



*Te Rūnanga Whakauka o Kahurangi ki Kaikōura*

NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION BOARD



*Herea kia Kōtahi - Working Together*

Annual Report

2007/2008

*Cover: Sand dunes at Onetahua/ Farewell Spit Nature Reserve (Ramsar site)*  
*Photo © Véronique Cornille 2000*  
*Cover design by Véronique Cornille*

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**Annual Report 2007/2008**  
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# INTRODUCTION

The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board is one of fourteen appointed by the Minister of Conservation under section 6(P) of the Conservation Act 1987. Board functions are outlined in section 6(M) and the powers, which enable the Board to carry out those functions, are under 6(N) of the Act.

The Conservation Act specifies that the Board's role is to:

- recommend the approval of conservation management strategies;
- approve conservation management plans;
- advise on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice;
- advise on proposed changes to the status of land areas of national and international significance;
- advise on proposals for new walkways;
- liaise with Fish and Game Councils on conservation matters; and
- carry out other powers delegated to them by the Conservation Minister, the Conservation Act or any other Act.

The Board has a number of functions under section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980. These functions include recommending the review or amendment of national park management plans and recommending approval of such plans by the New Zealand Conservation Authority.

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires conservation boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority with an annual report as soon as practicable after the 30th June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board submits this, its tenth annual report.

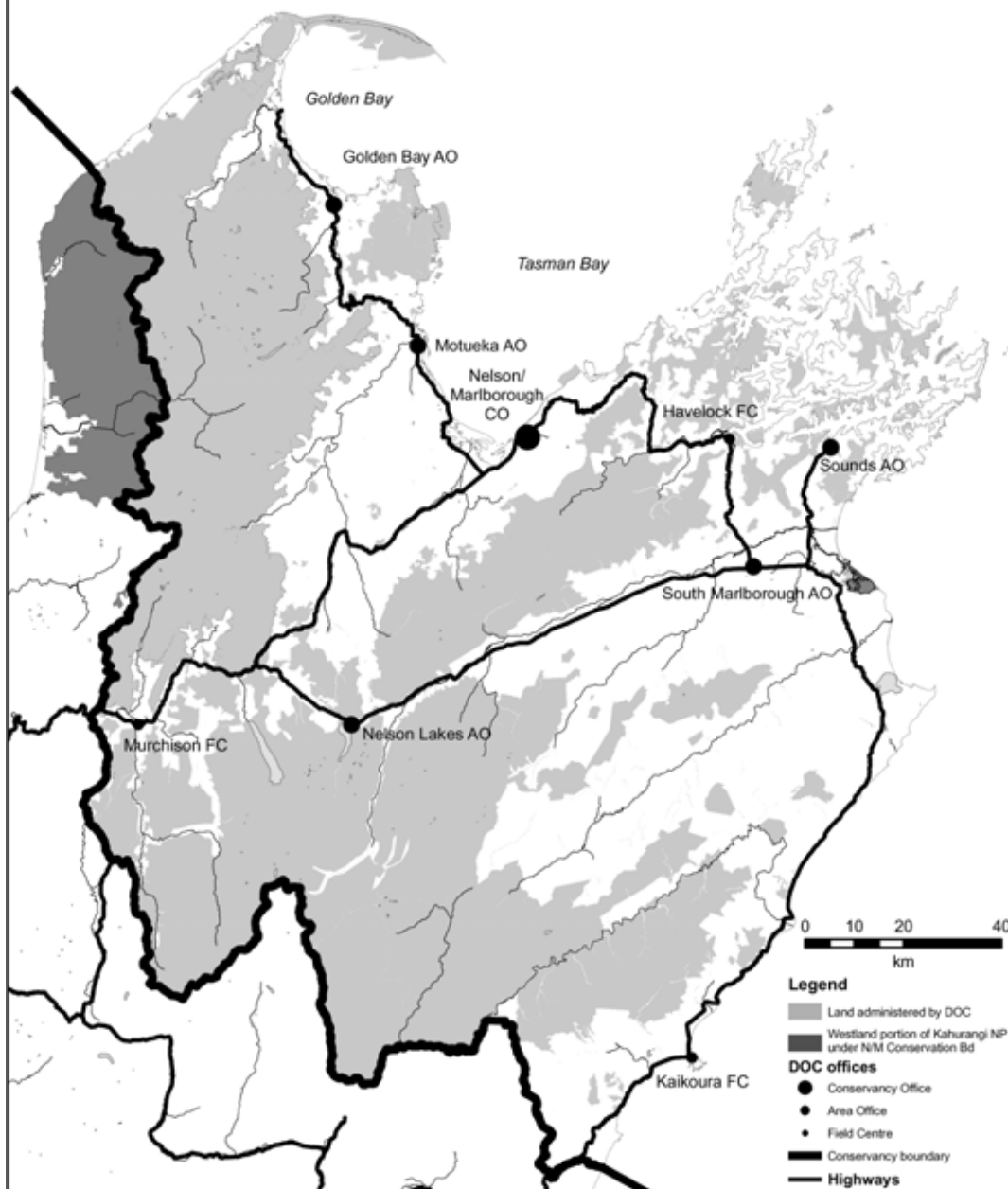
## NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVANCY

The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy, with oversight of the whole of Kahurangi National Park. Fifty percent of the Nelson Marlborough region is managed by the Department of Conservation on behalf of the public. This area is very diverse. Its special characteristics include:

- Three National Parks (ranging from second largest to smallest and most intensively used in the country)
- Mt Richmond Forest Park
- Molesworth Recreation Reserve
- The nature reserve and Ramsar wetland at Farewell Spit

- A new Conservation Park, Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia, in the Kaikoura ranges
- Four Marine Reserves
- Other sites with special characteristics including Te Waikoropupu Springs and Marlborough Sounds island sanctuaries
- Two Great Walks - Abel Tasman and Heaphy Track
- The largest marine mammal watching industry in the country (Kaikoura)
- The most active marine farming industry
- Two of New Zealand's sites of endemism including 380 threatened plant species
- Iconic animal species which have active management programmes (e.g. tuatara, endemic frogs, Powelliphanta, great spotted kiwi, Hutton's shearwater, weka, kaka, black fronted tern and blue duck)
- Actively managed biodiversity sites – Rotoiti, Mainland Island, Kahurangi National Park, an Operation Arc site and 33 islands with mammalian pests absent undergoing restoration programmes
- A large number of biosecurity risks under active management by delegation from Biosecurity NZ (e.g. Didymo, koi carp)
- Animal pests -22 possum control sites (11% of national total by area), 23 goat control sites (31% of national area) and the major wasp control operation in the country at Nelson Lakes
- Historic places– 750 recorded historic places on conservation land (50/50 Maori and European)
- One of the largest numbers of recreational facilities and structures in the country - 159 huts, 1975km of track, 454km of road, 1120 structures, 80 campsites, 322 toilets, 184 amenity areas and 2691 signs
- Very active community involvement with the public, iwi, schools, recreational users and other groups which poses challenges but has also produced significant benefits and successful outcomes at significant sites e.g. Ship Cove, Kaikoura Walkway, Te Korowai marine protection (in progress).

# Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board administration area



# HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY EVENTS FOR THE YEAR

## Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park

The establishment of a new conservation park was a major highlight for the year. The Board received a presentation on the proposed conservation park at its November 2007 meeting and fully supported the concept. Members were delighted to attend the opening and dawn blessing of Ka Whata Tu O Rakihouia on 7 June 2008 and enjoyed a celebratory breakfast at Takahanga Marae hosted by the local runanga.

The Park is 88,065 hectares in area and includes some of some of the highest mountains in New Zealand outside the Southern Alps. It includes 23,584 hectares of land that became public conservation land last year as a result of tenure review. It links with 42 conservation areas to form this new conservation park.

Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park contains ecologically important areas with remarkable diversity in native wildlife and plants and provides a stunning setting for many recreational activities. These include tramping, rafting, climbing, hunting, fishing, horse trekking, and mountain biking. Old farm buildings in the park are a reminder of the high country farming history of the area. Farming will continue on part of the new conservation park under a license allowing Muzzle Station to graze cattle and sheep over 8283 hectares.

The Park is also host to a diverse range of native wildlife, especially insects and lizards. Three species of giant weta occur in the park as well as New Zealand's only alpine lizard, the black-eyed gecko. Kea and falcon, both nationally endangered species, live in its mountains and its forested slopes and shrublands support titipounamu/rifleman, korimako/bellbird, tui and kereru.

The name of the new conservation park, Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia (the Standing Stores of Rakihouia), was recommended by Te Runanga o Kaikoura, being the Maori name for the Seaward Kaikoura Range. Hutton's shearwaters which breed in the Seaward Kaikouras were an important food source for Maori in past times.

Gina Solomon acted as an observer for the Board at the hearing into submissions on whether the park should be created and its name in April 2008. Gina and Maurice Manawatu provided valuable insights into local iwi's use and knowledge of the proposed name.



# Farewell to Ropata

This year Ropata Taylor resigned after eight years' service on the Board with his last meeting as chair at his home marae of Te Awhina. Kerry Marshall, chair of the New Zealand Conservation Authority, spoke at this meeting acknowledging Ropata's achievements as chair and noting that the Nelson/Marlborough Board was "...well-focused, well-led and output driven." He thanked Ropata for his leadership in bringing Maori values and perspectives into the conservation arena and said that he looked forward to Ropata continuing to play a valuable role in the Nelson area.

Board members singled out Ropata's skills in chairing and advocating for the Board with eloquence and authority. Neil Clifton, Nelson/Marlborough Conservator spoke on behalf of the Department saying how much he had valued working with Ropata as chair. He acknowledged that Ropata had continued the path forged by Darcia Solomon and Kath Hemi in developing an effective relationship between the Board and iwi. His inclusive approach with members of the Board and departmental staff was valued.

In reply, Ropata said that he had learned a great deal through the diversity of people and issues involved with the board. Highlights of his time as chair included the Abel Tasman National Park management plan process, the creation of Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park, the Horoirangi Marine Reserve, Te Waikoropupu Springs draft Management plan and the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan as well as the developments at South Bay Kaikoura, and Ship Cove. Personal highlights included the Maori board members' national hui. Ropata said that his hope was that he had added value by making a Maori world view mainstream through articulating how Maori see things. He urged the Department to have even more courage in championing conservation and he acknowledged departmental staff, present and past, for their assistance.

Ropata was presented with a painting by Robin Slow with a plaque to commemorate his service to the Board.



**Ropata supervising tree planting at Kaikoura Primary School in November 2007**

*(Photo: Véronique Cornille)*

## Farewell to Kerry Marshall

Kerry Marshall's retirement as Chair of the New Zealand Conservation Authority after twelve years' service was marked with a farewell function at Cable Bay. Board chair Ropata Taylor welcomed community and Authority members, local iwi and DOC staff to the event which included tree planting and the unveiling of a new bench on the Cable Bay Walkway on the Stuarts' farm. Kerry, as a Nelson resident, has been the person responsible for liaison between the Board and the Authority. In his new role as Mayor of Nelson he visited the Board at its April 2008 meeting and discussed ways that the Nelson City Council and the Nelson/Marlborough Board could work together constructively.



**Kerry Marshall with Barbara and Ian Stuart of Cable Bay at the function to mark his retirement from the Conservation Authority.** (Barbara Stuart is the regional co-ordinator of the New Zealand Landcare Trust and the Stuarts are active conservationists and farmers).  
*(Photo: Nelson Mail)*

## Maori members' hui

A hui was held in August 2007 for Maori members of the Board. Issues considered were Section 4 of the Conservation Act, the Abel Tasman National Park draft plan and issues associated with that, marine protected areas policy and how Maori views could best be reflected in conservation work in future. Members were keen to see a forum established for regular meetings with the nine iwi in the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy. Ropata Taylor, Carl Elkington, Gina Solomon and Glenice Paine attended the hui.

Maori members of the Board (as well as non-Maori) have particularly appreciated the contribution and support provided to the Board by Barney Thomas, Pou Kura Taiao for the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy.

# Progress with plans

## Te Waikoropupu Springs Management Plan

The Board had been disappointed with the progress on the management plan for Te Waikoropupu Springs Scenic Reserve following staff shortages within the Department due to illness and departures. However, additional resources were applied towards the end of the year. The draft was developed with close involvement of Manawhenua ki Mohua for whom the Springs are a highly valued wahi tapu site. Two Board members, Tracey Osborne and Philip Simpson, attended the final meeting on 4 June 2008 to resolve outstanding issues and were impressed by the nature of the relationship between the Department and Manawhenua ki Mohua and their ability to solve difficult issues together. On 17 June 2008 the final draft plan was formally presented to Manawhenua ki Mohua with Board members Philip Simpson and Ropata Taylor present. The draft then came to the Board at its June 2008 meeting of the Board prior to public notification.

## Abel Tasman National Park Management Plan

Significant progress was made this year with the Board approving the revised plan for sending to the New Zealand Conservation Authority at the August 2007 meeting. Board members, Bill Gilbertson and Glenice Paine, with John Morgan representing local iwi, presented the draft plan to the NZCA in October 2007. There was a meeting held in December 2007 in Nelson for the NZCA sub-committee and the Board representatives and Departmental staff to discuss key issues such as the capacity of the park and how limits had been decided upon. The Authority's written comments were received in April 2008 and the Board sub-committee incorporated some changes in the draft as a result.

The Board appreciated the continuing commitment of Bill Gilbertson as a co-opted member of the sub-committee to the onerous and time-consuming work of seeing the plan through to completion.

The preparation of the plan and subsequent discussions with the NZCA sub-committee raised some important issues such as how to reach the appropriate balance between viable use and conservation, and some divergence in views was apparent. There were also issues about the process through which draft plans are dealt with and the scope for changes by the Authority. These matters will be discussed further with the intention of improving the process for all involved.

## Partial review of Kahurangi National Park Management Plan

The intention to review (in part) the Kahurangi National Park management plan was publicly notified in July 2007. The partial review focuses on a number of issues including: mountain-biking; aircraft access and privately owned accommodation.

## Implementation of Conservation Management Strategy and Conservation Management Plans

A comprehensive report on the implementation of the existing CMS was received at the August 2007 meeting. Board members commented that the report provided a good illustration of the Conservancy's work but that it could not be read as a report on the total state of conservation in the region as it did not address what remained to be done. The Board requested that more information be added to several sections of the report and this was done

The Board did not receive any implementation reports on Conservation Management Plans this year. Annual implementation reports were expected for the Kahurangi and Nelson Lakes National Park Plans and had been requested for the Farewell Spit Management Plan. The Board's responsibility for regularly monitoring progress and giving advice on the implementation of Conservation Management Plans is an area the Board has targeted for improvement and is working with the Department to achieve this.

## Additions to National Parks

The Board was pleased to note that additions to Abel Tasman, Kahurangi and Nelson Lakes National Parks were gazetted during the year. Over 900 hectares was added to the Abel Tasman National Park in several parcels, the most significant of which is an area of 790 hectares known as the Hadfields Clearing, overlooking Awaroa Inlet. The area was previously in private ownership and was surrounded by the park.

An area of 38 hectares has been included in the Honeycomb Hill Caves Specially Protected Area in Kahurangi National Park. This protects a significant cave system.

The land added to Nelson Lakes National Park consists of small areas at St Arnaud and the nearby Lake Rotoiti that are indistinguishable from the surrounding park land.

## **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board has a membership of twelve, appointed by the Minister for Conservation. Two of these are on the nomination of Ngai Tahu.

Philip Simpson and Tracey Osborne were re-appointed to a second term on the board and two members retired from the Board this year. Glenice Paine retired after six years on the Board. Glenice was convenor of the marine conservation sub-committee, as well as a member of the management planning committee and Queen Charlotte Track sub-committee. She was actively involved in the Long Island-Kokomohua marine reserve committee and represented the Board on Soundfish. Her broad knowledge of resource management issues and her ability to bring diverse views together and look for practical workable solutions as well as her extensive work for the Board were very much appreciated and have been missed. Bill Gilbertson also left the Board after six years with this Board (following six years on the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board).

His extensive knowledge, his hard work on management planning and concessions and expertise on outdoor recreation was valued by the Board and he continues to serve as a co-opted member until the Abel Tasman National Park Management Plan is finalised.

Two new members, Ross Hall of Dovedale and Lynda Neame of Blenheim joined the Board with their first meeting being November 2007.

## Members' profiles



**Ropata Taylor** has been a Board member since 2000 and Chair since 2004. His iwi affiliations are Ngati Rarua, Te Atiawa, Ngati Tama and Ngati Kuia. He lives in Motueka and is General Manager of the Whakatu Incorporation.



**Judy Hellstrom** is an active advocate for conservation in the Marlborough Sounds, both land and marine-based, and has considerable personal experience in plant pest eradication and bush restoration. She lives in outer Queen Charlotte Sound. She has served as Deputy Chair this year and will succeed Ropata as Chair.



**Ian Mitchell** is a viticulturalist from Marlborough's Wairau Plain with extensive experience in public land administration and management. Ian joined the Board in 2005. Ian also serves on the Molesworth Steering Committee.



**Maurice Manawatu** was first appointed on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu in 1998 and has continued to serve ever since. He is affiliated to Ngati Kuri and Ngai Tahu. He owns and operates a Maori tourism venture in Kaikoura and chairs the coastal guardians group Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura.



**Gina Solomon** was appointed in 2006 on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu. She is affiliated to Ngai Tahu, Kurahaupo, Ngati Koata, Te Atiawa, and Ngati Toa. She follows in the tradition of her mother, Darcia Solomon, a Board member for many years and her late father John, a passionate conservationist.



**Dr Tracey Osborne** is a marine biologist living in Onekaka, Golden Bay who first joined the Board in 2004. She is convenor of the marine committee of the Board providing expertise in marine science and use of the marine environment. She also represents the Board on the Tasman Environmental Trust.



**Dr Philip Simpson** is an ecological consultant, wine grower, author and indefatigable tree planter. He has twice won the Environment section of the Montana Book Awards. His research interests include tree lilies, ethnobotany, New Zealand flora and natural history, ecological processes and conservation philosophy.



**Ross Hall** is from Dovedale. He has wide experience in the horticultural field, a background in outdoor recreation and interests in ecology and ornithology. He joined the Board in October 2007 with his first meeting being in November 2007



**Lynda Neame** lives in Blenheim. She is experienced in air quality and water quality issues, with an interest in waste treatment systems and the impact of discharges on receiving environments. She is involved with habitat maintenance and restoration projects, particularly Te Whanau Hou project at Grovetown Lagoon. Lynda is also involved with iwi and Forest & Bird.



**Véronique Cornille** has a cattle and sheep farming background and has had a successful sales and marketing career. She is now a full time photographer with a focus on cultural heritage. She has lived and worked closely with iwi all her life, has a special interest in historic sites, and has been a volunteer on the Kakapo Project on Whenua Hou/Codfish Island.

**Carl Elkington** is a resource management and quota management consultant based in Picton. Carl has extensive knowledge of the fishing industry and is affiliated with Ngati Koata, Taranaki and Te Tau Ihu. He joined the Board in 2003 following in the footsteps of his father, Jim.

**David Melville** is an ecologist specialising in ornithology, with particular experience in wetland management. He joined the Board in 2003 after managing the World Wildlife Fund in Hong Kong.

## MEETINGS

Five Board meetings were held during the year:

- 30 August 2007 at Wairau Pa, Blenheim
- 30 November-1 December 2007 at Takahanga Marae, Kaikoura (with a field trip to the South Bay Walkway to see the Hutton's shearwater project and the completed walkway.)
- 21 February 2008 in Nelson

- 10-11 April 2008 at Onetahua marae, Pohara (with a field trip up the Cobb Valley, Upper Takaka and around Pohara to look at restoration, Didymo, hut relocation proposals, a privately maintained alpine garden and the Grove Scenic Reserve.)
- 19 June 2008 at Te Awhina Marae in Motueka.

Attendance at Board meetings was high with three meetings having 100% turn-out of members and the remaining two having 9 and 10 members attending. In addition to formal Board meetings, Board members attended various sub-committee meetings throughout the year and other meetings and events in their role as Board members. Other meetings included:

- Maori Board Members Hui (Ropata Taylor, Gina Solomon, Carl Elkington, Glenice Paine)
- Waimea West Water Allocation meetings (David Melville)
- Tasman Environmental Trust meetings (Tracey Osborne)
- Tai Poutini West Coast Conservation Board meeting (Véronique Cornille)
- Chatham Islands Conservation Board meeting (Véronique Cornille)
- Function to farewell Kerry Marshall as Chair of the Conservation Authority (Ropata Taylor, Tracey Osborne, Véronique Cornille)
- Opening and dawn blessing of Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park on 7 June (Ian Mitchell, Judy Hellstrom, Maurice Manawatu, Gina Solomon, David Melville, Véronique Cornille, Lynda Neame)
- Molesworth Steering Committee meetings (Ian Mitchell)
- Hui in Motueka to discuss iwi issues in Abel Tasman National Park draft plan (Bill Gilbertson, Gina Solomon, David Melville and Véronique Cornille)
- Opening of Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust (Ropata Taylor and Véronique Cornille)
- Long Island Marine Reserve Advisory Committee (Lynda Neame attended 4 meetings.)
- Hearing into whether a Conservation Park should be established at Kaikoura (Gina Solomon).

## Report by Véronique Cornille on Te Pukenga Atawhai held at Onuku Marae April 2008

Gina and I were privileged to join staff from our own conservancy (including Kay Switzer, our Board Support Officer) together with an eclectic mix of DOC people from Canterbury and West Coast for Te Pukenga Atawhai course at the beautiful Onuku Marae on the shores of Akaroa Harbour.

The five-day course was facilitated by DOC's Pou Kura Taiao: Barney Thomas – Nelson, Dave Para – Gisborne, Whetu Tipiwai – Napier, Kara Edwards – West Coast, David Higgins – Canterbury and Matapoura Ellison – Otago, each leading groups which regularly merged to share outcomes and generate further discussion.

This process was particularly valuable for its diversity, the leaders coming from different iwi and different parts of the country. In addition we were fortunate to have the input of local kaumatua and kuia as well as Evaan Aramakutu from DOC Head Office who led an extremely interesting session on his Treaty of Waitangi research. The

environment was open, holistic and non-judgmental with the 40 participants being encouraged to ask questions.

The food was excellent, plenty of it, a great variety catering for all tastes prepared by a dedicated and efficient team from Onuku Marae. The clearing and washing up was done by each group, in turn. Every day our group had a set housekeeping task. We lived as part of Onuku Marae, all sleeping on mattresses in the whare.

There were people at the Pukenga who had never been on a marae and who had never been helped to pronounce Maori. And, there were others who had grown up as part of a marae. Regardless, we all learned and grew from each other and our leaders. For some it was the power of becoming familiar with Maori protocol, of never feeling uncomfortable again at the thought of going onto a marae or anything involving Maori culture. For others it was the value of a mihi and having their own, appreciating its importance no matter how brief or how long.

An unexpected outcome was interaction and networking with a large cross-section of departmental staff from Westport to Haast, Mt Cook to Kaikoura and Golden Bay to Nelson. We learned about their jobs and site-specific realities, and also gained a better overview of the Department. John Nankervis of NZCA recently told me that on his Pukenga he was surprised that most staff hadn't heard of NZCA. Likewise, I found most didn't know what a Conservation Board was.

Do I recommend it? Yes, absolutely. No course could teach what Pukenga gifts in five days.



**Doing the dishes at Onuku Marae.** From left Ysabella Gray, Barney Thomas, Kay Switzer, Gina Solomon and Ren Leppens (Waimakariri office, DOC).

*(Photo: Véronique Cornille)*



# BOARD COMMITTEES

Membership of Board committees was reviewed in 2008 as new members joined the board. Convenors and committee members have identified highlights and key issues from the year's work.

## Marine

This purpose of this committee is to provide a link between the Board's wider communities of interest, the Board and the Department in relation to issues associated with marine conservation. At a policy level, the committee provides advice to the Board and the department in relation to management and relationship issues associated with conservation and use of the marine environment.

**Members:** Tracey Osborne (convenor), Maurice Manawatu, Carl Elkington, Gina Solomon, Lynda Neame

Sub-committees of the Marine committee are: **Long Island-Kokomohua marine reserve** and **Horoirangi marine reserve**.

The marine reserve sub-committees were set up by the Board to provide for the involvement of key groups associated with each marine reserve. Lynda Neame represents the Board on the Long Island-Kokomohua sub-committee and Tracey is the Board's representative on the Horoirangi sub-committee.

## Highlights and key areas of work

Marine conservation continued to be one of the Board's main priorities for the 2007-08 year. A plan of how the Board could effectively contribute to progress in marine conservation in the top of the South was prepared by the committee and discussed with the Board at the August 2007 meeting. Many of the general ideas on Board effectiveness developed in this plan were carried over into a strategic plan for the Board as a whole.

The committee provided a summary of marine conservation issues in the Nelson/Marlborough area and CMS to the rest of the Board and received a briefing paper from the Department explaining the Department's allocation of resources to marine conservation issues. The committee noted that about 4% of the Conservancy's coastline had some level of protection of marine habitats, well short of the 2010 target of 10%. It also noted that only five out of the fifteen habitat categories identified in the CMS were represented in these protected areas. The committee also expressed concern for the state of the marine ecosystem in Tasman Bay where scallops have not been abundant for the past seven years. The Board supports the Department's emphasis on awareness and compliance in marine reserves, protecting the region's marine mammals and supporting Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura (coastal marine guardians) at Kaikoura. However, Board members still feel concern for the state of marine species and habitats in their region and question whether marine conservation receives enough attention from the various agencies with overlapping constituencies.

The committee reported on the Hector's Dolphin Threat Management Plan and, as a result, the Board raised issues with the Department on the need for further research and information campaigns to raise awareness among the public and the fishing community about the seriousness of the threat to Hector's and Maui dolphins.

The committee provided a summary of the Marine Protected Area classification and protection standard to the rest of the Board and has drafted an advice paper to the Department on the implementation of the MPA policy in the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy. This is not yet finalised. The Board eagerly awaits the time when MPA planning will commence in the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy.

The Board was briefed on the progress of Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura at its November 2007 meeting in Kaikoura. Three Board members attended the launch of the Kaikoura Coastal Marine Uses and Values Characterisation Report at Takahanga Marae attended by the Minister of Fisheries and many from the local community.

The committee is monitoring the progress of Soundfish which is a local group concerned with the quality of recreational fishing and the marine environment in the Marlborough Sounds. This group arose out of a hui organised by the Board some years ago and although it has taken more of a fishing focus than originally intended, the group have shown an awareness of the need for protecting marine habitats. The Board was disappointed that poor management of the blue cod resource in the Sounds in the past has led to the need for a widespread ban on the taking of this species for the next four years.

The Board at its June 2008 meeting heard about a long-term project for the restoration of the Nelson Bays marine ecosystem sponsored by the Tasman Environmental Trust and gave this project its support.

The committee drafted a submission on the proposed New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement giving particular emphasis to the need for eco-system-based management of marine and coastal habitats and ecosystems. The Board is particularly supportive of the 100-year planning horizon for coastal management in the face of climate change and the provision for local authorities to manage vehicles on beaches.

Board members were briefed by the Department at the June 2008 meeting on a proposal for a new marine mammal sanctuary at Cloudy and Clifford Bays. There is some concern amongst Board members about the process and the evidence base for this proposal and this issue will be followed up by the committee.

*Tracey Osborne (Convenor)*

## Management planning

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Department in relation to strategic direction and planning for the management of conservation land, in particular national parks. By agreement with members, smaller committees are constituted from the overall management planning committee to work on individual management plans, which includes working with department staff on the preparation of draft plans.

**Members:** Judy Hellstrom (convenor), Philip Simpson, David Melville, Ropata Taylor, Tracey Osborne, Véronique Cornille and Ross Hall

Sub-committees include:

**Abel Tasman National Park management plan** Members: Philip Simpson, Judy Hellstrom, David Melville and Bill Gilbertson (co-opted member)

**Kahurangi National Park management plan partial review** Members: Tracey Osborne, Judy Hellstrom, Ross Hall and Philip Simpson

**Te Waikoropupu Springs management plan** Members: Philip Simpson, Ropata Taylor, and Tracey Osborne

## **Highlights and key areas of work**

During the last year, the Management Planning sub-committees have been active. The Abel Tasman sub-committee met several times to reach agreement on the plan, which was recommended to the NZCA for approval in October 2007. Another particular highlight for the Board this year has been the production of the draft management plan for Te Waikoropupu Springs. The Board is looking forward to the completion of the partial review of the Kahurangi National Park management plan.

An upcoming focus for the Conservation Board is preparing for the review of the Conservation Management Strategy for the Conservancy. The Board looks forward to working with the department on this key planning document. Overall, there is an effective and collegial working relationship between the Board members and the Conservancy office with respect to management planning.

*Judy Hellstrom (Convenor)*

## **Marlborough**

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Conservancy on issues associated with conservation in Marlborough. Marlborough has a high concentration of endemic flora and fauna and to date much of the conservation effort there has been focused on private land. Board representatives provide an important link to local communities, particularly landowners and local decision-makers.

**Members:** Ian Mitchell (convenor), Judy Hellstrom, Maurice Manawatu, Philip Simpson, Véronique Cornille, Gina Solomon, and Lynda Neame

Sub-committees include:

**South Marlborough** Members: Ian Mitchell, Maurice Manawatu, Gina Solomon, Philip Simpson, Lynda Neame, Véronique Cornille

**Queen Charlotte Track** Members: Judy Hellstrom, Ian Mitchell and Lynda Neame

## Key issues and highlights for the year

**Queen Charlotte Track:** The Board continues to take an active interest in management issues associated with the Queen Charlotte track and surrounding reserves. The Board supports in principle a user-pays approach which would include access to private land and the use of associated jetties. It is encouraged by the work the Department and Marlborough District Council is doing with the Sustainability Working Group (which includes representatives of Destination Marlborough, the Marlborough Development Board, Chamber of Commerce and operators and landowners) to find a resolution to some of the on-going management issues associated with the track. The Board is also encouraged by the way the Marlborough District Council, the Department and Outward Bound worked together to achieve the building of a new wharf at Anakiwa, which provides important access to the Queen Charlotte Track.

Other related issues in the Marlborough Sounds include wilding pine removal from private land adjacent to Queen Charlotte Sound and pest control. The Board particularly supports community initiatives in the Sounds to remove wilding pines. The Board is also pleased to note the conservation milestone of declaring Blumine Island 'pest free' after all its mice, rats and stoats were wiped out by the Department. Blumine Island is the last of the smaller island reserves to become a safe haven for native wildlife since pest eradication began in the 1960s. The dedication of those involved over the years is greatly appreciated by the Board.

### South Marlborough

**Hutton's Shearwater:** Board members had the opportunity to visit the Hutton's Shearwater colony being established on the Kaikoura Peninsula to help secure the long term survival of this nationally endangered species. This year the translocation component of the project has been completed. Future work will concentrate on reducing predator numbers at the mountain site and at the Peninsula as well as monitoring work. The Department, Te Runanga o Kaikoura, Ngai Tahu and Whale Watch Kaikoura are to be congratulated on this very significant conservation initiative.

**Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura:** The Board was involved in initiating and continues to support the ongoing work of Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura (Kaikoura Coastal Guardians) at Kaikoura and acknowledges the role of Board member Maurice Manawatu as chairperson of this group over the last year. The Board considers that the strength of having a community based group considering local effects on the marine area is being demonstrated through the work of Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura. A key outcome from discussing the Hector's dolphin management plan was reaching agreement that the survival of Hector's dolphins was very important. Also of particular note is the special dispensation given to Kaikoura by the Ministry of Fisheries to consider the boundaries of the protection zone .

The South Marlborough sub-committee is also pleased to note that recreational facilities on the Clarence Reserve (now part of Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park) have received a major upgrade. The Board also supports the continued upgrade of the Kaikoura Peninsular Walkway, which is continuing to receive very favourable feedback. The upgraded track surface will provide safer walking access and the Board supports the effort to make this iconic place more accessible to a wider range of people.

*Ian Mitchell (Convenor)*

# Concessions

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Department on policy matters associated with concession management and also to advise on specific concession applications where appropriate. The Concessions committee also covers responsibility for walkways.

**Members:** David Melville (convenor), Carl Elkington, Judy Hellstrom, Gina Solomon and Ross Hall

## Highlights and key areas of work

This year the Board continued to provide advice to the Department on a range of concessions for recreational and commercial activities. The Board supports the Department's move towards more proactive management of concessions, particularly in identified 'hotspots'. Significant projects that have occupied the Concession committee's time this year include an application to put a hydro-electricity scheme at Lake Matiri and the concessions regime for guided activity in Abel Tasman National Park.

The committee, working with the Department, has developed an agreed approach to considering applications for sporting events on conservation land, including national parks. These guidelines are currently being finalised.

*David Melville (Convenor)*

## Liaison with other groups

All Board members have responsibility for liaising with other groups, when opportunities arise. Specific responsibilities are:

**West Coast Liaison:** Véronique Cornille with back-up from Tracey Osborne. During the year Véronique Cornille attended a meeting of the West Coast Tai Poutini Board.

**Fish and Game Liaison:** Ian Mitchell and David Melville

Agenda and minutes were exchanged regularly throughout the year and the Board made a submission on the Nelson-Marlborough Sports Fish and Game Management Plan. The Board also commented to the Minister on the review of the Wildlife Schedule with the only likely contentious conservation issue being the status of the Canada goose and its management.

**Abel Tasman Foreshore Advisory Forum:** Ross Hall represents the Board on this Forum. The Forum has not met recently.

**Tasman Environmental Trust:** Tracey Osborne (with Philip Simpson as back-up). This Trust was established as an independent organisation to assist in the protection and maintenance of Tasman and Nelson natural areas. The Board nominates one trustee. The Trust is particularly active in restoration of wetlands such as Spring Creek, projects

such as rearing and planting rare and endangered plant species in protected landscapes and establishing new walkways such as the Waimea Walkway. The Trust administers the Cobb Dam Mitigation Fund which funds community based aquatic restoration projects in Golden Bay. This year funding was given to three community groups for predator control in the Cobb and Flora Catchments, three projects for riparian restoration and establishment of new wetlands, and contributions towards a blue duck monitoring project and a new walkway at Paynes Ford. The Trust has also begun work on a marine ecosystem restoration project.

**Molesworth Steering Committee:** The Department of Conservation manages Molesworth as a Recreation Reserve under a lease to Landcorp Farming. The lease provides for a Steering Committee appointed by the Minister of Conservation with an independent Chair and representation from Landcorp Farming, Ngai Tahu, the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board, the Department of Conservation and conservation and recreation interests. Ian Mitchell was appointed by the Minister to represent the Board.

## OTHER BOARD WORK

### Strategic planning

The Board's strategic priorities for this year were: marine, ecosystem restoration (later redefined as landscape ecology) and pest control/biohazards. Where possible, each meeting had a theme drawn from the priorities and field trips related to that theme.

Over the year considerable thought went into defining the Board's role in achieving change in the priority areas and to understanding how the Board could work more effectively in general. The Board is firmly of the opinion that given the limited time and resources available it is important that the Board define its key priorities and focus its collective effort on those areas where it can add value.

A draft strategic planning paper was collectively developed during the year and a semi-final version presented to the Board by Tracey Osborne at its June 2008 meeting.

The draft strategic plan gives an analysis of the Board's statutory roles and why Boards were created. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis led to the following conclusions:

- Board members need initial training and annual reminders of good practice for performing their statutory roles and giving useful advice to the Department.
- Advising on the implementation of the CMS and Conservation Management Plans needs improved understanding and definition.
- Proactive annual planning of issues and statutory processes to be tackled in the coming year would help the Board to focus, and
- The Board can effectively influence others when it clearly emphasizes its uniqueness and uses this to good effect.

The Plan includes strategic 3-year objectives to address these four main points.

## Farewell Spit

Farewell Spit Nature Reserve is designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. During the year there was agreement with the Department to give priority to the preparation of a monitoring programme in accordance with Ramsar guidelines to enable assessment of potential changes in the ecological character of the site.

## Landscape ecology

Philip Simpson presented a series of papers to the Board on landscape ecology. These papers outlined the changing role and context for landscape protection in New Zealand from the past paradigm which involved the Government protecting areas from people to the present situation where natural areas were valued by communities and ecological restoration had replaced land protection as the dominant form of conservation. Similarly the focus had moved from protecting large mostly remote areas to working with the community to protect and restore small, local lowland areas where people live. These papers were important in shaping the thinking of the Board and were passed on to other Boards and to the Department as input for the new CMS round.

## Wild animal management

The Board made a submission to the Independent Panel of the Minister of Conservation on the management of the numbers of deer, Chamois, Thar and pigs. In its submission the Board supported the current wild animal control regime and opposed any initiative to change the status of any wild animals from controlled species to managed species. The Board submitted that the Government has a primary duty to the internationally valued fauna and flora of New Zealand and that there should be no compromise made in relation to putting the preservation and protection of that fauna and flora before the interests of those seeking benefit, both commercial and private, from introduced animals.

Members discussed the control of goats on Arapawa Island at its April 2008 meeting and supported the Department of Conservation's plans to have goats removed from conservation land within a defined time.

## Bioprospecting

The Board made a submission on the Ministry of Economic Development's discussion paper on bioprospecting. Key points made were that New Zealand's biodiversity is extremely important on a world scale owing to the ancient nature of the landmass, the high level of endemism and the unique relationship between its ecology and its people. In the Board's view these values need to be controlled by New Zealanders. The Board

supported having a comprehensive policy framework to manage bioprospecting activity in this country and also a national authority to provide checks and balances rather than placing decision-making about bioprospecting in the domain of a single authority.

## The Board's carbon footprint

During the year, the Board focused on ways in which it could become carbon neutral. In June 2007 it was decided to plant trees at each meeting and since then Board members have planted approximately 100 trees at Kaikoura Primary School, Grovetown lagoon, Pohara and Te Awhina marae. Board members consistently strive to carpool to meetings and on average approximately three quarters of the kilometres members travel to Board meetings are carpooled. Board papers are now all photocopied using fully recycled paper.

## Removing charges for young people

The Board fully agreed with the Southland and West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Boards about the need to encourage young people to use the conservation estate through reducing the costs involved. The Nelson/Marlborough Board, like other Boards, accepted that removing fees for children on the Great Walks was a start but considered that more widespread changes were needed. The Board wrote to the Minister proposing that there should be free usage of all huts for those aged under eighteen years and was disappointed that the Minister did not support this proposal.

## Community involvement

The Board is committed to the view that working with like-minded organisations and individuals is an integral part of conservation work.

During the year Board members enjoyed meeting with the Friends of the Cobb who are carrying out extensive trapping in the Upper Cobb Valley. Members also appreciated seeing the work of the volunteers who are restoring the Givern alpine garden at the Cobb Reservoir, the Rarangi Landcare Group and the volunteers who, along with DOC staff, have restored The Grove Scenic Reserve.

Kerry Marshall in his new role as Mayor of Nelson City Council accompanied by Deputy Mayor, Rachel Reese, visited the Board at its February meeting and discussed how the Board and Council could work more closely together.

The Board continued to provide a public forum at each of its meetings and this was advertised. Attendance was not high and in some locations, non-existent. However where people did attend, a wide range of issues were raised and the Board appreciated their input and efforts made to attend the meetings.



# FAREWELL FROM THE CHAIR

*Mate ana he tetekura, whakaeteete mai he tetekura. When one frond recedes, another unfurls.*

It is with fondness that I reflect back on the past eight years of service on the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board and with pleasure that I write the concluding remarks for our annual report.

We have developed a collective culture amongst our members so that all contribute and participate in the decision making of the Board. I thank all of the members for their outstanding work this year. Previously we began the process of developing our strategic plan. This ensures our foci are consistent with our statutory responsibilities, whilst integrating our specific priorities and allowing for the unique value that our Board can make to conservation efforts across our district.

It was a particular highlight for the Board to be part of the celebrations launching the Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park. This year the Board was inspired by the innovative design that the Department is integrating throughout the conservancy. Of note are both Ship Cove and the Kaikoura Peninsular walkway - reflecting the values and traditions of our communities and their respective association with the wilderness.

Similarly we were pleased with the progress through to our approval of the plan for the Abel Tasman National Park. I feel very fortunate to have been part of this process from the start, given how lengthy the timeframe is. The Te Waikoropupu plan is unique in the planning approach adopted. It was a privilege for board members to share in its presentation at Onetahua Marae.

I want to acknowledge Neil Clifton and his team for all of their efforts. During the year Rod Witte filled in for Jo Gould due to illness. The standard of reports prepared for the board was exemplary and the amicable relationship between the Board and departmental staff is a testament to the strong relationships built on mutual respect.

As we approach the revision of the CMS, I have to note our concern about the framework we are to use. It is our view that what was previously mooted is superior to what we will now work with. This year we advised technical staff to ensure that reporting against the current CMS is not simply a quantitative list of work carried out – but to measure whether the Department’s efforts are resulting in a healthier environment. This will be our particular challenge as we review the CMS for the future.

Finally, I thank everyone I have interacted with during my time as a member of the board. It has been an experience I will always value.

Mauri Ora

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ropata Taylor', enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval shape.

Ropata Taylor  
(Chairman)

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend Conservation Board meetings. If you would like more information on the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board please see the website [www.conservationboards.org.nz](http://www.conservationboards.org.nz) or contact the Community Relations Officer - Board Support, at the Department of Conservation in Nelson phone (03) 546 3143 or e-mail [nelsonmarlboroughboard@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nelsonmarlboroughboard@doc.govt.nz).



**Board members at the dawn blessing of Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia up Mount Fyfe.**

From left: Board members Judy Hellstrom, Lynda Neame, David Mitchell and Gina Solomon; the Minister of Conservation, Hon Steve Chadwick; Board member Ian Mitchell; Board Support Kay Switzer; Board members Maurice Manawatu and Véronique Cornille; Nelson/Marlborough Conservator, Neil Clifton; Kaiwhakahaere of Ngai Tahu, Mark Solomon; and the Director-General of the Department of Conservation, Al Morrison.

*(Photo: Dick Carter)*