



Northland Conservation Board
Te Runanga Papa Atawhai O Te Taitokerau



Panoramic view of Mount Manaia, Whangarei, Northland

Annual Report
2010/11

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Chairperson's Foreword

I have much pleasure in presenting the Northland Conservation Boards Annual Report for 2010-2011.

Once again this has been an interesting and productive year for the Board. The Board has been actively involved in the review process of our Conservation Management Strategy which is now well under way. The Board looks forward to seeing a completed draft document in the near future and to hearing how it is received by the community.

The operative conservation management strategy was developed in the 1990s and is now beyond its 'use by date'. This has been a concern for the Board so it is very pleased with the current activity.



Kevin Evans - 2000-2011 - Committed Conservationist & Pateke advocate.

We have also been kept informed of discussions between the Department of Conservation and Te Roroa iwi around the Government's proposal to establish a Kauri National Park centred on the Waipoua Forest. A discussion document on the proposal was released for public submissions in May 2011.

The Board's field visits continue to provide an invaluable insight into the great work that is being done for conservation throughout Northland by the Department, Landcare, community groups, local iwi and passionate individuals. They also highlight the issues and future challenges we need to help overcome.

It is disappointing that no progress has been made in the implementation of the Marine Protected Area Policy. Northland has more coastline and marine area than any other part of New Zealand and marine protection has long been the main strategic priority for the Board.

On the other hand, it is great to see the Whangarei District Council has become GE free and is now a leading example helping move the Northland Region towards being totally GE free. The Board was an early campaigner for a GE free Northland.

On a graver note I think it is necessary to record that the continual cuts to the Department's budget will inevitably impact on what it can achieve. Of particular concern is that some of the Department's most skilled and knowledgeable people may be made redundant as a reduction in staff has become necessary; the effects of which will, I am sure, be felt for years to come.

The Department is relying on business and the community to step in and provide the resources we need to fight the stoats and rats which ceaselessly plunder our native wildlife. Increasing political and public understanding that the clean, green image which drives our country's economy is underpinned by the land managed by the Department is critical to conservation being seen as an "investment" rather than an "expense".

This year we farewelled Board Members Ian Faulkner and John Kenderdine, whose contribution and commitment have been invaluable and will be greatly missed. Fortunately four new Board Members joined our Team. They brought some great skills and fresh perspectives to the Board and I know as I finish my tenure on the Board, that it is in good hands to carry on its important work.

As the Board meets the challenges of the forthcoming year, I would like to thank the Board members, the Conservator Chris Jenkins and his Team of, who have helped in numerous ways to make it possible to achieve the Board's undertakings over the last year. I would like to make a special thanks to Board Support Officer Jeannie Hogarth for her unwavering dedication and support which continues to amaze us all.

My term of appointment as Chairperson of the Northland Conservation Board finishes in August 2011. I would like to thank all of the current and previous Board Members, the many Department of Conservation staff and members of the public who have shared their passion for conservation with me during my time on the Board. That passion and enthusiasm for conservation and their jobs that each and every Departmental staff member has shown is a true credit to the organisation.

Long after the other memories have faded, it will be the people that I will recall. It has been a privilege and pleasure to know and work with all of you.

I wish you well for the future



Kevin Evans
CHAIRPERSON

Introduction

The Northland Conservation Board is one of thirteen[13] bodies appointed nationwide by the Minister of Conservation under s.6P of the Conservation Act 1987.

The functions of the Board are outlined in s.6M and the powers that enable the Board to carry out those functions are under s.6N of the Act.

The role of the Conservation Boards as laid out in the Conservation Act 1987, is as follows:

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

Section 6O of the Conservation Act requires that every Conservation Board provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority with an annual report as soon as practicable after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement, the Northland Conservation Board submits its Annual Report for consideration.

The Board's Area

The Northland Conservation Board's area of responsibility covers the same boundaries as the Department of Conservation's Northland Conservancy.

Northland is a long narrow peninsula, the features setting it apart from the rest of the country being its subtropical climate and 1,700km of indented and very scenic coastline. The Region covers a land area of 1.25 million hectares, supporting a population of just over 150,000.

Northland's economy is based on pastoral farming, forestry and horticulture, with well over half the region's land area devoted to beef and sheep farming. Northland is a popular holiday destination, making tourism a significant industry.

In ecological terms Northland is notable as home to two high profile species - the Kauri and the Kiwi. One of the most magnificent trees in the world, the Kauri, was prolific in the north but much of the region's Kauri forest is now gone. A number of relatively large Kauri dominated tracts do remain, principally the



Waipoua/Mataraua/Waima ecosystem and the Puketi/Omahuta/Maungataniwha complex but other individual forests as well.

Kiwi too are an important ingredient that makes Northland special, but the North Island Brown is under threat and special effort is required to maintain several large viable populations in the region.

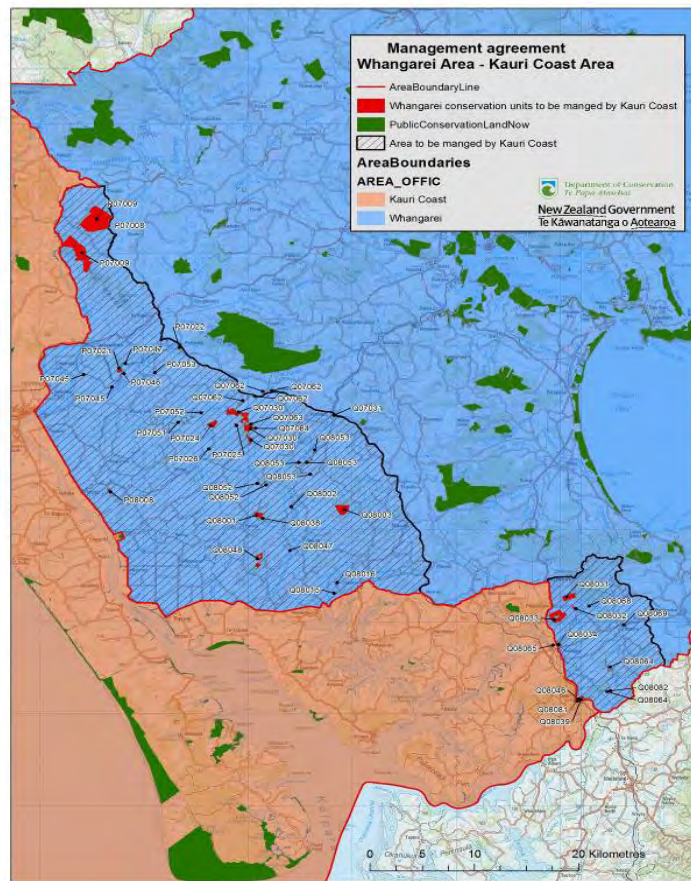
Notable are the harbours, headlands, islands and reserves of Northland's eastern seaboard, the islands that provide offshore sanctuary to the very best of New Zealand's natural treasures and the wild and rugged yet beautiful west coast.

However, Northland also has the dubious distinction of being the region with more native plants and animals at risk than anywhere else in the country. The arrival of new pests which is not an uncommon occurrence, pose great risks to our native biota.

In terms of history and culture, Northland was the cradle of both the Maori and European settlement of New Zealand. For both cultures the North has a long, fascinating and sometimes turbulent past and the region's historic sites and buildings still reflect this history.

The majority of historic places are of Maori origin, with many holding a deep spiritual significance amongst the region's Iwi. On Crown administered land alone almost 3,000 historic places have been recorded. The sites include fortified pa, traces of ancient gardens, coastal midden and sculptured, terraced hillsides. Around Kerikeri and Waitangi there are a number of significant historic buildings relating to early European settlement in the area.

The Conservancy is split into four Areas – Kaitaia, Bay of Islands, Kauri Coast (including Trounson Kauri Park Mainland Island) and Whangarei. Each Area has its own Area Manager.



Revised Area Boundaries Whangarei & Kauri Coast 2010

Membership

The Board welcomed four new Board Members and reappointed one Member – all for a three year term. The Class of 2011 is already proving to be a “class act” and seriously complementing the current membership.

Helene Leaf

The re-appointment of Helene Leaf provides continuation of the excellent contribution Helene has made as a Member of the Board and as Deputy Chairperson. Helene has been instrumental in providing a vital link between the Board and Iwi with particular emphasis on Helene’s rohe of the Hokianga. Her home Marae – Paekanae has hosted the Board on several occasions for meetings and the Board’s annual Induction Sessions. Helene has demonstrated that it is possible to juggle a huge community workload as well as making a significant contribution as a Member of the Conservation Board. We welcomed Helene back with open arms.

Hori Parata

The Board welcomed the appointment of Hori Parata who resides in Whangarei and has strong ties with Ngatiwai. Hori brings with him a sound background in cultural history and practices as well as long term involvement with the Department of Conservation on a wide range of conservation issues. At one time Hori was the Conservation Portfolio holder for the Ngatiwai Trust Board. His appointment complements the Iwi networking of Helene in the Hokianga drawing the threads between the rohe of Hokianga and Whangarei.

Peter O’Hara

Peter O’Hara’s appointment filled a void within the Board in terms of his vast communication skills. He also has proven leadership skills that will be well sort after as he settles into his role on the Northland Conservation Board. Peter showed that although a “new kid on the block” in terms of the Board he was quick to put up his hand to take ownership of producing a regular post Conservation Board meeting Press Release as well as drafting the first Communication Plan for the Board. He has already proven himself to add value to the Board.

Richard Robbins

Richard Robbins continues a strong representation of the Far North region. His experience in resource management for land and marine areas complemented by his interests in ornithology, tramping and remote field research, make him a valuable asset to the composition of the Board. Like Peter O’Hara, Richard has quickly settled into his role as a Board Member making measurable contributions to discussions and participation in activities of the Board.

Robert Willoughby

Like the other three new appointees, Robert too has *hit the road running* as a Member of the Board. His clear understanding of cultural differences and how to achieve positive, mutually beneficial results for conservation is already adding value to the Board. His long involvement in the Te Rawhiti community and association with the Department of Conservation will prove valuable as a Member of the Board.

- **Kevin Evans continues as Chair until 31 August 2011.**

While pleased to welcome the three new Members the Board sadly bade a fond farewell to four Members.

Ian Faulkner

During his six years on the Board Ian had proved to be an exceptional contributor at all levels. He was always keen to participate in Board activities and represent the Board wherever possible. He became the first Member to represent the Board on the Fish and Game Council Northland – a role he took to with gusto and from feedback from the Council greatly enhanced meetings and made sound contribution into discussions on a wide range of issues.

Ian also showed a keen interest in the review of the Conservation Management Strategy and lead robust debate regarding the focus of the review and the Board's role at all levels. Ian will be greatly missed from the Board Team.

John Kenderdine

John's "Mr Sustainability" title was well earned. He was a person who practiced what he preached from the nifty eco friendly car he drove to his aversion to all things plastic! During his six year term on the Board he was never "lost for words" and was never afraid to say what others were merely thinking. His candid and forthright approach ensured fulsome debate was had on issues he was passionate about and he was at the forefront in promoting conservation and environment issues affecting the Far North area where he lived. John and Ian Faulkner joined the Board at the same time and each in their own way have left a meaningful legacy for future Boards to look back and build on.

Waitai Petera

While only managing to make two meetings in his tenure of the Board, Waitai's contribution outside of the Board meetings in promoting conservation and supporting the Department were outstanding.

Waitai's appointment was undoubtedly one of picking the best person for the job. However, Waitai's other commitments were overwhelming and this made it nigh impossible for him to commit to the Board and, in particular, attend meetings.

Maria Tau

Unfortunately, for personal reasons, Maria resigned from the Board within the first year of her tenure.

All four departing Board Members were farewelled with thanks and the very best wishes for their future.

Conservation Board Meetings

The Northland Conservation Board held four[4] meetings during the reporting period. The venue for Board meetings is chosen to ensure as wide a coverage as possible is made of the region and to enable members of the public throughout Northland to have access to the Board.

1	06 August 2010	-	Northland Conservancy Office, Whangarei
2	05 November 2010	-	Aroha Island Ecological Centre, Kerikeri
3	03 March 2011 -		Northland Conservancy Office, Whangarei
4	03 June 2011	-	Kauri Coast Area Office, Dargaville

Members Attendance

▪ Kevin Evans	Dargaville	2 from 4
▪ Ian Faulkner	Bay of Islands	1 from 4*
▪ Judi Gilbert	Whangarei	4 from 4
▪ William Goodfellow	Bay of Islands	3 from 4
▪ John Kenderdine	Kaitaia	1 from 4*
▪ Helene Leaf	Hokianga	3 from 4
▪ Ian McGill	Bay of Islands	3 from 4
▪ Peter O'Hara	Mangawhai	2 from 4**
▪ Hori Parata	Whangarei	2 from 4**
▪ Richard Robbins	Kaitaia	2 from 4**
▪ Ken Ross	Bay of Islands	4 from 4
▪ Robert Willoughby	Russell	2 from 4**

* Retiring Board Members final meeting.

** New Board Members [first meeting March 2011]

Induction Session

Due to the lateness of the 2011 Board Appointments [finally announced on 24 December 2010] the several times postponed Induction Session finally took place at Kingston House in Kerikeri on 17 February 2011.

The Induction programme included presentations from all four Area Managers and provided an opportunity for Board Members to ask questions of all Department of Conservation staff present and to gain an understanding and appreciation of what being a Member of a Conservation Board entailed. The Induction programme based on an "in house" non public approach, provided the right informal setting to put all Members at ease [particularly the new Members] and get to know key Department of Conservation staff who would provide the necessary local contact for Members during the course of their term on the Board.

The Induction process continues to provide an annual platform for existing and new Board Members to become familiar with Department of Conservation processes and to establish and/or reinforce the “housekeeping” aspects of Board Membership.



Class of 2010 Members and Northland Conservancy staff - Induction Session, Kerikeri, February 2011

2010/11 Year in Review

Quite often Board Members muse over why they are on the Board and the relevance of Conservation Boards in general. It is when looking back on a year gone by that the answer to this question becomes patently obvious.

Board Members make a significant contribution to how the public see and practice conservation. Every time a Board Member attends a public meeting, workshop, hui or similar gathering representing the Board brings into focus why Board's were established and the importance of being a voice for Conservation in the region.

Each Board Member has his/her own particularly conservation ethic and passion for the ecology and environment, whether it be a determination to make a difference for communities by actively advocating water quality and effluent disposal issues to rearing and releasing Pateke/Brown Teal into the wild. Each persons personal agenda does have an impact and does add the required flavour to what makes up a Conservation Board.

The Northland Conservation Board does not purport to contain technical experts on our ecology or environment. However, each Member is passionate about protecting, enhancing and valuing the ecology, history, cultural and environmental components that makes Northland the special place it is.

Genetic engineering continued to be a key issue for the Board. Zelka Grammer of GE FREE Northland ensured that the Board was kept up to date with issues relating to genetic engineering and took the opportunity when the Board met in Whangarei to address this during the public forum section of Board meetings. It was pleasing therefore to note that this persistence has paid off with the Whangarei District Council taking a leadership voting unanimously to investigate regulating genetically modified organisms through its District Plan in conjunction with other Councils in Northland and Auckland.

The Public Forum component of meetings continued to provide opportunity for members of the public to voice their concerns and none more so than Mrs Margaret Hicks in relation to the Ruakaka/Waipu area drawing the Board's attention to the impact on wildlife from kite boarding and the need to be vigilant in relation to the District Council's waste water effluent discharge application.

The Ruakaka issues drew attention to the need for the Board to acknowledge that *things aint what they used to be* and acknowledge the increased pressure on our natural habitats, species and environment from escalating development and the infrastructure pressures resulting from this. Like King Canute the Board is powerless to hold back the tide but it recognised the opportunity to find positives from this ongoing pressure on public land.

Mr Jeff Griggs [who is well known to the Board having worked with the Board when still employed by the Department of Conservation] outlined a proposal for a Regional Park along the Ruakaka Coast – a project the Board saw as having merit and one to be flagged for future discussions with the relevant Councils at the appropriate time.

The Board continued to input into Regional and District Plans and Policy Statements drawing on the expertise of new Members to complement that of longer serving Members.

The relationship between the Board and Department of Conservation staff continued to develop and grow. The Board appreciated the *open door* policy of Conservancy and Area Offices and acknowledged the passion and commitment of the Department's staff in Northland.

The year ended on a high note with the very first Press Release being circulated post the March 2011 Board meeting. All Board Members should take pride in their contribution during the 2010/11 year and build on relationships and initiatives in the 2011/12 year.

Conservation Management Strategy Implementation and Monitoring Field Inspections 2010/11

With the delay in the review of the Conservation Management Strategy the Board focused more on relationship building in the Areas and being brought up to date on issues brought to attention by the Area Managers and their Teams.



Sue Reed, Area Manager Whangarei addressing Group prior to site inspection visit to Bream Head.

Site Inspection – Bream Head Scenic Reserve/Smugglers Bay – Whangarei Area

On a brilliant sunny late summer morning in March 2011, Sue Reed, Area Manager, Whangarei and staff of her Visitor Assets and Historic Team lead the Board on a very memorable,

informative and inspirational site visit to Bream Head, Smugglers Cove, Mount Manaia and Reotahi.

The visit covered multiple issues and opportunities for the Board to view first hand the work undertaken and facing Sue and her Team. Arrangements had been made to link with representatives from communities groups in the area who were working with the Department on a wide range of issues to enhance and protect this unique and stunning site. The pace of the visit was perfectly judged and enabled the Board to view, consider, discuss and appreciate this slice of Whangarei Area. Included in the visit were –

Gun Emplacement

Maria Butcher, Ranger Historic, Whangarei Area explained the significance of this actively managed historic asset.

Smugglers Bay Walk

Don Robertson, Acting Programme Manager Visitor Assets, Whangarei Area provided the Board with background information on the major track upgrade that had just been completed as well as highlighting significant natural features of this impressive walk that offered some of the most stunning scenery along the Northland eastern coastline. Time was taken to relax in Smugglers Bay while Don and Sue [Reed] drew the Board's attention to plans to enhance the visitor experience in the area while ensuring the protection and enhancement of the abundance of natural features of the site.



Board Member, Hori Parata, Ngatiwai, discussing the significance of the rock at the entranceway to the Smugglers Bay Walk.



Our intrepid Group, lead by Sue Reed, Area Manager, Whangarei and Board Member Judi Gilbert, wending their way to Smugglers Bay.



At the crest of the walk with panoramic views of Whangarei Harbour in the background.

Smugglers Bay



Don Robertson discussing the values and future management for Smugglers Bay.

Bream Head Trust

During the lunch recess the Board received a presentation from Robin Lieffering, Chair of the Bream Head Trust, who outlined the work of the Trust and the efforts being made to raise funds to install a predator fence along the peninsula. Robin acknowledged the good relationship that had been forged between the Department and the Trust that was enabling significant progress to be made at the site. She also outlined the opportunities for sponsorship for the work of the Trust, which indicated that all the hard work and dedication of the community was at last paying off. The Board fully supported the initiatives being planned and would provide whatever advocacy it could to extend the profile of the Trust and the work being undertaken.



Robin Lieffering, Bream Head Conservation Trust

Mount Manaia



Board Member, Hori Parata, explaining the cultural significance of Mt Manaia

The Board was provided with an update on the upgrade to the Mount Manaia track and the recent damage that was requiring remedial action as a result of recent major storms in the area.

Board Member Hori Parata drew attention longstanding issue surrounding the Trig Station on Mt Manaia. The issue of the presence of the trig on top of Mt Manaia was of ongoing concern, particularly to Ngatiwai. He outlined the understanding Ngatiwai had with the Department made 20 years previously when the Department wanted to build tracks up Mount Manaia [a tapu mountain] one of the major conditions that Ngatiwai had imposed was that the Trig must be removed. He said it was abhorrent to Ngatiwai that the structure still remained on their sacred Maunga and that no structure should be placed there.

The trig was owned by Land Information New Zealand [LINZ] and was the subject of ongoing discussions between the Department and LINZ to have the structure removed. The Board supported the removal of the structure and wrote to LINZ seeking its removal. LINZ responded to the Board that it intended to arrange a hui of all parties and provide options for consideration with a view to achieving an acceptable solution to this longstanding issue. The Board will continue to monitor progress in the 2011/12 year.

Whangarei Harbour Marine Reserves



Vince Kerr, Technical Support Supervisor, Marine, discussing the Motukororo Marine Reserve

The site visit concluded at the Motukororo Marine Reserve at Reotahi [one of two Marine Reserves in the Whangarei Harbour the other being at Waikaraka] where Vince Kerr, Technical Support Officer, Marine, provided the Board with background details of how the Marine Reserve had been established and the increase in the ecology of the site in these early days of the Marine Reserve establishment. He also outlined that although in terms of size this Marine Reserve was small, the interest from the public, particularly families, schools and community groups [observed from their attendance at snorkelling days etc] was significant and augured well for the future of the area and the increase in public demand for more such sites to be established.

S.4 Treaty of Waitangi

▪ Treaty Settlements

The Board acknowledged the financial implications on the Department in terms of Treaty Settlements. Northland is now in the throes of seeing some major Treaty Claims reaching settlement e.g. Muriwhenua Incorporation and Te Runanga o Te Rarawa in the Far North. The Board will continue to monitor the situation and lobby Government to ensure that the Department receives fair and equitable reimbursement for the operation funding that is currently being diverted to Treaty Settlement costs.

The Board acknowledges the efforts of Chris Jenkins and his Team to build positive relationships with all the Iwi in the North. This work will be of great benefit when Treaty Claims have been settled and the work of the Department in Northland adapts to the implications of the implementation of the Settlements.

Board Functions Under Section 6M of the Conservation Act

6M1 The functions of each Board shall be

(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 Strategy Review

The long awaited review of the Conservation Management Strategy [CMS] for Northland finally got underway in May 2011. The Board understood the rationale behind the delay and endorsed the need for consistency throughout the Department.

The Board appreciated the work staff of the Department had already undertaken in terms of the review and accepted that this would be a good foundation to begin the revised consultation process.

Now that the CMS review was revived and in full throttle mode the Board established a CMS Working Group [lead by the Chair] to work closely on a regular basis with the Department's CMS Team. This would ensure that the Board would have a presence at meetings/hui/Workshops etc that would provide the essential background for the Board as it proceeds through the process.

The Board looks forward to seeing the completion of the Review and the opportunity to approve the final document during the course of 2011/12.

(d) To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General –

(ii) *On any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board:*

Natural Heritage

Kauri National Park for Northland

The Government's directive for the establishment of a Kauri National Park in Northland was supported by the Board. Department of Conservation staff in Northland continued to keep the Board updated on progress with the proposal on a regular basis. The need to engage and gain the support from local Iwi, particularly Te Iwi o Te Roroa was noted and endorsed.

It was pleasing therefore to note that on 21 May 2011 the "Kauri National Park Proposal Discussion Document" was released for public comment. The concept of a National Park based on Waipoua is not new. As far back as the 1940's Professor Macgregor proposed such a Park and then in the mid 1990's a proposal actually reached the then Minister of Conservation. However, due to the concerns of Iwi in Northland that no such proposal proceed until such time as Treaty of Waitangi Claims had been addressed and settled, the proposal did not proceed. The Board at that time was fully involved in the proposal and had advised the New Zealand Conservation Authority of its support in principle but voiced its concerns regarding the need to address Treaty of Waitangi Claims before any such proposal was finalised.

With the passing of the Te Roroa Settlement Act in late 2008, opportunity was taken to review the proposal given that within the *Deed of Settlement* the establishment of a National Park based on the Forests of Waipoua was noted. The key issue for Te Roroa is co-governance without which their support of the proposal will not be given.

When the over riding National Parks Act was developed by the then Government under very different conditions and attitudes that we know today. The criteria for the establishment of a National Park as outlined in the *Act* makes no provision for co-governance – a key component crucial to Te Roroa for the establishment of a National Park as outlined in the current proposal. The Board acknowledged that the criteria within the *Act* provides challenges in terms of the new proposal.

The Board noted that the issue of expanding the National Park to include other Iwi rohe in Northland had not been ruled out and as Treaty Claims were settled the issue of including areas within each Settlement becoming part of a National Park for Northland could be considered.

The Board looked forward to being involved with the proposal as it progressed through the public consultation process and ultimate Report to the Minister before the end of the 2011/12 year.

Ngunguru Sandspit

The Board continued to monitor progress on achieving ongoing protection for the Ngunguru Sandspit. The Conservator Northland kept the Board informed on progress with possible options being considered [including land swap] and noted that the Crown and the private landowner were in dialogue to achieve a positive outcome.

This issue has been ongoing for a number of years and it is hoped that in 2011/12 a final chapter can be written that will ensure the future ongoing protection for this unique site.

Marine Protection

Marine Workshop

The Board in conjunction with Vince Kerr, Technical Support Officer, Marine and his Team at Northland Conservancy Office, hosted an inaugural Marine Sustainability Workshop in August 2010. The Workshop attracted representation from all Marine Groups throughout Northland and provided a platform to exchange ideas and programmes communities in Northland were involved in. The networking that took place laid a strong foundation for future collaborative marine protection programmes.

The Board hosted a further Workshop in November 2010 that built on the inaugural meeting and the Board will continue to support and host these very important opportunities to share and engage in a collaborate manner to achieve the best possible protection outcomes for Northland.

The goodwill and passion for the marine environment demonstrated by all participants was heartening as it was acknowledged that by working together progress can be achieved.

The Board acknowledges and supports the excellent work Vince Kerr was undertaking to promote and initiate marine protection programmes throughout the region.

Whale Strandings



Whale Straning, Far North, Northland

Two major whale strandings occurred in Northland during the 2010/11 year. The Board congratulated the Department's staff on the handling of these significant events and, in particular, the involvement of volunteer groups and individuals. It demonstrated the good relationship between the Department and the local communities and how everyone banded together in a common cause under extremely difficult and harrowing circumstances.

The Board noted that these type of incidents took a heavy toll on the Departments resources and staff.

Whangarei Harbour Marine Reserves Advisory Committee

Ian McGill continued to represent the Board on the Whangarei Harbour Marine Reserves Advisory Committee.

During the site visit in Whangarei in March 2010, it was good to be able to visit one of the Marine Reserve sites and see first hand the area involved and to hear the success of establishing this type of protection in the area. The area of the Reserves may be small, but the significant improvement in marine life as a result of the marine reserve status, was impressive.

Poor Knights Islands Nature Reserve & Poor Knights Islands Marine Reserve

The application to have the Poor Knights Islands Nature Reserve & Poor Knights Islands Marine Reserve declared a World Heritage Site, was still in progress.

National Marine Park for Northland

Past Board Member Jeroen Jongejans vision for a “National Marine Park for Northland” is still alive and being prompted at every opportunity. The Board will continue to seek opportunities to advocate for the establishment of a Marine Park in Northland. *It won't happen overnight, but it will happen!*

Historic Heritage

The Board acknowledges the need for the Department and other agencies to integrate management strategies in relation to the protection of our historic heritage.

Kororipo-Kerikeri Basin

The Board acknowledges the progress being made in the redevelopment of the Kororipo-Kerikeri Basin. With the removal of the vehicle bridge access resulting in the Basin being a pedestrian only site, has greatly enhanced visitor numbers and enjoyment of this historic site. The ongoing work of the Governance and Management Group in implementing the Kororipo-Kerikeri Basin Sustainable Development Plan is noted and acknowledged.

Threats to our Natural Heritage

Species Management & Predator Control

Kiwi

The Board acknowledged and supported the Department's Dog Aversion Training for Kiwi acknowledging that dogs continued to be the main danger to our native Icon. The Board supported the need to increase education of the public [particularly the young, through school programmes etc] on the dangers faced by Kiwi and draw attention to the need to keep dogs out of Kiwi areas and actively encourage owners to participate in the Dog Aversion Training.

“Project Restore” Taranga Island Rodent Eradication



Dawn – 19 May 2011. The first load heading out with Taranga Island in the background. The golden sunrise dawning a new era in the restoration on this magnificent Island and its biodiversity.

The Board was pleased to see the implementation of a 15 year old project for the eradication of Kiore from *Taranga* Island in the Hen and Chickens Island Group in Whangarei Harbour. The final result was due to the relationship built with Ngatiwai whose support was crucial to the success of the project. Along with following the progress of the rat eradication on Taranga Island, the Board would be watching with interest the progress Ngatiwai was making applying matauranga Maori on Mauitahi. The Board congratulated the Department and Ngatiwai on the manner in which they had worked together on *Project Restore* and was looking forward to watching developments on the Islands now managed by Ngatiwai. Exciting times ahead.

***Phytophthora taxon Agathis* [‘PTA’]**

The Board continued to receive regular updates on the presence of PTA in Northland forests. The work of the Inter-Agency Group dealing with this threat was acknowledged and it was hoped that in 2011/12 a more definitive outlook and possible solution could be achieved. The ongoing protection of Northland’s unique Kauri forests was a major concern for the Board, but it recognised the issue was being handled in a professional and positive manner.

Water Quality & Effluent Disposal

The Board continues to monitor the issue of water quality and effluent disposal in Northland. These are critical issues particularly as they relate to our remote communities. The impact on fragile and inadequate infrastructure in times of major torrential downpours [that are common and frequent in Northland] and impact on communities is of major concern. The Board proactively discusses the issues with the Regional and District Councils and takes the opportunity to make submissions into the relevant Regional and District Plans to continue to draw these major issues to attention and seek solutions.

The Board acknowledges the impact that ongoing significant development is having on the region. While Councils continue to issue building permits without a corresponding upgrade of appropriate infrastructure to handle this increased pressure, the issues currently being faced will continue to escalate at an alarming rate. The Board will continue to take every means available to it to seek action to alleviate the current situation and have Councils put in place adequate protection mechanisms to cope for the present and far into the future.

While seeking this action the Board will, at all times, be mindful of any potential adverse impacts from any construction or disposal programmes on our ecological biodiversity and habitats.

Fire

Chris Jenkins, Conservator Northland advised the Board of the establishment of an Enlarged Rural Fire District for Northland [ERFD] that would cover all the land within the Far North District will become a new Enlarged Rural Fire District incorporating the Far North District Council, Department of Conservation and the Aupouri/Karikari Rural Fire District into one District. This would be a new Authority and the Principal Rural Fire Officer would make decisions on fire control on all land in the Far North including land administered by the Department. The Department would have a seat on the new Board which would include representatives from the Far North District Council, Forestry Companies, Iwi an independent director and the New Zealand Fire Service.

Fire is a huge risk in Northland, in particular in the Far North. In the establishment of an enlarged rural fire district would see a new attitude to rural fire control with more emphasis on “fire prevention” through education and enforcement. The enlarged rural fire district would herald a potential new era on handling fires in Northland with the possibility of a future where there was one Fire District for all of Northland.

The Board supported this significant move to handle fires in Northland.

Biosecurity

Genetic Engineering/Modification

The Board continues to support a GE FREE Northland. The passion and commitment of Zelka Grammer and her GE FREE Northland Group is gathering momentum after years of tireless work and advocacy. Zelka Grammer has taken every opportunity during the Public Forum section of Board Meetings to keep the Board informed of issues relating to genetic engineering/modification. The Board appreciates this and will continue to support the GE free concept.

The Board was pleased to note that the Whangarei District Council was taking a leadership role in the region to achieve an integrated approach to GE with the Regional and other Councils in Northland to establish a zero tolerance to GE within the region.

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To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board.

Fish and Game Council Northland

The Board welcomed the presence of Rudi Hoetjes, Manager, Fish and Game Council Northland at Board meetings. The Board looks forward to enhancing this ongoing liaison in 2011/12 with possible site visits to Fish and Game Wetland sites and other locations of mutual interest to both organisations.

The Board acknowledged the excellent contribution retiring Board Member Ian Faulkner had made representing the Board at meetings of the Fish and Game Council Northland. Rudi Hoetjes endorsed this contribution and said that Ian would be missed as his contribution into discussions had added value to meetings.

The Board resolved to continue to be represented at meetings of the Fish and Game Council Northland. Like the Board the Council held its meeting at different locations throughout Northland. In view of this the Board resolved to be represented at meetings by the local Board Member at each location. This decision was conveyed to the Council.

General Liaison

Liaison with individuals, groups, agencies is a high priority for the Board. It is pleasing to report the continued attendance at Board meeting by representatives from a wide range of interest groups. By holding Board Members at different locations throughout the Conservancy, opportunities are available for a wide range of representation to attend meetings and be heard. The Board welcomes these opportunities and never ceases to be amazed and humbled by the commitment, passion, enthusiasm, dedication and selflessness of these individuals.

The Board acknowledges the significant contribution to conservation that is made – all on a voluntary basis – by these individuals and groups and offers its support in any way possible to assist and add value to projects being undertaken.

Local Authorities

The Board was pleased to note Craig Brown's re-election to the Northland Regional Council and his appointment as Chair. Craig has been a regular attendee representing the Northland Regional Council at Board meetings around the North. His frank and honest input into discussions raised the bar in terms of the Board's understanding of local authority politics. When Craig spoke the Board listened and while acknowledging and applauding his appointment as Chair realised that his ability to attend Board meetings on a regular basis would likely be curtailed. The Board expresses its appreciation to Craig for adding value to our meetings and for his honesty and integrity.

Another highlight following on from the 2010 Local Authority elections was the election of previous Board Member, Jeroen Jongejans to the Whangarei District Council. With his passion for the marine environment and his all round background and experience of conservation and the environment, the Board notes with satisfaction the opportunity for Jeroen to *wave the conservation flag* in local politics.

The Board sent its congratulations to both Craig and Jeroen on their respective appointments and looks forward to continuing to work with them and their Teams to achieve positive conservation outcomes for the region.

The Board welcomed Councillor Bronwyn Hunt as the new regular representative of the Northland Regional Council replacing Craig Brown. This continuity of representation is appreciated.

The Board appreciated the representation at Board meetings from the Far North District Council and welcomed Councillor Colin Kitchen as the Council's representative.

Department of Conservation

The commitment, passion, dedication and enthusiasm of the public is only matched by that of Department of Conservation staff throughout Northland. The inspired and proactive leadership provided by Chris Jenkins, Conservator Northland played no small part in the ability of the Conservancy to live within its budget yet achieve major gains for conservation. This has become even more challenging in the current global economic climate where the ever diminishing allocation to the Department presents not a few challenges!

The Board was introduced to the Department's new "Vision" of "New Zealand is the greatest living space on earth" and the methods being taken to implement the aims and objectives of the vision in line with the strategic directions of the Department.

The Board recognised the emphasis on involving the community to achieve the objectives of the Vision – the Department cannot achieve conservation gains alone – however, with the community all things were possible. The Board looked forward to be part of achieving the Vision.

On a more sombre note, the Board noted that as has happened in the past, change in focus i.e. the new Vision, together with the Department's ever decreasing budget, yet another Review was underway within the Department. The Board will watch with interest the outcome from this Review.

In recognising the need to move forward and the rationale behind the current Review, the Board also notes the affect this has on already over committed staff. It hopes that in implementing the Review care is taken to ensure that key experienced and skilled staff are not lost to conservation at the expense of achieving a balanced budget.

The Board continues to acknowledge the genuine care and concern of staff to do the best they can with the resources available is commendable. The dedication and commitment of staff is unquestionable and the Board recognises how fortunate the Department as a whole is in recruiting and maintaining staff of this calibre. The constant changes within the Department do affect all staff and it is under this constant "change" umbrella staff continue to produce quality results.

The leadership of Chris Jenkins, Conservator Northland, has a major bearing on the conservation achievements within the region. His commitment and personal contribution to achieving positive outcomes is significant, particularly in the area of relationship building

between key agencies and Iwi. The Board acknowledges the positive achievements Chris Jenkins and his Team have, and continue to make, in the region, as well as the good relationship between the Department and the Board.

New Zealand Conservation Authority

The Board appreciated the ongoing support and advice provided by Yvonne Sharp, New Zealand Conservation Authority Member and the Authority's Northland representative at Board meetings.

On numerous occasions Yvonne's wise counsel and sage advice had been provided and appreciated. Yvonne's long association with local government politics [including as previous Mayor of the Far North District Council] has been invaluable for the Board in providing sound background advice on local issues and networking opportunities within the region.

Yvonne's professionalism enables her to relate to all groups and individuals. She has provided added value to Board meetings as well as ongoing feedback on activities and issues facing the Authority.

The Board appreciates the Authority enabling Yvonne to participate in Board activities and meetings and hopes that this will continue for a very long time.

The Board records its sincere appreciation to Yvonne for her commitment and contribution during the year and looks forward to continuing this mutually beneficial relationship in the future.

Public Forum

The Public Forum segment within each Board Meeting Agenda, continues to be a highlight at meetings. The diverse discussions that are held at this time have proved to be enlightening and, at times, entertaining. Again, the passion, commitment and enthusiasm of individuals [whether they be representing their own interests or those of a group etc] is outstanding. Wherever possible the Board has picked up on the issues raised and supported the work that was being done.

The Board acknowledges the valuable contribution these individuals make and will continue to honour this commitment and provide whatever support and assistance it can. It also appreciates the opportunity to hear issues of major concern and conflict and wherever possible has offered its support to assist in achieving resolutions and positive outcomes.

The Board would like to formally acknowledge the regular attendance at meetings of the following –

- Rongo Bentson, Te Runanga o Te Rarawa
- Zelka Grammer, GE Free Northland
- Bev Woods, Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society Northern Branch
- Margaret Hicks, Ruakaka/Bream Bay Coastal Care

The Board appreciated the public attendance at meetings in all the various locations. The local contribution added value and colour to proceedings and on each occasion the Board was provided with advice of new conservation initiatives being undertaken and progress with

existing programmes. It was pleasing to note the good relationship between the Department and local communities in all four Areas where the Board held its meetings.

CONSERVATION LAND USE

CONCESSIONS

During the 2010/11 year the Board was provided with information on the Department's Concessions Review and received regular updates on concession applications at each Board meeting.

STATUTORY PLANNING

The Board made submissions on the following documents in 2010/11 :-

- Regional Policy Statement for Northland
- Northland Regional Council Annual Plan
- Far North District Council Annual Plan
- Whangarei District Council Annual Plan
- The Board provided letters of support to the Department of Conservation opposing resource consent application to take water from the Awanui River.

New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement

The Board was provided with a presentation from Andrew Riddell, Community Relations Supervisor, Statutory Planning, on the many facets of the new New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and its relation to the Resource Management Act.

Crest Energy Tidal Turbines, Kaipara Harbour

The Board noted the decision by the Environment Court to allow Crest Energy to pursue the installation of tidal turbines in the Kaipara Harbour.

The Board heard a presentation from Deborah Harding, Te Uri o Hau advising that they are not opposed to tidal turbines as a means of sustainable energy. However, the Crest Energy project risks the environmentally and ecologically important Kaipara Harbour to an experiment on the commercial viability of tidal turbines.

The Board will closely monitor this application as it proceeds through the various consent processes.

New Zealand Game Animal Council

In 2009 the Board made a submission opposing the establishment of a New Zealand Game Animal Council and advocated that any funding that was to be channelled to the establishment of such a Council should more appropriately be allocated to the Department of Conservation to increase its resources for its wild animal management programmes.

In 2011 the Board noted with concern the decision by the Government to proceed to establish a New Zealand Game Animal Council.

The Board will take the opportunity to again voice its concerns to the Select Committee set up to hear submissions on the establishment of this Council.

Christchurch Earthquakes

The Board was extremely dismayed at the major earthquakes in Christchurch in September 2010 and February 2011 and the continued after shocks and consequent damage to the infrastructure and buildings in Canterbury.

The Board expressed its strong support for the efforts being made to rebuild and repair the City and suburbs affected and the emotional, physical and psychological affects on the people of Canterbury.

The Board was humbled by the trauma being experienced given the relative safe haven that is Northland.

Recreation & Tourism

Tracks and walkways

The Board noted progress being made on the upgrade of various tracks and walks within the region together with the Northland sector of the Te Araroa Trail.

- **Far North Multi-Day Walk**

The Board congratulated the Department on its work to upgrade the Multi-Day Walk in the Far North with the addition of campgrounds along the route. This had the potential to greatly increase visitor numbers to the area and provide an exciting and stunning visitor experience along this coastal walk.

- **Te Araroa Trail**

The Board had been updated on progress with the establishment of the Northland sector of the Geoff Chapple inspired and lead Te Araroa Trail from Cape Reinga to Bluff. The Conservator Northland had advised that all the facets of the Trail on Department of Conservation managed land had been completed. The upgrades involved some vegetation clearance and extension but none of the work had required resource consents.

Promotion

Loder Cup

- The Board did not put forward a nominee for the 2011 Loder Cup.

Northland Conservancy Conservation Awards

- In 2011 the Board confirmed its promotion of a **Board Supreme Award** from successful nominees at the next Northland Conservancy Conservation Awards expected to be held in 2012.

Environmental Defence Society 2010 Conference, Auckland

- Richard Robbins and Robert Willoughby represented the Board at the June 2011 Environmental Defence Society Conference. The theme for 2011 was “Coastlines :*Spatial Planning for Land and Sea*”.

Feedback from the attendees indicated that the Conference had been worthwhile, not only for the content, but for the invaluable opportunity to network with a wide range of participants at all levels. The Keynote Speakers had provided excellent information that encouraged robust discussion and debate.

The Board sees merit in continuing to send representatives to this Annual Conference.

Communication

Press Release

- The Board’s inaugural Post Board Meeting Press release was launched following the 11 March 2011 meeting and will be a regular feature for future meetings. The Board appreciated the initiative of new Board Member Peter O’Hara in volunteering to produce this document on behalf of the Board, together with the development of a Communication Plan.

Goals & Objectives

- The Board’s Goals and Objectives were reviewed and updated at the June 2011 Board meeting and, once finalised, will be displayed for public access on the Board’s website page.
- In the 2011/12 year the Board will seek to align specific projects relating back to the Goals and Objectives in order to progress the objectives outlined and the intent encapsulated within the Goals and Objectives document.

Department of Conservation Website [www.doc.govt.nz]

The Board continues to use the Departments website to promote issues and provide access by the public to Agenda, Minutes, Annual Reports and other documentation. The Board acknowledges the importance of utilising this ever growing technology and will continue to look for innovated ways to promote conservation and the environment through this medium in the future.

Conclusion

The 2010/11 year has seen the Board make a conscious effort to actively engage in local conservation and environment issues while, at the same time, acknowledging that while New Zealand is a small country located at the furthest end of the globe, what happens globally flows on and ultimately reaches our shores.

The issue of climate change/global warming cannot be ignored and its impact on the environment and the ecosystems that live within it must be acknowledged and, wherever and in whatever way possible, advocated for protection before all is lost.

The Board viewed the documentary “The End of the Line” which graphically illustrated the depletion of our fisheries and the consequent impact on all life forms, including humans.

The Board will continue to actively promote sustainability at all levels and the ongoing protection of our ecosystems and ecology.

Clean potable water, effective and efficient waste management, pristine harbours and waterways, thriving species, effective pest eradication programmes and the enhancement of our marine biodiversity will continue to be a focus for the Board.

The Board acknowledges the excellent work being undertaken by staff of the Department of Conservation and applauds the new Vision of the Department that recognises the importance and significance of involving the community – in isolation we achieve little – united we can achieve much.

The Northland Conservation Board wants to be part of a movement towards achieving the best possible outcomes for our species, habitats and environment generally, including humans. The Board is committed to continuing its active advocacy and support at all levels to achieve this along with all the like minded communities, groups and individuals in Northland.



Kevin Evans
BOARD CHAIRPERSON

KEVIN EVANS

Champion of Biodiversity and, in particular,
Pateke/Brown Teal



Observing the Marine Reserve at Reotahi – March 2011

**Member of the Northland Conservation Board
2000 to 2011**

**Chair of the Northland Conservation Board
2006 to 2011**