

*Nelson Marlborough
Conservation Board
Annual Report 2013/2014*



Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board Annual Report 2013-2014

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Conservation Act 1987**

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Photographs

Front Cover: Board members at Wairau Lagoons

Back cover: Wairau Lagoons

Photographs by Kath Inwood, February 2014

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1. **Message from the chair, Ross Hall**

This is my final message as the Chair of the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board with the June 2014 meeting being my last, after which I step down following seven years as a Board member.

It has been a year of significant change for the Department of Conservation with the new departmental structure taking effect from September 2013. Changes to senior staff, the enlarged regional structure and advent of the Partnership Group have required the Board to learn a new institutional structure and build new working relationships.

An indication of the complexity of the restructure is that Jan Hania, Conservation Partnerships Director for Nelson, Marlborough and the West Coast, was unable to meet with the Board until April due to workload commitments.

At a more local level it is pleasing to note that familiar faces amongst existing staff have filled many Partnership and Service leadership roles. We as a Board, and the wider public, are fortunate to have had this continuity of personal and working relationships during a time of transition.

Of importance to all boards this year was the review of Conservation Boards. In this instance we were fortunate to have Bob Dickinson, a member of our own Board, on the review panel.

I stated in last year's annual report that I had concerns over what was happening in the key area of management planning. Proposals to coordinate and integrate planning processes and boost numbers of planning staff goes some way to alleviate this, though it is disappointing that what is to ultimately happen to Conservation Management Strategies is still an unknown.

There had been concern that the new regional structure would lead to a reduction in the number of boards. It is pleasing that such an impractical measure was not carried out.

Also as someone who was appointed to the Board due to my recreation background I welcome the proposal to place greater emphasis on recreation.

The most significant event of the year for the Board was its October meeting in Kaikoura.

Here we met with the Molesworth Recreation Reserve Steering Committee to approve the Molesworth Recreation Reserve Management Plan. Given the almost legendary status of Molesworth as a farm this achievement is not to be underestimated. It is also a good example of the Department and Board members, especially Ian Mitchell, working in partnership with another agency, in this case Landcorp.

Another important agenda item was the Board's approval of the continuation of mountain biking on the Heaphy Track, along with two other tracks in Kahurangi National Park, following a three year trial period. While this has the potential to be contentious, the results of the trial are unequivocal, there is no real reason why

under current conditions the continuation of mountain biking should not be allowed.

We also at this time met with the Conservation Authority and the newly appointed Director- General Lou Sanson.

I cannot finish without thanking all the Department staff who have had played a part in making the Board a success over the years of my appointment. Thanks especially go to Neil Clifton, Jo Gould and Martin Rodd, along with Kay Switzer, Sean Magee and Kath Inwood, the three Board Support Officers who have played such an important role in my tenure as Chair.

Finally I would like to thank all the past and present Board members with whom I have worked. My seven years with the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board have been hugely rewarding and a real honour.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Hall', is centered on the page.

Ross Hall

2. Introduction

The Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board is 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;
- 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 these plans by the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA).

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires conservation boards to provide the NZCA 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 annual report.

3. Nelson Marlborough region

The Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers all of Nelson and Marlborough, with oversight of the whole of Kahurangi National Park. This includes Abel Tasman, Kahurangi and Nelson Lakes National Parks, Mt Richmond Forest Park, Molesworth Station and important nature reserves such as Takapourewa (Stephens Island) and Farewell Spit.

The area caters for a wide range of recreational activities including in the Marlborough Sounds and Ka Whata Tu o Rākohiua, the Conservation Park in the Kaikoura Ranges. There are also four Marine Reserves in Nelson Marlborough - Long Island/Kokomohua, West Haven, Tonga Island and Horoirangi.

There are about 750 historic places, both Maori and European, including archaeological sites, historic backcountry huts, a whaling station and cob cottages in South Marlborough.

Species protection programmes in the area cover tuatara, endemic frogs, Powelliphanta snails, great spotted kiwi, Hutton's shearwater, weka, kaka, black fronted tern and whio (blue duck) and include a "mainland island" at Nelson Lakes (the Rotoiti Nature Reserve Programme).

4. Achievements and key events for the year

4.1. Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

The implementation report on the current CMS was considered at the October 2013 meeting. Members noted that there was a phenomenal amount of work undertaken with the community, including community groups, social groups, schools, businesses and volunteer projects. It was suggested that this work could be better promoted in the public arena.

It was also noted that more could be done to promote the role of the Board in order to improve the public's understanding of its functions.

4.2. Management Plans

Molesworth Management Plan

The Board approved the Molesworth Recreation Reserve Management Plan on 9 October 2013 and celebrated the success of the process which involved members of the Molesworth Steering Committee working together with the Board over a number of years to develop the plan. Key organisations who had submitted during the planning process were at the meeting to approve the plan, including Fish and Game, and Forest and Bird.

Implementation Monitoring

The Board considered implementation reports on the Abel Tasman National Park Management Plan, Nelson Lakes National Park Management Plan, Kahurangi National Park Management Plan and Te Waikoropupu Springs Management Plan. Members were impressed overall with the progress made and the range and amount of work completed.

The Board recognised that the Abel Tasman Coast Track upgrade and the Anchorage Hut replacement were significant achievements. Frustration was expressed at the lack of progress with a land exchange at Anchorage, which was unable to progress until the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Bill is enacted.

The construction of the new bridges on the road to the Heaphy Track was commended by the Board.

The Board congratulated the Department on the new developments at Te Waikoropupu Springs, and the inclusive process that was used in this project. The outcome was described as "stunning".

Board members suggested that the inclusion of common names alongside botanical names in management plans and implementation reports would be valuable for members of the public.

4.3. Mountain biking trial in Kahurangi National Park

The Board received a monitoring report on the Kahurangi National Park mountain bike trial in October 2013. The Board recommended that the NZCA

support the continuation of mountain biking in the park subject to the same conditions of existing use.

Winter mountain biking on the Heaphy, Barron's Flat and Kill Devil Tracks from May to September was permanently approved in January 2014.

4.4. Project Janszoon

The Board was pleased with developments with Project Janszoon during the year. As well as the extensive project work on the ground, the Board expressed satisfaction with the high level of consultation and information sharing carried out by Project Janszoon and its Director, Devon McLean.

4.5. Loder Cup

The Board prepared and submitted a nomination for the 2014 Loder Cup.

4.6. Issues of interest

Other issues of particular interest to the Board this year were:

- Te Tau Ihu Settlement Bill
- Kaikoura (Te Tai-o-Marokura) Marine Management Bill
- Recognising the national significance of the Wairau Lagoons
- The land status of the Motueka sandspit
- Proposed steatite mining in the Cobb Valley
- Establishment of the Game Animal Council
- Delay with progress of the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Bill
- Seismic testing off Pegasus Bay
- Tenure Review process
- Battle for our Birds
- Whale strandings
- Helicopter hunting
- Review on the status of the long-finned eel
- Marine reserve monitoring reports

5. Board Membership

All ten members were appointed by the Minister for Conservation including two members nominated by Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu.

Members' terms of office that were due to expire on 30 June 2013 were rolled over until 31 April 2014. Following the decision of Joe Puketapu to stand down from the Board from 30 June 2013, there was one vacancy carried throughout the year. Two members retired during the year, and two new members were appointed. A further two members retired at the end of the 2013-14 year.

Nominations for the Chair and Deputy Chair were considered by the Board in October 2013, with Ross Hall re-elected to the Chair position, and Gina Solomon elected as Deputy Chair.

5.1. Members' profiles



Ross Hall (Chair) is from Dovedale. A keen tramper, he also has experience in horticulture, a background in outdoor recreation and interests in ecology and ornithology. He joined the Board in October 2007. He was first appointed Chair in September 2010 and was re-appointed by members in October 2013. Ross retired from the Board at the end of June 2014.



Ian Mitchell is a viticulturalist from Marlborough's Wairau Plain with extensive experience in public land administration and management through his career as Commissioner of Crown Lands. Ian joined the Board in 2005. He also convenes the Marlborough Committee and represents the Board on the Molesworth Steering Committee. Ian was Deputy Chair until October 2013 and retired from the Board at the end of June 2014.



Gina Solomon of Kaikoura was appointed in 2006 on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu. She is affiliated to Ngati Kuri, Ngai Tahu, Kurahaupo, Ngati Koata, Te Atiawa and Ngati Toa. She is an active member of Te Runanga o Kaikoura and has held various positions within the organisation. Gina represents her Runanga on a number of committees promoting iwi values. Gina was elected Deputy Chair in October 2013.



Maurice Manawatu was first appointed on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu in 1998 and continued to serve until October 2013. He is affiliated to Ngati Kuri and Ngai Tahu. He owns and operates a Maori tourism venture in Kaikoura and is chair of Te Runanga o Kaikoura.



Lynda Neame lives in Blenheim, and first joined the Board in 2007. 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. Lynda retired from the Board at the end of May 2014.



Mairangi Reiher of Golden Bay is of Ngati Tama/Te Atiawa/Te Arawa iwi. Her interests are centred on the preservation of cultural sites, waahi tapu and the conservation of natural flora and fauna. She has extensive board member experience and serves on the Manawhenua Ki Mohua and Onetahua Marae committees. She joined the Board in December 2010.



Joy Shorrock was appointed to the Board in December 2010. She is a traditional Maori weaver and a teacher of this art form. Joy is an active member of Te Awhina Marae and is on the marae board. She is also a member of the Kaiteriteri Recreation Reserve, the Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust and the Motueka Museum Board. Her iwi affiliations are Te Atiawa, Ngati Rarua, Ngati Tama, Ngati Kuia and Ngati Koata ki te Tau Ihu. She lives in Motueka.



Sue Brown farms with her partner. They have a dairy farm in Ferntown, Golden Bay and a pastoral grazing block in Stanley Brook in the Motueka Valley. Sue is actively involved in the Aorere Catchment Group with the NZ Landcare Trust and is currently Dairy Section Chair for Federated Farmers Golden Bay province. She was appointed to the Board in December 2010.



Bob Dickinson has extensive experience in management and director positions and held the position of CEO of Tasman District Council for 17 years. He is a keen user of public conservation land as a trumper, skier, recreational boatie, climber and mountain biker, with a special interest in geology and history. He was appointed to the Board in December 2010 and lives in the Redwood Valley.



Amelia Taylor was appointed in November 2013 on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, to replace Maurice Manawatu. She is a whale watch sea crew guide and works in the hospitality industry. She is involved in many local environmental groups with interests in beach and stream protection, species recovery and caring for birds. She is currently studying the use of New Zealand plants in medicine. She is affiliated to Ngati Kuri, Ngati Koata, Te Atiawa, and Ngati Toa.



Steve Knight was appointed to the Board in May 2014. Steve is a self-employed viticulturalist. He has extensive experience in management and strategic planning. He has been involved in the Young Farmers Contest as both a committee member and participant for many years. His outdoor recreation interests are hunting and tramping.

6. Meetings

Six meetings were held during the 2013/14 financial year. These were:

August	Picton
October	Kaikoura (3 days)
December	Motueka
February	Blenheim (2 days)
April	Takaka (2 days)
June	Stoke

6.1. Attendance

The table below shows the number of Board meetings attended by members out of the total number of meetings held during the year. For members not serving a full year, the number of meetings attended is shown against the number of meetings held during their membership.

Member	Home	Attended
Ross Hall	Dovedale	6/6
Ian Mitchell	Blenheim	5/6
Gina Solomon	Kaikoura	6/6
Maurice Manawatu	Kaikoura	1/2
Lynda Neame	Blenheim	5/5
Mairangi Reiher	Takaka	5/6
Sue Brown	Collingwood	6/6
Joy Shorrock	Motueka	5/6
Bob Dickinson	Nelson	5/6
Amelia Taylor	Kaikoura	3/4
Steve Knight	Blenheim	1/1

Members attended other meetings and events in their role as Board members, including subcommittee meetings and representative roles. Bob Dickinson was a member of the Conservation Board Review Panel.

Other one-off meetings attended by members on behalf of the Board:

- Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust Conference, October 2013
- Selection process and interview panel for Partnerships Ranger, November 2013
- Community Conservation Partnerships Fund recommendation panel, May 2014
- Conservation Board Chairs meeting, June 2014

6.2. Field trips

The October meeting was held in Kaikoura. Board members visited a number of sites with relevance to the Kaikoura marine strategy. These included the Ohau Point seal colony and seal pups, the beach at Hapuku, and the Point Keen Seal Colony. The Board also visited Takahanga marae.

In February, the Board were hosted by Te Runanga a Rangitane O Wairau for a visit to the Wairau lagoons and Grovetown lagoon. At the Grovetown lagoon they had an onsite briefing about the community restoration work from representatives of Te Whanau Hou Grovetown Lagoon Society. These were followed by a visit to the Wairau Bar.

In April members visited the Cobb Valley to gain some insight into the site of a proposed steatite mining application. They also visited Te Waikoropupu Springs to see the new developments.



Wairau Lagoons, February 2014

7. Board Committees

Membership of Board committees was reviewed as new members joined the Board. Key areas of work are identified below.

7.1. Marine Conservation

The purpose of this committee was 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.

Members for the 2013/2014 year were: Lynda Neame (Convenor), Gina Solomon and Joy Shorrock. Lynda Neame represented the Board on the Long Island-Kokomohua Subcommittee and Joy Shorrock was the Board's representative on the Horoirangi Subcommittee.

Board members Gina Solomon and Maurice Manawatu were actively involved in Te Korowai o te Tai o Marokura, an initiative originally started by the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board. The Te Korowai (Kaikoura Coastal) strategy was launched in October 2012 and was well received by Ministers of the Crown. In March 2014, the Government presented their response for implementation - the Kaikoura (Te Tai o Marokura) Marine Management Bill.

7.2. Management Planning

The purpose of this committee was 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 were set up to work on individual management plans as the need arose, including working with the Department on the preparation of draft plans.

Members of the Management Planning Committee during the 2013/14 year were: Ross Hall (Convenor) and Mairangi Reiher. There were also three subcommittees.

The Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) Review Subcommittee (members Ross Hall, Gina Solomon, Lynda Neame, Sue Brown, Ian Mitchell and Mairangi Reiher) had no active work this year.

The Board representatives on the Molesworth Management Plan Subcommittee were Gina Solomon, Ian Mitchell and Lynda Neame. They were joined by Hamish Ensor, Mark Solomon and Gerry Soanes from the Molesworth Steering Committee. The Molesworth Management Plan was completed and approved in October 2013.

7.3. Marlborough

The purpose of this committee was to advise the Conservancy on issues associated with conservation in Marlborough. Members were Ian Mitchell (convenor), Maurice Manawatu, Gina Solomon, and Lynda Neame. Ian Mitchell reported on conservation projects in the region and Gina Solomon provided updates on Kaikoura activities at each meeting.

7.4. Concessions

The purpose of this committee was to advise the Department on policy matters associated with concession management and also to provide advice on specific concession applications where appropriate. Members for the 2013-14 year were: Ross Hall (convenor), Gina Solomon, Bob Dickinson, Mairangi Reiher and Joy Shorrocks. The Board was regularly updated by the committee on all concessions applications and approvals.

The committee is only formally involved in the concessions process when one of the agreed trigger points is activated. The committee was involved most often when there was an application for a new activity, although there were also applications for research work that activated triggers.

The committee raised questions with the Department on several concession applications, and urged the Department to ensure that appropriate consultation with iwi and local hapu is carried out early in the assessment process.

7.5. Liaison

All Board members have responsibility for liaising with other groups when opportunities arise and some members have specific roles in liaison.

Liaison with other Conservation Boards

Agendas and minutes were exchanged with the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board. Sue Brown was the nominated liaison person.

There was no specific member responsible for liaising with the Canterbury/Aoraki Conservation Board but agenda and minutes were exchanged.

New Zealand Conservation Authority

The Board meeting in Kaikoura in October 2013 was combined with a NZCA meeting. This enabled the Board members and NZCA members to meet and spend some time together.

In June 2014, members were pleased to welcome Judy Hellstrom, NZCA liaison person for the region and former Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board Chair, to the meeting.

Gina Solomon attended the Conservation Board Chairpersons' meeting with the Ministers, NZCA and senior managers in Wellington in June 2014.

Tasman Environmental Trust

The Trust was established as an independent organisation to assist in the protection and maintenance of Tasman and Nelson natural areas. The Trust administers the Cobb Dam Mitigation Fund which funds community based aquatic restoration projects in Golden Bay. Philip Simpson, a former Board member, was the Board's representative on the Trust. Minutes were exchanged, and strong conservation projects were progressed.

Molesworth Steering Committee

The Department of Conservation manages Molesworth Station 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 the Board's representative on the Molesworth Steering Committee.

Abel Tasman Foreshore Advisory Forum

Ross Hall, Mairangi Reiher and Joy Shorrock represented the Board on the Abel Tasman Foreshore Advisory Forum.

Fish and Game Nelson Marlborough Region

The organisations exchanged agenda and minutes.

8. Other Board Work

8.1. Briefings and updates

In addition to the regular updates on the Department's activities provided in the status report which is considered at each meeting, the Board received additional briefing and updates. Topics covered were:

- Departmental changes - The newly appointed Director General for the Department of Conservation, Lou Sanson, was present at the October meeting to discuss the changes to the Department and how the Department and Boards can work together to best effect.
- Review of Conservation Boards - The Board submitted to the Conservation Boards Review, which was completed in November 2013. Board member Bob Dickinson was a member of the review panel.
- Tenure review process - A briefing was provided about the tenure review process, and progress with properties within Nelson Marlborough.
- Mountain biking in Kahurangi National Park - the monitoring report was presented to the Board following the mountain biking trial in Kahurangi.
- Te Tau Ihu Settlement - the Board was provided with a briefing on the Te Tau Ihu Settlement Bill and the role of the Board once this came into law.

In addition, the Department provided an update on conservation activities within the local area at each meeting location.

8.2 Community Group presentations

This year the Board has developed a practice of inviting representatives from community organisations to present at each meeting. Speakers this year have represented:

- Forest and Bird
- Federated Mountain Clubs
- Fish and Game
- Waimea Water Augmentation Committee
- Motueka Ornithological Society
- Tasman Environmental Trust
- Te Rununga a Rangitane O Wairau
- Project De-Vine
- Friends of the Cobb
- Waimea Inlet Forum

These were predominantly voluntary groups carrying out huge amounts of conservation work within the community. The Board recognises and appreciates volunteers and thanks them for the work done in this area.

8.3 Community involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. Meetings were held in different parts of the Nelson Marlborough region and opportunities for the public to attend Board meetings were advertised.

Members of the public attended the Public Forum at several of the year's meetings and a range of issues were raised. The Board appreciated their input and efforts made to attend the meetings and responded by letter with a response to questions asked or concerns raised.

The Board stayed overnight at Onetahua Marae in Golden Bay in April 2014. A visit to Takahanga Marae was included in the October 2013 three-day meeting in Kaikoura.

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 or contact the Board Support Officer, at the Department of Conservation in Nelson phone (03) 546 3151 or e-mail nelsonmarlboroughboard@doc.govt.nz.

