three nature reserves - (Mangere (113ha) and South-East (208ha) Islands and Tuku NR (1238ha). A significant number

of important habitats have been protected and a significant amount of land has been protected through the covenanting of private land. A key focus of the Department’s work in the Chathams is threatened flora and fauna programmes. The vast expanse of ocean surrounding these islands is rich in marine life and supports internationally significant populations of sea birds and nationally significant populations of whales, dolphins, seals and sharks.

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board represents a total island population of approximately 600 people (Chatham and Pitt Island) and has particularly close contact with the community. Chatham Islanders have very strong ties to their land and resources, reflected by their livelihoods of fishing, farming, and tourism.

The Board also consults and works with the Imi/Iwi on the Chatham Islands along with the other conservation groups such as Taiko Trust and CHART, as well as the Chatham Islands Council, Chatham Islands Enterprise Trust and the Chatham Islands Visitor Industry group.

4 BOARD MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

Five formal Board Meetings were held on main Chatham during the reporting period.

Date	Meeting venue
September 27 th , 2016	Kaingaroa Club, Kaingaroa
November 12 th , 2016	Taiko Camp, Taiko Town
February 9 th , 2017	The Den, Waitangi
April 11 th , 2017	The Den, Waitangi
June 15 th , 2017	Kopinga Marae

The Board welcomed a number of visitors to Board meetings including; Kerri Moir from ECAN who provided helpful updates around biosecurity and animal and plant pest control work, Mike Bell from the Taiko Trust gave regular updates to the board through written reports and also hosted our meeting and field trip at Taiko Town, Owen Pickles and councillors from Chatham Islands Council who discussed biosecurity on the Islands, Local staff from Doc contributed to meetings and on occasion joined the Board for lunch. Warren Parker, Sarah Owen, Dave Houston. Sylvia joined the Board to receive the Conservation Award and joined afterwards for morning tea. Michelle Cracknell joined us for part of a number of our meetings throughout the year.

The first Board meeting of the year held at Kaingaroa Club with Keri Moir from Ecan in attendance included a great discussion in relation to the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy. This was followed by a field trip to the beach front at Kaingaroa with Amanda Baird (Senior Ranger, Biodiversity) to see the Chatham Island button daisy and an endemic Chatham Islands scurvy grass, both of which are threatened and reduced to very few places remaining on the island. The board also saw the impact of taupato, an invasive weed, on these species. Following this the Board travelled to Ocean Mail Scenic Reserve to see the impact marram grass is having on dune systems and native species and heard about the work the Department is doing to reduce this threat.

All Board members were looking forward to the overnight November meeting and field trip at Taiko Camp. En route to Taiko Town the board visited the MPA quarry and the work they are undertaking on the new wharf build. This helped the Board to further understand the effects the work is having on conservation and the steps that are being taken to mitigate any risks or impacts. Meeting at Taiko Camp was a great chance for the Board to hear and see first-hand from Mike Bell the work that the Taiko Trust have been achieving. A trip to Sweetwater to see the predator fence enabled the Board to see its importance in relation to keeping the Taiko population growing and free from predators. Of the many highlights of this trip, being buzzed by several Taiko flying overhead during a night walk into Sweetwater was unforgettable. Being joined at this meeting by Sarah Owen (Statutory Manager) was beneficial for the Board and gave them valuable knowledge, especially being updated on CMS timelines and procedures.

The February meeting at the Den was the first chance for some Board members to meet Dave Carlton replacing Connie as Operations Manager.

The Board were joined for part of this meeting by Owen Pickles, CEO of the Chatham Islands Council and the three councillors in charge of the Biosecurity portfolio to discuss biosecurity issues effecting the islands and ways these impacts can be managed.

In February the Board were excited to take up the opportunity to attend an East Coast Hawkes Bay Conservation Board meeting in Gisborne accompanied by a field trip to Longbush reserve. Due to our geographical remoteness and isolation this collaboration between the Boards helped members to gain confidence and made us feel empowered as to the scale of projects we can be advocating and encouraging on the Islands.

The Board were excited to welcome NZCA Chair, Warren Parker and Dave Houston (Technical Advisor, Ecology) to their April meeting held at the Den. Warren was attending on behalf of the Boards NZCA liaison member, and gave the Board some great insight into the role of the NZCA and discussed in-depth the potential of the Departments' Predator Free 2050 initiative on the Chatham Islands. Dave presented the Board with the draft Shore Plover Recovery Strategy and gave them some background information on Shore Plover recovery efforts. The following day along with Warren, the Board visited Hapupu and saw the restoration and protection work the Department and Hokotehi Moriori Trust are undertaking to preserve the tree carvings (dendroglyphs) there.

Hosted by Hokotehi Marae, the June meeting provided the Board the opportunity to present the annual Conservation Award to the recipient, Sylvia Eyles which was gratefully received. Dinee spoke of the Boards appreciation for the dedication and commitment Sylvia has shown to conservation on the Islands. Her passion and willingness to share her time and knowledge were commended by the Board. With the upcoming tourist season good discussion was had around Visitor assets and Concessions, in particular ensuring future concessions reflected natural and cultural heritage and reminding current concessionaires of their responsibilities.



Photo: Board at Taiko Camp
Photographer: Jilleen Chandler

5 STATUTORY FUNCTIONS UNDER THE CONSERVATION ACT

6M(1)(c) To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for areas within the jurisdiction of the Board

Conservation Management Strategies (CMS)

The Board were updated on the current timeline for CMS revision however there is no clarity on when the Chatham Islands CMS might be reviewed and the commencement date is still to be confirmed.

As part of the Boards process of monitoring DOC delivery of CMS objectives, the Board reported on five CMS topics this year. They are as below:

1. Treaty Settlement
2. Plant pests and exotic plants
3. Indigenous species
4. Community Liaison and Involvement
5. Concession

For each of these topics the Department prepared a report on progress of CMS objectives for the Board to consider. The board led a response report which provided valuable advice for DOC not just for future management but also to support changes to any new CMS that could strengthen the outcomes of DOC's priority work. In the Boards February the Board requested two CMS topics be reported on in each meeting beginning in the April meeting. The timeline of the report delivery is as below:

CMS Topic	Board member responsible	Meeting location & date
Plant Pests and Exotic Plants	Di Gregory-Hunt	Kaingaroa Club, Kaingaroa September 27 th , 2016
Indigenous Species	Pauline Mackay	Taiko Camp, Taiko Town November 12 th , 2016
Community Liaison and Involvement	Judy Kamo	The Den, Waitangi February 9 th , 2017
Concessions	Amanda Seymour	The Den, Waitangi April 11 th , 2017
Visitor Services	Judy Kamo	Kopinga Marae June 15 th , 2017 (deferred from April meeting)
Customary Use	Mana Cracknell / Susan Thorpe	Kopinga Marae June 15 th , 2017

6M(1) (d) (ii) To advise the Department on any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board

1. The Conservation Streamlining Bill was discussed and the Board advocated their support to streamlining of any processes the department has, further advocating the complexity of DOC's statutory and planning processes.
2. During the year the CICB considered and advised the Department on the following:
 - a) A number of research permit applications for completing various forms of research across the Chatham Islands, including Pitt and the outer islands Rangatira and Mangere
 - b) The vesting of Taia Historic Reserve in Moriori, a process in the making for some 15 years
 - c) The outcome and future use of the White House (historic commissioner's cottage) on Tiki Tiki Hill.
 - d) The Waitangi Wharf upgrade, future management and feedback to the community on conservation and environmental risks of the upgrade
 - e) The management and strategic work at J M Barker National Historic Reserve (Hapupu) relating to the Rakau Momori and its Advisory Board.
 - f) Management and research priorities for species on Rangatira and Mangere Islands, what is DOC achieving in its work aside from several lengthy reports.

6 LIAISON

6.1 Department

The Board saw a change of support throughout the year as Dave Carlton replaced Connie Norgate as Operations Manager for the Chatham Islands in January. All meetings were attended by either Connie or Dave. Apologies were received from Reg Kemper (Director Operations, Lower North Island) who was unable to attend any meetings throughout the 2016/2017 year. The Board did have a chance to engage with Reg on their visit to the ECHBCB meeting in Gisborne. Sarah Owen (Statutory Manager) attended our November meeting.

Local DOC staff joined the board for parts of their meeting, while the board were kept informed of staff changes through the Departmental report presented at every meeting. Local DOC staff feel very connected to the Board and recognise the importance of their role in the conservation community, while the Board enjoy the engagement of hearing from team members on the ground and with differing areas of expertise.

6.2 Community

Taiko Trust

The Taiko Trust continues to build on their conservation achievements, with a fourth successful season of albatross chick transfer and rearing at Point Gap. This year also saw 31 pairs of Taiko breed, the best on record.

The Board were pleased with the progress of the Taiko Trust over the year and highly commended their advocacy with the public through well attended public open days, advocacy at the 2017 Chatham Islands festival and social media channels.

Chatham Heritage and Restoration Trust (CHART)

CHART continues to lead conservation projects in the community, and in particular the successful completion of their longstanding project of fencing at Blind Jims. Restoration planting is still underway.

Chatham Islands' Conservation Award

This award, started in 2004, was this year awarded by the Board to Sylvia Eyles in recognition of their appreciation of her dedication and commitment to Conservation on the islands. Her passion and willingness to share her time and knowledge were commended by the Board

Environment Canterbury

The Board continues to encourage an active working relationship with Environment Canterbury (ECAN) and attendance is invited at meetings during the year to update the range of biosecurity, weed and animal pest control work being undertaken by ECAN on Chatham and Pitt Islands.

DOC Community Fund

The Board advocated the allocation of conservation funding through the DOC Community Fund and were pleased to see a good range of applications received from the Chatham Islands in the regional pool.

The successful projects were;

- Ohinemama Farm – Surveying boundary of potential covenant
- Taiko Trust – Funding for growing trees for coastal revegetation
- Tuku Family Trust – Pest control in covenants and on farm
- Cathy Thomas – To purchase trees for Taupeka

6.3 Pitt Island

Having a Pitt Island based Board member was deemed valuable as Di Gregory-Hunt has continued to be a strong advocate for all Pitt Island conservation issues on the board, working with the community to ensure opportunity for all of community to provide feedback on conservation outcomes and priorities.

The Pitt Island Reserves and Conservation Purposes Charitable Trust (PIRCPT) was re-established to support the process for renewal of the Glory and Waihere licenses. The PIRCPT made recommendations on the future management and renewal of the leasehold blocks on Pitt Island on expiry of the current license agreements in May 2016.

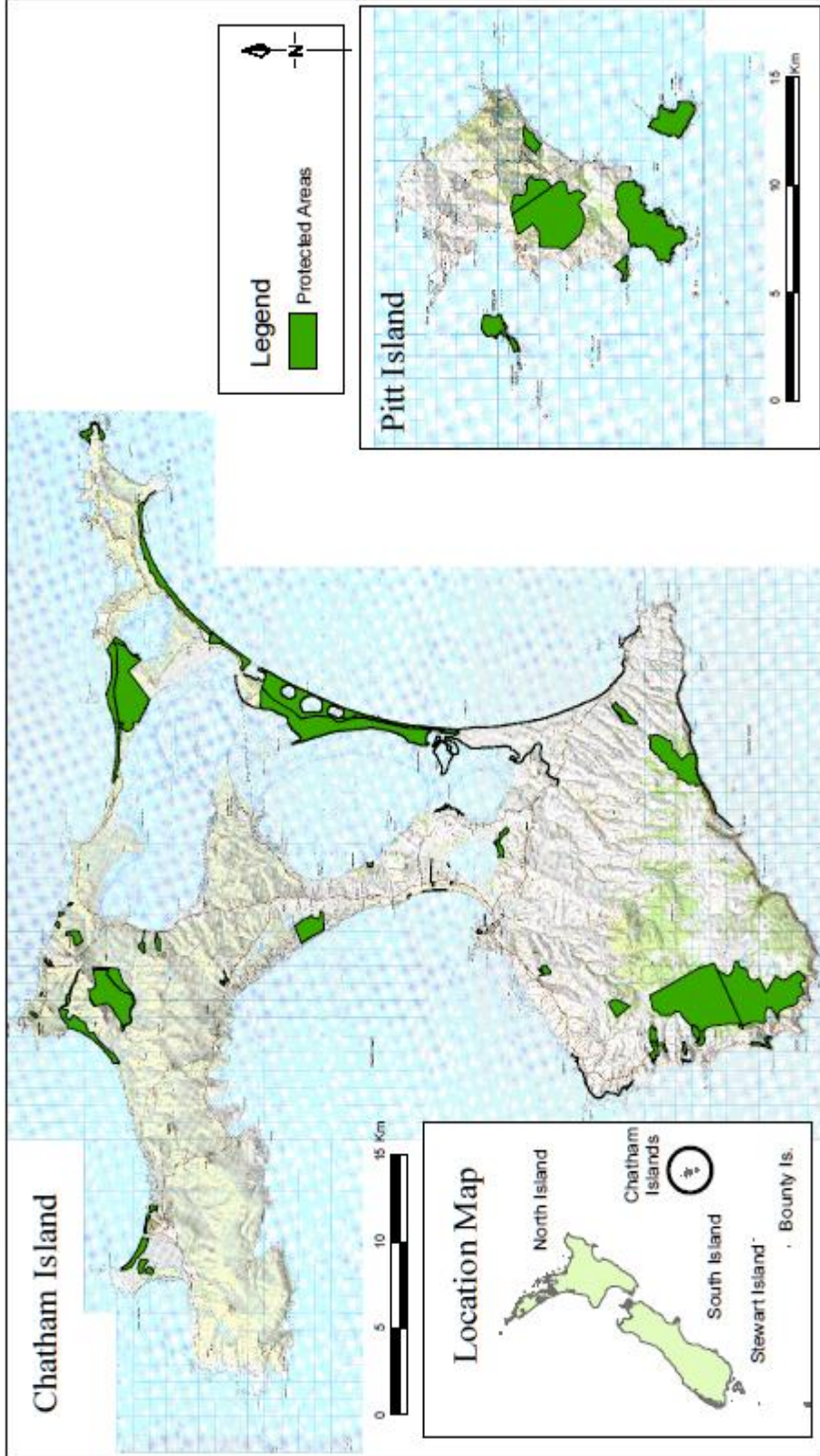
The Department has some work to do in relation to strategic planning and review of its work and priorities with the Pitt Island community over the next year.

7 FINANCIAL YEAR 2016/2017

The Board annual budget of \$22,000 saw the Board able to join the East Coast Hawkes Bay Conservation Board for a meeting in Gisborne. Their annual meeting on Pitt Island and visits to the offshore Nature Reserves were deferred to allow for this so will be undertaken in the next financial year.

Chatham and Pitt Islands

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Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai