



OTAGO CONSERVATION BOARD

Poari Papa Atawhai – ā-rohe ki Otago



Annual Report – Rīpoata ā-tau

1 JULY 2021 – 30 JUNE 2022

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.

For more information about the Otago Conservation Board, please see conservationboards.org.nz.

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Chair's Annual Report

I am pleased to report on the activities of this committed group for the 2021/22 year.

A key focus for the year was progressing a partial review of our Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) for biking. Our previous CMS was highly prescriptive in its descriptions of where biking could occur. To be able to consider applications for new biking trails within the ten-year life of a CMS, a partial review was required. 1749 submissions were received on the draft, and public hearings held. Four of our Board members formed a sub-committee to progress the review and in early 2022, the final draft was referred to the NZCA for approval. We were delighted that this was achieved in June. In our view, the new approach strikes an important balance between allowing for new trails to be considered but ensuring there are checks and balances in place to ensure any new trail is appropriate in a particular location.

Once again, we have been advocating on behalf of the public of Otago for the delivery of the CMS milestones to be put at the heart of the Department's business planning. The public of Otago invest a huge amount of time and energy communicating their priorities for conservation when a CMS is written. While there have been indications that our advocacy is raising the importance of this within Te Papa Atawhai, we still have work to do to put CMS Milestones at the heart of the Department's work.

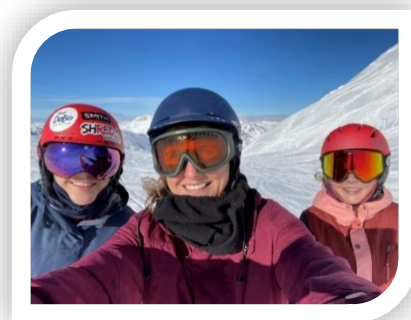
We continue to invest in thought and discussions around conservation partnerships with Māori and defining our role in supporting the Crown/Treaty partnership in a rapidly evolving context. Our consideration of the proposal to vest the management of the Morningstar Reserve to Ngāi Tahu was an interesting example of this work in action.

Climate change continues to be a key area of concern for our Board. We submitted an Emissions Reduction Plan in November 2021 on behalf of our Board and the Southland Conservation Board. There is no doubt this will be a key focus for the Board going forward.

You will see at the end of this document a more detailed summary of our year's work.

Mā tini mā mano, ka rapa te whai

Tara Druce
Otago Conservation Board Chair



Tara Druce enjoying a day at Treble Cone with her daughters

Our Key Priorities

- **Conservation Management Plan: Partial review, monitoring and advice to the Department**
- **Biodiversity and Jobs for Nature**
- **Visitor Management**
- **Climate mitigation and adaptation**
- **Land re-categorisation**
- **Reporting, communications, and self-review**
- **Strengthening our understanding of, and delivery on, our Section 4 commitments**





Introduction

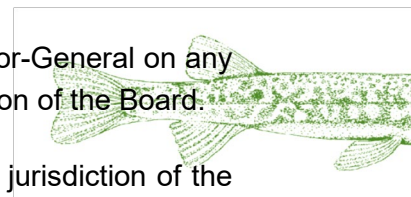
The Otago Conservation Board (the Board) is an independent body established under Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987. The Board's eleven members are appointed by the Minister of Conservation to provide advice to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) and to Te Papa Atawhai, the Department of Conservation (DOC) on behalf of the public.

The Board helps to achieve conservation outcomes by:

- Contributing a strategic perspective, informed by the community, to conservation planning, policy development and decision-making.
- Exercising powers of recommendation and approval for statutory management documents. In particular, the Otago Conservation Management Strategy and the Titirea/Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan.
- Advising on the implementation of statutory management planning documents.
- Advocating for conservation outcomes, including in public forums and through statutory planning processes.

The statutory roles and functions of Conservation Boards are set out under Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987:

- To recommend the approval by the New Zealand Conservation Authority of conservation management strategies and the review and amendment of such strategies under the relevant enactments.
- To approve conservation management plans, and the review and amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments.
- 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.
- To advise the New Zealand Conservation Authority or the Director-General on any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance.
- To advise the New Zealand Conservation Authority or the Director-General on any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board.



To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act.

In addition to the Conservation Act 1987, the following statutory roles and functions of Conservation Boards are included in the National Parks Act 1980:

- To recommend management plans, and the review or amendment of such plans, for parks within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- To consider and determine priorities for the implementation of management plans for national parks.
- To review and report to the Director-General or the Authority, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the administration of the general policies for national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- To give advice to the Director-General or the Authority on the interpretation of any management plan for a park; on any proposal for the addition of land to any national park or the establishment of a new national park; and on any other matter relating to any national park within the jurisdiction of the Board.

The Conservation Act requires Conservation Boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority with an annual report as soon as practical after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Otago Conservation Board submits this twenty-first annual report.



Phlipa Agnew on Huriawa Peninsula, Karitane

Otago Conservation Board Region

Otago Conservation Board

The Otago Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers the area of 4,093,064.12 hectares.

The region runs from the eastern coastline, across dry inland valleys, and over the Southern Alps to the west. It contains a multiplicity of different landforms, with a huge rainfall gradient - 10,000mm on the western side of the Southern Alps and just 100kms due east, the driest area of New Zealand, Alexandra with 400mm annually. The area also extends out to the 12-nautical mile limit with respect to coastal and marine issues, and out to the 200-nautical mile limit. with respect to protected species.

Approximately 6.34% of New Zealand's public conservation land and area lie within Otago's jurisdiction.

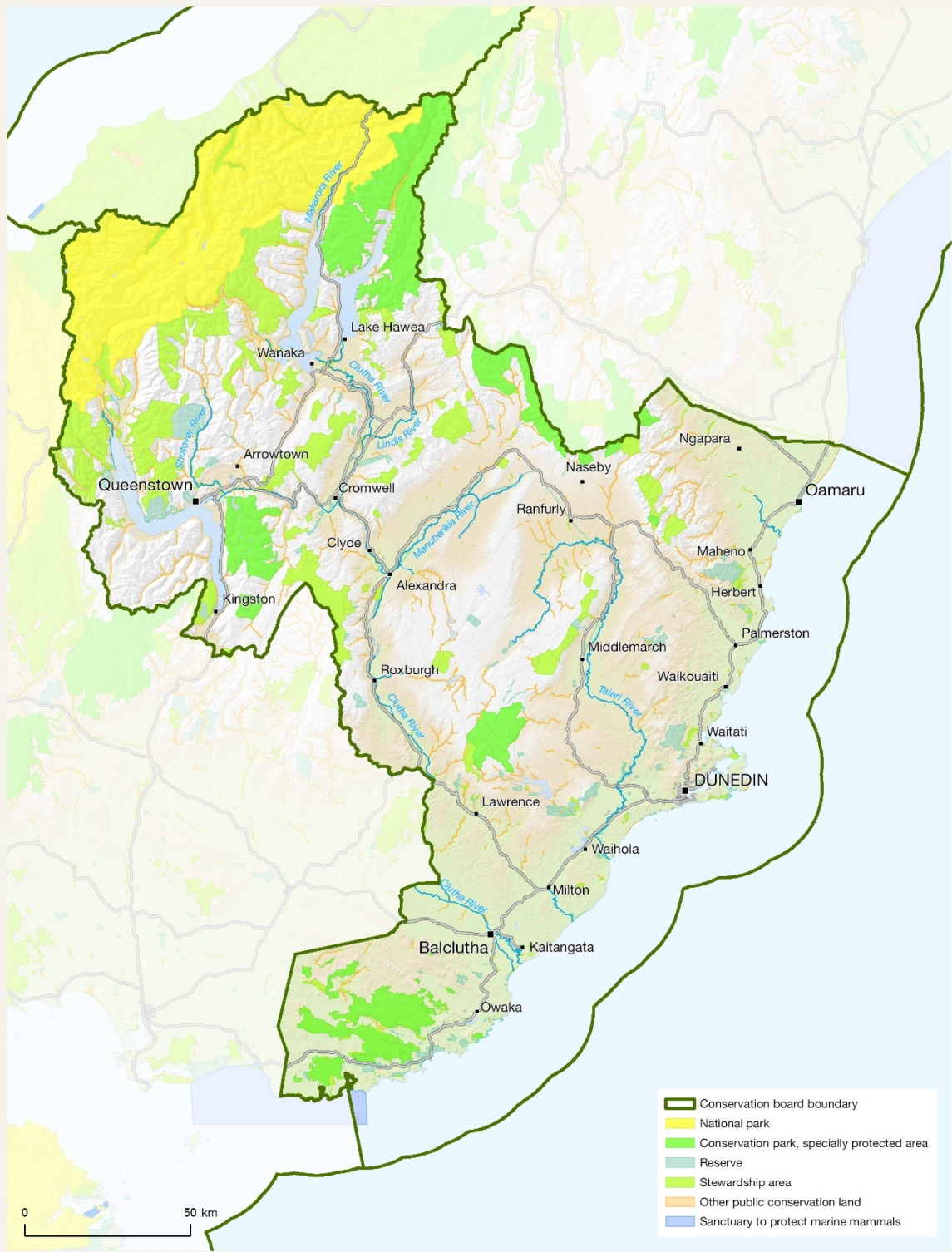
Public conservation land and areas make up 22.34% of all land in Otago. This consists of:

- 909,799.62 hectares of Public Conservation Land
- 4,527.8 hectares of Sanctuaries to Protect Marine Mammals

Conservation features of the area

The main features of Public Conservation Land and Waters within the Board's boundaries are:

- Fiordland National Park – 155.02 ha
- Mount Aspiring National Park – 358,763.65 ha
- Eyre Mountains/Taka Ra Haka Conservation Park – 26.37 ha
- Catlins Conservation Park – 52,878.44 ha
- Te Papanui Conservation Park – 20,517.42 ha
- Hawea Conservation Park – 103,786.25 ha
- Oteake Conservation Park – 30,921.77 ha
- Ahuriri Conservation Park – 25.91 ha
- 119 Scenic Reserves – 33,338.94 ha
- 37 Historic Reserves – 1,646.85 ha
- 87 Recreation Reserves – 14,994.04 ha
- 645 Stewardship Areas – 243,540.87 ha
- 478 Marginal Strips – 12,075.64 ha
- 4 Specially Protected Areas – 33,834.98 ha
- 1 Sanctuary to protect Marine Mammals – 4,527.8 ha



Otago Conservation Board Public Conservation Areas 2022

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New Zealand Government

Otago Region

This area runs from the east coast, across the dry inland valleys of Central Otago, and over the Southern Alps to the west. It features a rich Ngāi Tahu history and a wide range of different landforms, ecosystems and species that are found nowhere else. This is, in part, due to the huge rainfall gradient — 10,000 mm annually on the western side of the Southern Alps and 400mm annually in Manuherikia, Alexandra, the driest part of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

It also offers many attractive opportunities for recreation and sightseeing, which is creating a huge increase in visitors to the region.

The public interest in recreation and conservation issues provides the basis for the Board's intervention and advice whether through its oversight of commercial activities on conservation land, the management of visitor activity, the control of weeds and pests, the enhancement of biodiversity or the provision of its statutory advice.

The Board also recognises the special significance of Te Wāhipounamu — the Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area, a part of which lies within the Board's jurisdiction.

Significant areas

The Board's area features 2,793,630.24 ha of Public Conservation Land, including:

- 132 Scenic Reserves 33,513 ha total)
- 52 Historic Reserves (1,694 ha total)
- 459 Recreation Reserves (19,030 ha total)
- 5 Ecological Areas (16512.31 ha total)
- 646 Stewardship Areas (67,0640 ha total)



Tititea/Mount Aspiring National Park

Tititea/Mt Aspiring National Park covers 355,531 ha, straddling the boundary between the areas covered by both the Otago Conservation Board and West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board. Its large glacier carved valleys, stunning mountain rangers and river valleys make it a popular destination for recreational users and international visitors alike.

Te Papanui Conservation Park

Te Papanui Conservation Park covers 20,591 ha. This remote area is an area of high ecological value, providing protection for a large area of intact native tussock grasslands, as

well as a diversity of other ecosystems including wetlands, shrublands and silver beech forest remnants. It is considered a remote experience area and is used by the public for a range of recreational activities including hiking/walking, mountain biking, 4WD, horse trekking and cross-country skiing.

Hāwea Conservation Park

The Hāwea Conservation Park covers about 105,000 hectares of public conservation land around Lake Hāwea and the Hunter River, as well as areas on the McKerrow Range near Makarora. Large areas in the park are covered with native beech forest and shrublands.

Ōteake Conservation Park

About 65,000 hectares of public conservation land on the St Bathans, Hawkdun, Ida, Ewe and St Mary's Ranges and parts of the upper Manuherikia Basin. The vegetation is dominated by tussock grasslands.

Kōpūwai Conservation Area

The Kōpūwai Conservation Area is around 20,000ha and stretches along the Old Man Range due west of Alexandra. It contains the upper catchments of the Pomahaka and Fraser Rivers and features distinctive rock tors bisected with fields of alpine herbs along the exposed summit.

Otago Central Rail Trail

This very popular recreational facility for cyclists, walkers, mountain bikers and horse riders follow the route of the former Otago Central Branch railway line for 150 kilometres between Mata-Au, Clyde and Middlemarch. It is now one of the official Aotearoa, New Zealand Cycle Trails.

Remarkables, Coronet Peak and Treble Cone

Parts of the public conservation land at these sites are occupied by commercial ski fields that are well-known for winter recreational activities but are also popular summer destinations.



Significant species

There are many significant and well-known indigenous species that can be found within the Board's area of jurisdiction, including:

Otago and grand skinks/mokomoko

Jewelled gecko/moko kākāriki

Yellow-eyed Penguin/hoiho

Otago shag/kōua

New Zealand sea lion/rāpoka

Hectors dolphin/upokohue

New Zealand fur seal/kekeno

Southern right whale/tohorā

New Zealand parakeet/kākāriki

Long-tailed bat/pekapeka-tou-ra

Galaxiid/īnanga

Long-finned eel/tuna kuwharuwharu

Haast kiwi/tokoeka

New Zealand falcon/kārearea

Buff weka

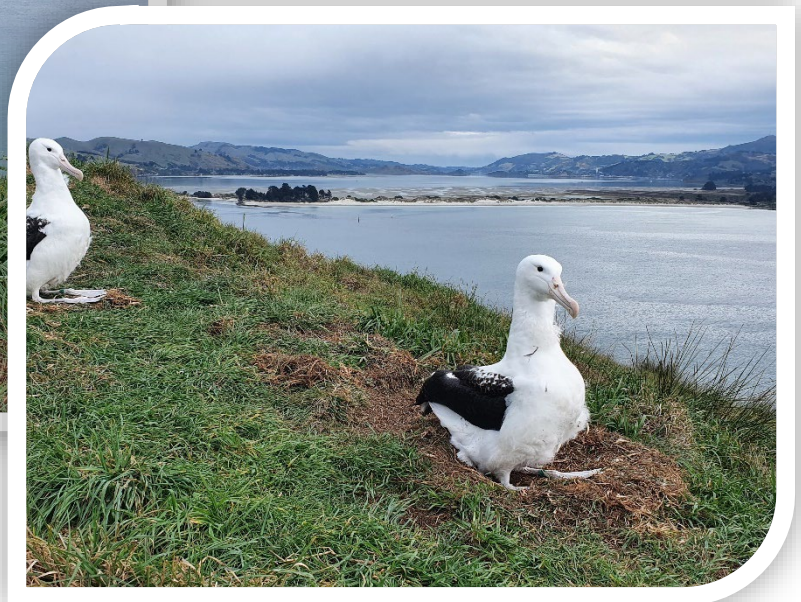
Yellowhead/mōhua

South Island robin/kakaruwai

Royal albatross/toroa



Toroa, Taiaroa Head – photo credit: Jim Watts



Work Programme

At the beginning of each year, the Board prepares a work plan outlining its statutory responsibilities, expectations set by the Minister of Conservation and any priorities the Board wishes to address. This is a living document that is updated with progress reports prior to each meeting. A summary of the main work streams is listed below, and the full document can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Statutory engagement

'Contributing a strategic perspective to conservation planning, policy development and decision making.'

The Board provided advice to the Department on a number of statutory matters including:

- Recommendation to the NZCA of the draft partial review of the Otago Conservation Management Strategy
- Advice to the Department regarding a proposal to vest a part of the Morning Star Beach Recreation Reserve
- The status of implementation of tenure review outcomes in Otago
- Progress of South-East Marine Protection
- Prioritising and resourcing engagement in Destination Management Plan processes

The Board made submissions including:

- Tenure Review, Lowburn Valley
- Governmental Emissions Reduction Plan

One media release was issued

- A call for action on a regenerative tourism strategy



CMS Partial Review

The CMS partial review was signed off by the NZCA in June 2022. The OCB recommended many new areas for consideration for assessment, whilst looking to strengthen the assessment criteria to ensure robust debate on the merits and impacts of track proposals. This approach was endorsed and adopted by the NZCA and signed off by the Minister. In our view, the new approach strikes an important balance between allowing for new trails to be considered but ensuring there are checks and balances in place to ensure any new trail is appropriate in a particular location.

CMS Milestone Reporting

Once again, we have been advocating on behalf of the public of Otago for the delivery of the CMS milestones to be put at the heart of the Department's business planning. The public of Otago invest a huge amount of time and energy communicating their priorities for conservation when a CMS is written. While there have been indications that our advocacy is raising the importance of this within Te Papa Atawhai, we still have work to do to put CMS Milestones at the heart of the Department's work.

Land Classification

The reclassification of Remarkables/Kawarau is a priority for the Otago Conservation Board and the whenua under consideration is of immense value to the people of Otago. Further, the reclassification of the Remarkables/ Kawarau is a milestone in the 2016 Otago Conservation Management Strategy.

The OCB has been advocating to the Department for a number of years to urging them to continue to progress this important work and avoid the loss of significant momentum and erosion of relationships that would be likely from a delay.

We now understand this work will form part of a wider consideration of stewardship reclassification in the South Island and we considered by a specialised panel. While we welcome moves to progress this, we would like to ensure that the Otago Conservation Board input is woven into this process as per our statutory responsibility.



Biodiversity

Over the past year the board has continued to advocate for the precious and unique biodiversity of Otago. With strong expertise in this area from both the terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments, the board carries out this important mahi in a variety of ways.

Te mana o te taiao

The long awaited first te mana o te taiao implementation strategy was released this year. This strategy allows operators better guidance to enact the goals of this broader plan. While the board does not have an operational role, this document provides a basis for us to provide advice to the department and other conservation organisations to ensure the implementation goals are met in a meaningful way and in a way that gives effect to te Tiriti and our Otago conservation management strategy. The board looks forward to seeing how this strategy continues to develop and the outcomes it brings for our nature.

Biodiversity Forum

The Otago biodiversity forum continues to show promise as a cross organisational platform to share ideas, work together and achieve biodiversity outcomes. Our board continues its role in this forum in an advisory capacity.

Submissions and letters

During the year, our biodiversity subcommittee submitted on:

- November 2021: Letter to minister regarding South East Marine Protection Forum
- April 2022: Managing long term exotic forestry in the ETS alongside Southland Conservation Board
- June 2022: Clutha district cars on beach bylaws

Tāoka species

The board continues its work to support the wishes of mana whenua to have better information about tāoka species in our rohe. Working with the department we have begun to receive information which is not only useful for our treaty partners but also the board at large.

Tarras airport

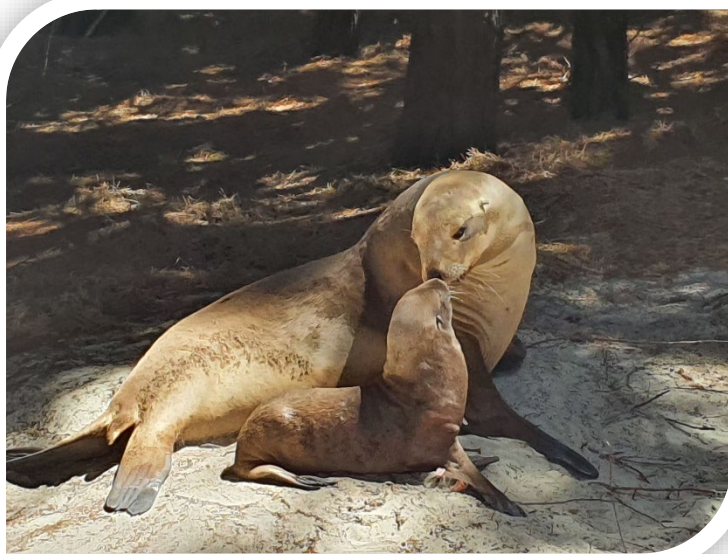
After a presentation from the community, the board has begun to consider proposals for a new airport in central Otago at Tarras. While the board has no opinion on this development as of yet, the biodiversity of the site and surrounding areas including wetlands are being considered.

Field trip Tuckers Beach

In November 2021 the board visited one of the jobs for nature projects at Tuckers Beach near Queenstown. This project is aiming to enhance habitat and recreation values of a reserve in this area. The board were impressed by the clearing of weeds that had occurred using machinery to work a larger area faster. We also learnt about the challenges of this site with water needing to be trailed into plants over summer and guards needed to protect seedlings from the large rabbit population of the area. This site already contained some amazing wildlife with board members experiencing sightings of tūturiwhatu/dotterels, McCanns skinks and kotare/kingfisher during this visit. It will be exciting to see how this site develops in the future.

Challenges- Other Notes

Several discussions have been held at and between Board meetings regarding the challenges in having an effective system for monitoring and reporting on impacts on species, infrastructure and landscapes at a regional / local level particularly in relation to tāoka species and their wellbeing and particularly in high traffic / high visitor usage areas. There is reporting at a national level but there seem to be challenges in effectively reporting at a regional / local level, which would be very useful for DOC staff and for Conservation Boards to be able to identify and manage threats as early as possible to minimise negative impacts.



*Rāpoka/ NZ Sealion at Aramoana
Photo credit: Jim Watts*



*Biodiversity Subcommittee lead
Taylor Davies-Colley holding a scree
skink found during a lizard survey in
Oteake conservation park in January
2022. This is one of the most lizard
diverse places in the country and a
special part of our region.*

Visitor Management

The following is a summary of the work done by the Visitor Management Subcommittee against the board's annual workplan.

1. Provide input relating to visitor management into statutory plans / documents / conservation law reform eg CMS / Park Plans / Conservation legislation

Tim Barke (Visitor Management subcommittee lead) attended an update in Queenstown with DG and DOC and the Board submitted on Partial Reviews of Conservation General Policy and General Policy for National Parks. Tim also attended the Conservation Standards Workshop at Cardrona Alpine Resort in Wānaka

2. Provide input into Destination Management Plans and encourage alignment with DOC visitor management strategies

Tim was appointed to the Destination Management Steering Group for the Queenstown Lakes District. Tim attended Te Ūnga Mai Destination Management planning wānanga for regenerative tourism development held in the Bay of Islands with Regional Tourism Organisations from throughout NZ. Meetings were held with Kai Tahu (Aukaha and Te Ao Marama) and the Department of Conservation to collect input for the development of the Plan

3. Promote strengthening of relationships between the Department, the visitor industry (and Concessionaires), iwi, and environmental / recreationally focussed groups and individuals

An Otago Conservation Board Visitor Management Hui with the DG and DOC is being planned for early 2023 to explore ways to make it as simple and effective as possible for the visitor industry and community members to contribute to conservation outcomes

4. Provide input as required or requested by DOC on visitor related matters

Review of Conservation Management Strategy Milestones is currently underway to ensure they are achievable and effective in tracking progress of mahi and desired conservation outcomes

5. Development and ongoing governance of DMPs should include iwi representation

There is agreement for DOC and Kāi Tahu to partner with Lake Wānaka Tourism, Destination Queenstown and Queenstown Lakes District Council in ongoing governance and to oversee the implementation of the Queenstown Lakes Destination Management Plan

Tim Barke on Lake Whakatipu Waimāori



Climate Change

In conjunction with Southland Conservation Board, the Otago Conservation Board wrote to NZCA proposing that carbon reduction and climate change mitigation plans be introduced to both new and existing concessions, and asking for NZCA support. NZCA wrote to Minister Conservation to endorse request on 19th July 2021.

On behalf of OCB, the committee submitted to the Emissions Reduction Plan (Ministry for the Environment) on 23rd November 2021

The Climate Change subcommittee has also been involved in supporting other sub committees with issues that arise in the public forum.

Additionally, there has been work done to support the CMS milestone mahi, including suggesting rewording to include climate change/carbon reduction in milestones.

Board Liaison

Treaty Partnership

Our Ngāi Tahu representatives continue to liaise with local rūnaka as well as Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and effectively bring Treaty partner perspectives to our table.

New Zealand Conservation Authority

The Board has continued to maintain a positive and constructive relationship with the New Zealand Conservation Authority. This has included:

- NZCA liaison (Tony Lepper) attended OCB meetings.
- Continuing to align its submissions with those made by the NZCA to ensure maximum impact (when possible).

Other Conservation Boards

The annual Conservation Board Chairs' Conference provides an excellent forum for Chairs across Aotearoa, New Zealand to learn from each other and is highly valued. Relationships with the local neighbouring Conservation Boards are excellent with regular communication between the four Boards – Otago, Southland, Canterbury Aoraki and West Coast Tai Poutini with regular reciprocal attendance at meetings, particularly with Southland.

Fish and Game

The Board was represented at Fish and Game Council meetings in Macraes, Ōtepoti, Dunedin and met with the Westland branch informally.



Informing the Board

The Board continues to receive reports from the Department at each meeting. These include an overview of important issues with a particular emphasis on the strategic issues arising in each area. This is intended to better align with the Board's role. Some highlights included:

- CMS Partial Review briefing
- Implementing NZ Biodiversity Strategy
- Jobs For Nature
- SEMP Briefing
- Climate Change
- Visitor Management Strategy
- Business Planning
- Treaty Partnership



Community Engagement



A Public Forum session at each Board meeting is made available for members of the community to raise conservation issues with the Board. In 2021-2022, presentations made by community groups and members of the public at Board meetings included:

- **25 March 2022 (online):** Member of the public presented on the Tarras airport proposal



Governance

Department of Conservation



The Board enjoys a strong relationship with Te Papa Atawhai, the Department of Conservation in 2021-22, interacting with the Director Operations, SSI, Aaron Fleming, Statutory Manager John Roberts, and Operations Managers - Coastal Otago, Annie Wallace; - Central Otago, Nikki Holmes; - Whakatipu-wai-Māori David Butt.

Concessions and Submissions

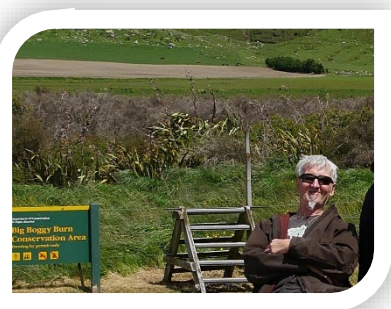
Where an application for a concession is believed to have a particular public interest, it is not adequately covered within a Plan or Strategy, or it is to be publicly notified, the Department will seek advice from the Board.

Board Membership

There were nine Board members for the reporting year. This included two appointees of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in accordance with section 273 of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

Changes to Membership

The year began with a farewell to Dave Vass. In June, we also bid farewell to Rob Wardle, Robyn Shanks and Ranui Ellison.



Dave Vass



OCB meeting kanohi ki te kanohi in Ōtepoti in June.

Board Members

Tara Druce – Chair

Tara Druce is based in Central Otago. Her role as Chair of the Otago Conservation Board brings together her love of the outdoors, conservation, strategy and governance. With a background in tourism public policy and planning, she has also run her own business and tourism planning consultancy as well as worked in Parliament advising the Minister of Tourism. She currently oversees the Regional Business Partners Team for Otago, supporting businesses through the region to grow and innovate. She lives in Manuherikia, Alexandra with her husband and three teenage girls.

Dr Philippa Agnew

Philippa is a research scientist with Tourism Waitaki at the Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony. She has a PhD in marine science, specialising in seabirds, and has extensive experience in environmental management, including maintenance, population management, spatial planning and conservation. She has detailed knowledge around protected species and Marine Protected Areas and was a member of the South East Marine Protection Forum.

Tim Barke

Tim has extensive experience in land, marine and aviation-based tourism, and is currently the General Manager of Lake Wānaka Tourism. He has worked extensively with community, iwi, and the Department of Conservation. Tim is interested and experienced in understanding taonga and seeking to achieve industry outcomes whilst protecting and enhancing the mauri and wairua of the rohe.

Taylor Davies-Colley

Ngāpuhi, te hikutu

Taylor is passionate about the biodiversity and people of Aotearoa and Otago. He recently completed a master's in science researching the decline of one of our rarest plant species. He now works as an educator and science communicator at Orokonui ecosanctuary working with children and the community to ensure a future for our unique and precious wildlife and wild spaces.

Ranui Ellison-Collins (outgoing)

Ranui is the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu appointee on the Otago Conservation Board. Ranui grew up in Ōtepoti, Dunedin, attending Queens High School and graduated from Otago University with a Bachelor of Commerce in Economics, a Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Development and a Diploma of Languages enforced in Mandarin. Ranui is a consultant, but

outside of mahi she enjoys exploring nature and broadening her understating of Kāi Tahu histories within te rohe o Ōtākou.

Dean Fraser

Dean is a Ngāi Tahu representative. He is General Manager Transformation at Ngāi Tahu Holdings. He has previously held a variety of roles both with Ngāi Tahu Development Corporation and as the Chair of Ōtākou Papatipu Rūnaka. He is skilled in strategic direction, operational delivery, and risk management.

Jen Rodgers

Jen Rodgers works as a facilitator for the Enviroschools programme in Dunedin. She is active in working with communities to increase knowledge of biodiversity and climate issues. She has a Bachelor of Science and a Graduate Diploma in Sustainable Practice.

Robyn Shanks (outgoing)

Robyn is a sheep and beef farmer in The Catlins and manages the Cathedral Caves tourist attraction for the Māori landowners. She is chairperson for Catlins Coast Inc. - a community charitable organisation set up to help manage tourism increase in The Catlins. Robyn's outdoor recreation interests are walking, gardening and sea-shore activities such as wildlife and bird watching.

Dave Vass (outgoing)

Dave has been an enthusiastic adventurer for over 30 years, especially as a mountaineer/climber mainly throughout the southern mountain areas of Ata Whenua, Fiordland and Otago. He is the co-founder of New Zealand's first canyoning company based in Wānaka and believes that smaller-scale tourism ventures can interact with nature in a meaningful and sustainable way.

Rob Wardle (outgoing)

Rob is the Central Otago Regional Representative for the QEII National Trust and undertakes other work as a self-employed ecological contractor. His career has been focused on the South Island High Country having worked for Landcorp Property Ltd and the Department of Conservation. With his wife Kate he owns and manages a walnut orchard and processing business at Galloway near Manuherikia, Alexandra. Rob is also a passionate backcountry adventurer enjoying, tramping, back country skiing, mountain biking, pack rafting and kayaking.

Board Committees

The Board may appoint committees when appropriate to address a particular issue within the region. During the reporting period, the following subcommittees were established:

Subcommittee	Board Members
CMS Partial Review	Rob Wardle
Biodiversity/Jobs for Nature	Taylor (Lead); Gareth, Philippa, Robyn
Climate Change	Jen (Lead); Taylor, Rob
Visitor Management	Tim (Lead); Rob, Philippa, Robyn
Land reclassification	Rob (Lead); Tara,
Strengthening understanding & delivery of Section 4	Ranui (Lead); Dean, Tim

Liaison roles

Making connection with neighbouring Conservation Boards and relevant organisations is important in both a collaborative and collegial sense.

Treaty Partnership

Ngāi Tahu nominates two members of the Board. They are individually selected by their papatipu Rūnanga, and their status as representative of local hapū is endorsed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Otago Conservation Board's representatives during this annual report period were Dean Fraser and Ranui Ellison-Collins.

Board member	Role
Ranui Ellison-Collins	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative
Dean Fraser	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative

Neighbouring Conservation Boards

Board member	Role
Dr Philippa Agnew	Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board liaison
Tara Druce (Chair)	New Zealand Conservation Authority liaison
Dave Vass	West Coast Ta Poutini Conservation Board liaison
Robyn Shanks	Southland Conservation Board liaison

District and Regional Councils

The Board made a motion to invite district and regional councils to speak to the Board when meeting on their patch and/or when discussing issues relevant to that region.

District and Regional Councils related to Otago Conservation Board
Dunedin City Council
Central Otago District Council
Otago Regional Council
Fish and Game Council
Waitaki District Council
Clutha District Council
Queenstown Lakes District Council

Other

Board member	Role(s)
Robyn Shanks	New Zealand Sea Lion Forum liaison

Board Meetings

The Otago Conservation Board held 6 meetings during the reporting period. Venues for the Board meetings are normally varied each year to ensure a wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board; however, Covid Alert levels meant that this year the majority of meetings took place online.

Date(s)	Location	Field Trip/Workshop
26 August 2021	Online	
20 September 2021	Online	Emergency online meeting to get recommendations to NZCA
21-22 October 2021	Queenstown	CMS Milestones workshop Field trip to Tuckers Beach
25 November 2021	Online	
25 March 2022	Online	
9-10 June 2022	Ōtepoti	CMS Milestones workshop Board culture workshop

Attendance

The table below summarises the number of Board meetings attended by members out of the total number of meetings held during the reporting period.

Members attended other meetings and events in their role as Board members, including sub-committee meetings and representative roles.

Board Member	Base	Meetings Attended
Tara Druce (Chair)	Manuherikia, Alexandra	5/6
Dave Vass (vice chair)	Wānaka	3/6
Dr Philippa Agnew	Oamaru	5/6
Taylor Davies-Colley	Ōtepoti, Dunedin	5/6
Ranui Collins-Ellison	Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Wellington	3/6
Jen Rodgers	Ōtepoti, Dunedin	6/6
Robyn Shanks	Ōwaka	2/6
Rob Wardle	Manuherikia, Alexandra	6/6
Dean Fraser	Ōtautahi, Christchurch	5/6
Tim Barke	Queenstown	6/6
Gareth Hughes	Ōtepoti, Dunedin	5/6

Field Trips

Field trips often coincide with Board meetings. This is an opportunity for members to visit areas of significance to their work and to better understand local issues affecting the communities where they are holding a meeting. Unfortunately, the ongoing pandemic significantly affected the board's ability to undertake field trips in the 2021-22 year.

Date(s)	Location
22 October 2021	Tuckers Beach



The Otago Conservation Board Visiting the Jobs for Nature site at Tuckers Beach, October 2021

Appendices



Appendix 1:

Annual Work Plan

Otago Conservation Board

1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022

This Annual Work Programme outlines the responsibilities and priorities of the Otago Conservation Board for the 2020/21 year. It has been developed in response to the Letter of Expectation from the Minister of Conservation dated 5 September 2019, aligns with the statutory functions of the Board and the application of these powers to deliver conservation outcomes for Otago. The plan is structured in three parts:

A: Government and Ministerial Priorities

1. Enhance relationships between our Treaty partners
2. Address the crisis of declining indigenous biodiversity and improve the protection of freshwater habitats and the marine environment
3. Improve protection of land with conservation values with focus on improving intrinsic values and appropriate user experiences in National Parks
4. Grow advocacy and community engagement

B: General expectations contained in the letter:

1. Statutory Responsibilities
2. Working with and providing advice to the Department of Conservation (the Department)
3. Working with adjoining conservation boards and the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority)
4. Monitoring and self-review

C: Risks/issues from the Board's perspective, and opportunities for conservation growth that are not covered above.

BOARD FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Board, as outlined in Section 6M of the Conservation Act, are:

- a) to recommend the approval by the Conservation Authority of conservation management strategies (CMSs), and the review and amendment of such strategies, under the relevant enactments;
- b) to approve conservation management plans (CMPs), and the review and amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments;

- 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;
- d) to advise the Conservation Authority or the Director-General:
 - (i) on any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance; and
 - (ii) on any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board;
- e) to liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board; and
- f) to exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act.

The functions of the Board, as outlined in Section 30 of the National Park Act 1980 are:

(1) In addition to the functions specified elsewhere in this Act or in any other Act, the functions of each Board shall be—

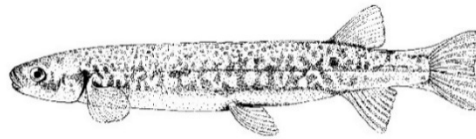
- (a) to recommend management plans, and the review or amendment of such plans, for parks within the jurisdiction of the Board in accordance with sections 45 to 47:
- (b) to consider and determine priorities for the implementation of management plans for national parks:
- (c) to make recommendations to the Minister for the appointment of honorary rangers under section 40:
- (d) to review and report to the Director-General or the Authority, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the administration of the general policies for national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board:
- (e) *[Repealed]*
- (f) to give advice to the Director-General or the Authority—
 - (i) on the interpretation of any management plan for a park; and

- (ii) on any proposal for the addition of land to any national park or the establishment of a new national park; and
- (iii) on any other matter relating to any national park within the jurisdiction of the Board.

Mahere ā-tau - Annual Work Plan

Te Poari o Te Papa Atawhai ki Ōtākou - *Otago Conservation Board*

1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022



This Annual Work Programme ('work programme') outlines the strategic priorities of the Otago Conservation Board ('OCB') for the 2021/22 financial year ('FY2021/22'). This document also highlights our commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi ('the Treaty'), and responsibilities outlined in Section 4 of the Conservation Act ('Section 4') and partnerships with mana whenua which have been woven into the planned actions within each priority. Our priorities for FY2021/22 year are as follows:

1. Conservation Management Plan: Partial review, monitoring and advice to the Department
2. Biodiversity & Jobs for Nature
3. Visitor management
4. Climate mitigation and adaptation
5. Land re-categorisation
6. Reporting, communications and self-review
7. Strengthen our understanding of, and delivery on, our Section 4 commitments

These strategic priorities have been developed in response to:

1. The Otago Conservation Board protocol for giving effect to our Section 4 responsibilities and partnerships with mana whenua
2. The Board's statutory responsibilities under the Conservation Act 1987, the National Parks Act 1980 and the Reserves Act 1977 and the application of these statutory powers to deliver conservation outcomes for Otago
3. The Letter of Expectation from the Minister of Conservation dated 7 August 2020
4. The Department's 4-year plan priorities and stretch goals
5. The Strategic Priorities of the New Zealand Conservation Authority ('the Authority')
6. Other priorities we have identified within our rohe.

LETTER OF EXPECTATION

The Minister's Letter of Expectation outlines the priorities for the OCB for FY2021/22 as follows:

Government and ministerial priorities

For the 2021-22 year, my priorities for conservation boards are to:

- Support the implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao - The Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy
- Contribute to any reviews of national park management plans and Conservation Management Strategies (CMSs) and support their progress effectively to promote strong conservation outcomes
- Embed the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in accordance with the obligations of section 4 of the Act in all aspects of work
- Support the transition to a lower-carbon conservation delivery model, having regard to the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019

Board-specific priorities

I have been informed by my officials that your priorities for the 2021-22 year are to:

- Deliver on your section 4 responsibilities to support conservation partnerships with iwi, hapū and whānau in Otago
- Advance the reclassification of Kawarau/the Remarkables in partnership with the Department and Ngai Tahu rūnanga and complete the partial review of the CMS for biking
- Advocate for gains in biodiversity, visitor management and climate change in Otago.
-

This plan also identified risks and issues from the Board's perspective, and opportunities for conservation growth that are not covered above.

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

The functions of the Board, as outlined in Section 6M of the Conservation Act, are:

- g) to recommend the approval by the Authority of conservation management strategies (CMSs), and the review and amendment of such strategies, under the relevant enactments;
- h) to approve conservation management plans (CMPs), and the review and amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments;
- i) 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;
- j) to advise the Conservation Authority or the Director-General:
 - (i) on any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance; and

- (ii) on any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board;
- k) to liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board; and
- l) to exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act.

The functions of the Board, as outlined in Section 30 of the National Park Act 1980 are:

(1) In addition to the functions specified elsewhere in this Act or in any other Act, the functions of each Board shall be—

- (a) to recommend management plans, and the review or amendment of such plans, for parks within the jurisdiction of the Board in accordance with sections 45 to 47:
- (b) to consider and determine priorities for the implementation of management plans for national parks:
- (c) to make recommendations to the Minister for the appointment of honorary rangers under section 40:
- (d) to review and report to the Director-General or the Authority, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the administration of the general policies for national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board:
- (e) *[Repealed]*
- (f) to give advice to the Director-General or the Authority—
 - (i) on the interpretation of any management plan for
 - a park; and

- (ii) on any proposal for the addition of land to any national park or the establishment of a new national park; and
- (iii) on any other matter relating to any national park within the jurisdiction of the Board.

OCB SECTION 4 PROTOCOL

The Otago Conservation Board recognises the significance of Section 4, reflecting the strongest wording in statute relating to the Treaty. As such, the Board have adopted a set of Section 4 Protocols to guide our activities and interactions.

THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATIONS 4 YEAR PLAN AND STRETCH GOALS

1. The diversity of our natural heritage is maintained and restored.
2. Our history is brought to life and protected.
3. New Zealanders and our visitors are enriched by outdoor experiences.
4. New Zealanders connect and contribute to conservation.

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act 1987 and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend conservation board meetings. If you would like more information on the Otago Conservation Board please see the website www.conservationboards.org.nz or contact the Board Support Officer: otagoconservationboard@doc.govt.nz

Status indicator

Colour	Indicates
Green	Completed
Yellow	Started and is ongoing
Red	Not started yet

PART A: Strategic Priorities

1. Section 4

Lead: Ranui Ellison

Support: Dean, Tim

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action and Milestones	Status	Progress Commentary
A	Contract an independent external advisor to deliver Section 4 training to Board and regional DoC kaimahi	Yellow	<p>A wānaka/wānanga is planned for the Board and senior DoC staff to help build understanding and knowledge of tea o Māori, tikaka Māori, matauraka Māori, Te Tiriti o Wāitangi and the roles and responsibilities for takata Tiriti including those under Section 4 of the Conservation Act.</p> <p>This has been delayed until after current discussions are concluded between the Department and Kai Tahu.</p>

B	Identify and implement strategic opportunities where mana whenua can express their rangatiratanga over their takiwā		
C	Monitor the Department's understanding and management of impacts on environment and taoka species of all existing concessions		

2. CMS partial review, monitoring and advice to the Department

Lead: Rob Wardle

Support: Nil

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action and Milestones	Status	Progress Commentary
A	Ensure all Board recommendations, and in turn decisions, have taken into account the perspectives and interests of mana whenua and align with our Section 4 Protocols.		Section 4 considerations are increasingly taken into account. Training has been planned to further embed this mahi.

B	Engage in the implementation of the CMS partial review (cycling) to ensure strong conservation outcomes.		The Board engaged extensively, chairing public hearings in Queenstown and Wānaka in April 2021. Subsequently the Board worked with DOC Planners to allow the majority of conservation land parcels requested by mountain biking groups and individuals to be added to a schedule of land where new mountain bike tracks can be considered. This all-encompassing approach was recommended by the Board and accepted by the Department on the basis that the schedule of proposed tracks was far too large for environmental and social impacts to be objectively assessed or ranked. Adopting the extensive schedule of land parcels over which mountain bike tracks can be applied for was subject to the Department agreeing to tighten CMS criteria under which applications will be assessed for approval, including a requirement for Board and public consultation for significant applications.
C	Monitor DOC's implementation of the Otago CMS and advocate for CMS milestones to be embedded into annual work planning and budget.		CMS implementation and milestones have been a frequent agenda item with the Board advocating that key milestones are adhered to. Progress has been mixed with outcomes being unsatisfactory in several areas (for example monitoring of four-wheel drive impacts in Oteake Conservation Park). Milestones are however being fine-tuned with the Department and the SSI Director has advised that Milestones are now considered actively in the annual work planning process.
D	Give advice to the Department on concession issues and other statutory processes as required. In addition, ensure advice takes into account the outcomes of the Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki Supreme Court Case.		The Board has provided advice on multiple concession applications. At times the Board's advice has been sought well in advance and consultation meaningful. At other times consultation has been late with little evidence that the Board's advice was factored into decision making.
E	Monitor the Department of Conservation's progress towards the notification of a MANPMP review noting it expires in 2021.		Little appears to have happened in relation to the MANPMP review with the Board not having been engaged.

3. Biodiversity

Address the crisis of declining indigenous biodiversity and improve the protection of freshwater habitats and the marine environment. Monitoring Jobs for Nature

Lead: Taylor

Support: Robyn, Gareth, Phillipa

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action and Milestones	Status	Progress Commentary
A	Implement <u>Te Mana o Taiao, the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy</u> in collaboration with Kāi Tahu, Papatipu Rūnaka within Ōtākou, community organisations, councils and the department.		Implementation strategy has been released and engaged with.
B	Submit on strategic documents regarding biodiversity, threatened and taoka species in our region.		Ongoing , including upcoming conservation law reform (eg.Wildlife Act)
C	Jobs for Nature – monitor and engage in the programme to ensure good conservation outcomes for Otago consistent with our Section 4 Protocols.		Ongoing
D	Provide strategic leadership for the interagency Biodiversity forum and advocate to and for this group. Meet with ORC Chair and attend biodiversity forum meetings.		Ongoing. Regular attendance at the biodiversity forum meeting.
E	Support the collaborative relationships with Fish & Game Councils in areas of mutual interest in the Otago region,		Subcommittee members attend meetings when they can.

	identify areas of mutual interest, have a nominated board member attend F&G Council meetings and encourage Otago Fish and Game staff and councillors to attend board meetings.		
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4. Visitor Management

Lead: Tim Barke

Support: Rob Wardle, Philippa Agnew, Robyn Shanks

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action and Milestones	Status	Progress Commentary
A	Provide input relating to visitor management into statutory plans / documents / conservation law reform eg CMS / Park Plans / Conservation legislation		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DOC invited and agreed to join Queenstown Lakes DMP Steering / Ongoing Governance Group as a key partner (alongside Kāi Tahu, Destination Queenstown, Lake Wānaka Tourism and QLDC) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Note: Tim Barke is also on the Steering/Governance group as GM of Lake Wānaka Tourism 2. It is intended the above partnership will offer an example to strengthen collaboration on other local Government and statutory plans, documents and legislation. 3. It will also help strengthen the relationship, trust and understanding of objectives, opportunities and challenges/restrictions of the parties and enable more effective collaborative support for mutual benefit and the benefit of Te Taiao 4. An example is the refining of visitor impact measurement systems to assist DOC and users in the monitoring, communicating and management of impacts

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The Queenstown Lakes DMP is currently in draft form and is now being peer reviewed by Destination Think (an internationally recognised regenerative destination management specialist organisation) 6. As soon as the final draft is released it will be shared with the OCB for review and comment 7. The proposed governance and oversight of this DMP by LWT, DQ, Kāi Tahu, DOC, Queenstown Lakes District Council (including the overview to be provided by the OCB) has been shared with other RTOs (Regional Tourism Organisations) in a recent Destination Management Planning wānanga 8. Further review and input from Kāi Tahu will be included when received
B	Provide input into Destination Management Plans and encourage alignment with DOC visitor management strategies		As above
C	Promote strengthening of relationships between the Department, the visitor industry (and Concessionaires), iwi, and others who value the Conservation estate eg Federated Mountain Clubs		As above
D	Provide input as required or requested by DOC on visitor related matters		There is ongoing discussion with DOC around refining of visitor impact measurement systems to assist DOC and users in the monitoring, communicating and management of impacts

5. Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Lead: Jen

Support: Taylor, Rob

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action and Milestones	Status	Progress Commentary
A	Formally incorporate Climate Change mitigation and adaptation measures into the CMS milestones. Identify opportunities (in conjunction with DOC staff) in relation to emissions reduction and other climate initiatives/opportunities for the department and its concessionaires with in CMS milestone		Ongoing work with DOC business planning team to modify CMS milestones. Ongoing
B	Scan opportunities to submit on legislation/policy at national and regional level. Emissions Reduction plan (due 24th November 2021) with submission from a conservation perspective		Submitted on Emissions Reduction Plan 23 rd November 2021 on behalf of OCB and SCB.
C	Continue to advocate for climate change mitigation-including emissions reduction within Te Papa Atawhai and concessionaires.		Ongoing. OCB advocacy and correspondence with DOC nationally to require concessionaires to measure and report on carbon emissions and reductions, also advocate for policies to change in CMS/conservation law to allow DOC to look past applications to the emission of whole organisation.
D	Input into other OCB sub-committees with a climate change mitigation and adaptation lens		Ongoing. Input into Tourism futures/destination work

E	Advocate as appropriate for nature-based solutions- ie Deer Plan, and endorse climate change initiatives in Southern South Island		Ongoing
F	At every opportunity strive to increase the OCB understanding of Climate change adaptation and mitigation, and reduce the Board's emissions		Ongoing

6. Crown Pastoral Land/Land Re-categorisation

Lead: Rob Wardle

Support: Tara

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action and Milestones	Status	Progress Commentary
A	Ensure Kāi Tahu and Papatipu Rūnaka are actively engaged in the process, afforded adequate time to provide mātauraka and have had recommendations acknowledged in all land re-classification activities.		It has been difficult to assess how effectively Kāi Tahu and Papatipu Rūnaka have been engaged in the land tenure review process as pastoral leases are Crown land managed by LINZ. LINZ run the consultation process.
B	Engage on Remarkables /Kawarau Reclassification if and when the process commences.		This start stop exercise appears to have been overtaken for the mean time at least by the wider process of re-categorising stewardship lands.
C	National Stewardship Lands Reclassification Project. Engage at a generic and site-specific level as appropriate.		The Board has not been engaged in this space with the Department, instead having set up several committees. The Board continues to seek meaningful and timely input into this important exercise.
D	Crown Pastoral Lands:		The Board submitted on Lowburn Valley Preliminary proposal and was notified of the outcome of the Dunstan Downs tenure review which we had

	<p>Tenure Review - assess advertised proposals with a view to submitting.</p> <p>Crown Pastoral Reform Bill. Engage and submit if further opportunities arise.</p>		<p>previously submitted on. The Substantive Proposal comprehensively protects inherent values present on the property. The Board wrote to MOL requesting that the total removal of tenure review from the Crown Pastoral Reform Bill be reconsidered. The Bill has subsequently passed its third and final reading with little change.</p>
E	<p>Provide advice/submit on any disposals or exchanges of lands managed by the Department</p>		<p>The Board provided advice on one proposed land exchange in the Lindis Valley.</p>

7. Reporting, collaboration, communications and self-review

Lead: Gareth

Support: Jen, Taylor

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Actions and Milestones	Status	Progress Commentary
A	<p>Report to the public and NZCA on the outcomes of our meetings and field trip activity through quarterly newsletter annual report.</p>		<p>Updates completed and Chair meetings with NZCA rep between meetings.</p>
B	<p>Maintain collaborate relationships with the department. Invite key department staff at Board meetings and other forums to contribute to discussions and decision-making processes.</p>		<p>Key departmental staff invited to meetings. Opportunity to collaborate further.</p>
C	<p>Continue to have nominated Board representatives to be liaison points with NZCA and neighbouring conservation</p>		<p>Southland - Jen</p>

	boards. Representatives to review agendas, board papers minutes and ensure relevant connections with OCB work.		NZCA - Tara
D	OCB Chair to continue to liaise with neighbouring Board Chairs through the NZCA Conference for Board Chairpersons and to develop a constructive working relationship with adjoining Board Chairs.		Tara attended the Chair's conference in November and continues to meet with other Chair by Zoom from time to time on areas of joint interest.
E	Ensure NZCA representative is kept well informed of Board activities and is invited to all meetings and copied into board papers.		Ongoing
F	Invite neighbouring boards to send representatives to attend our meetings and/or field trips.		Southland Conservation Board attend a meeting or two of ours each year however we could be more proactive with this.
G	Work towards creating an inclusive board culture that welcomes diverse perspectives, identities, and life experiences to ensure all board members are equally engaged and invested.		Opportunity to grow in this area. Board optimisation workshop took place on 9 June 2022.
I	Continue to maintain a relationship with the Papatipu Rūnaka within the Ōtākou region as both the community we represent and our Treaty Partner.		Relationship is maintained through the Board Chair and the Ngāi Tahu representatives as well as other Board members on an ad hoc basis. There is opportunity to grow this engagement.

PART C: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

10 Risks from the Board's perspective

A	The ability of board members to allocate adequate time and resources to what is a significant voluntary commitment.
B	The ability to balance competing perspectives and values for conservation around the Board table.
C	The Board is too focused on operations and not strategy / governance.
D	The ability to monitor and understand ever-evolving Treaty related responsibilities and issues.

