

# Southland Conservation Board Te Rōpū Atawhai o Murihiku

## Annual Report

1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021



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**Front Cover:** Southland Conservation Board members and Department of Conservation staff at Mintaro Hut along the Milford Track Great Walk, Fiordland. Photographer: Dale Chittenden

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## Annual Report

1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

Presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority  
pursuant to Section 6 (O) of the Conservation Act 1987

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## 1. Chairperson's report

The Southland Conservation Board has had another busy year trying to implement our work plan and dealing with concession applications. These have arisen largely due to the ramifications of a Covid-19 world and tourism businesses adapting to a domestic only market.

The Board is concerned that there appears to have been no headway in progressing the overdue review of the Fiordland National Park Plan. The Board should by now be in a pre-consultation phase with the Department and Iwi on the process and itemising the failures in the current Plan. This Park Plan review is now urgent. The Board is also aware that the Rakiura/Stewart Island CMS and Park Management Plan are due to expire this year and ask the Department to make sure these are on the priority planning list for next year.

The Board has been following, with interest, the evolution of the Milford Opportunities Project. This project has arisen from the failure of the Department to implement the present FNPMP outcomes for Milford Sound, and hence the development of another governance group to hopefully improve the visitor experience and conservation outcomes in Northern Fiordland. The Board attended a field trip to Milford/Piopirotahi to look at the proposals on the ground. The Board overall endorses the 'Master Plan' but has concerns on how the concept meshes with current conservation legislation, and who will have oversight of the new entity. Our Board sees a significant role here.

The Southland Conservation Board is pleased to see that work has started on progressing the proposed Southern Rakiura Wilderness Area. This has been a long-standing milestone in the Rakiura National Park Plan. We look forward to it being gazetted within the next year.

Climate Change, and its implications for New Zealand's biodiversity has been a major topic for our Board this year. A joint climate change workshop was held with the Otago Conservation Board in April with a wide range of speakers. The Southland Conservation Board has concerns that not enough is being done to enhance the conservation estate as an indigenous carbon sink and to make it more resilient to the effects of climate change.

In this regard, the Board is highly concerned at the rapid increase in deer numbers throughout mainland Southland and Rakiura and their negative effect on ecosystem health and forest biomass. The Board considers that more resources should be put into targeted deer control. The Southland Conservation Board has yet to gain traction with the Department in meeting the Minister's requirement to have input into the prioritisation of the Region's budget.

Membership of the Board remained constant with all the retiring members being given another term. One member resigned midway through the year due to a relocation. However, our Board remains a strong and cohesive team.

On a personal note, I have thoroughly enjoyed my working relationship with Julieanna Little (our Board Support Officer), Aaron Fleming (Southern Operations Director), Donna Shepard (Statutory Manager), the three District Operations Managers (John Lucas, John McCarroll, & Ren Leppens) and all the DOC Staff who have facilitated the Board in its work.

Finally, my thanks to the Southland Conservation Board members, who have worked well as a team and for all their hard work, especially that outside of meetings.



John Whitehead  
**Chairman**

## 2. Introduction

This is the 30th Southland Conservation Board Annual Report.

The Southland Conservation Board had 11 members for the 2020-2021 year appointed by the Minister of Conservation under the terms of the Conservation Act 1987. Three reappointments were made of Alison Broad, Vaughn Filmer and Peter McDonald. John Whitehead was reappointed as Chair, and Alison Broad was elected as Deputy Chair.

Conservation Boards are independent advisory bodies, established by statute. The Southland Conservation Board represents the community and offers interaction between communities and the Department of Conservation, within the area of jurisdiction of the Board.

The Board has several statutory roles under various Acts including:

- The recommendation of Conservation Management Strategies (CMS) to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) for approval
- Reporting on the implementation of the CMS
- The approval of Conservation Management Plans
- The recommendation of National Park Management Plans to the NZCA for approval
- Advising the Department of Conservation and NZCA on conservation matters, and proposed changes to the status of nationally and internationally significant land.
- Liaising with Fish and Game Councils on conservation matters
- Carrying out other powers delegated by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act or any other Act.

Board functions are outlined in section 6(M) of the Conservation Act 1987 and the powers, which enable the Board to carry out those functions, are under 6(N) of the Act. Boards also have a number of functions under section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980.

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires conservation boards to provide the NZCA with an annual report as soon as practicable after the 30th June each year. In recognition of this requirement, the Southland Conservation Board submits this annual report.



### 3. Conservation Board Region

The Southland Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers the area of 7,008,166.28 hectares as displayed in the map below. This 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. This includes the areas around the Auckland, Snares, Campbell, Antipodes and Bounty Islands

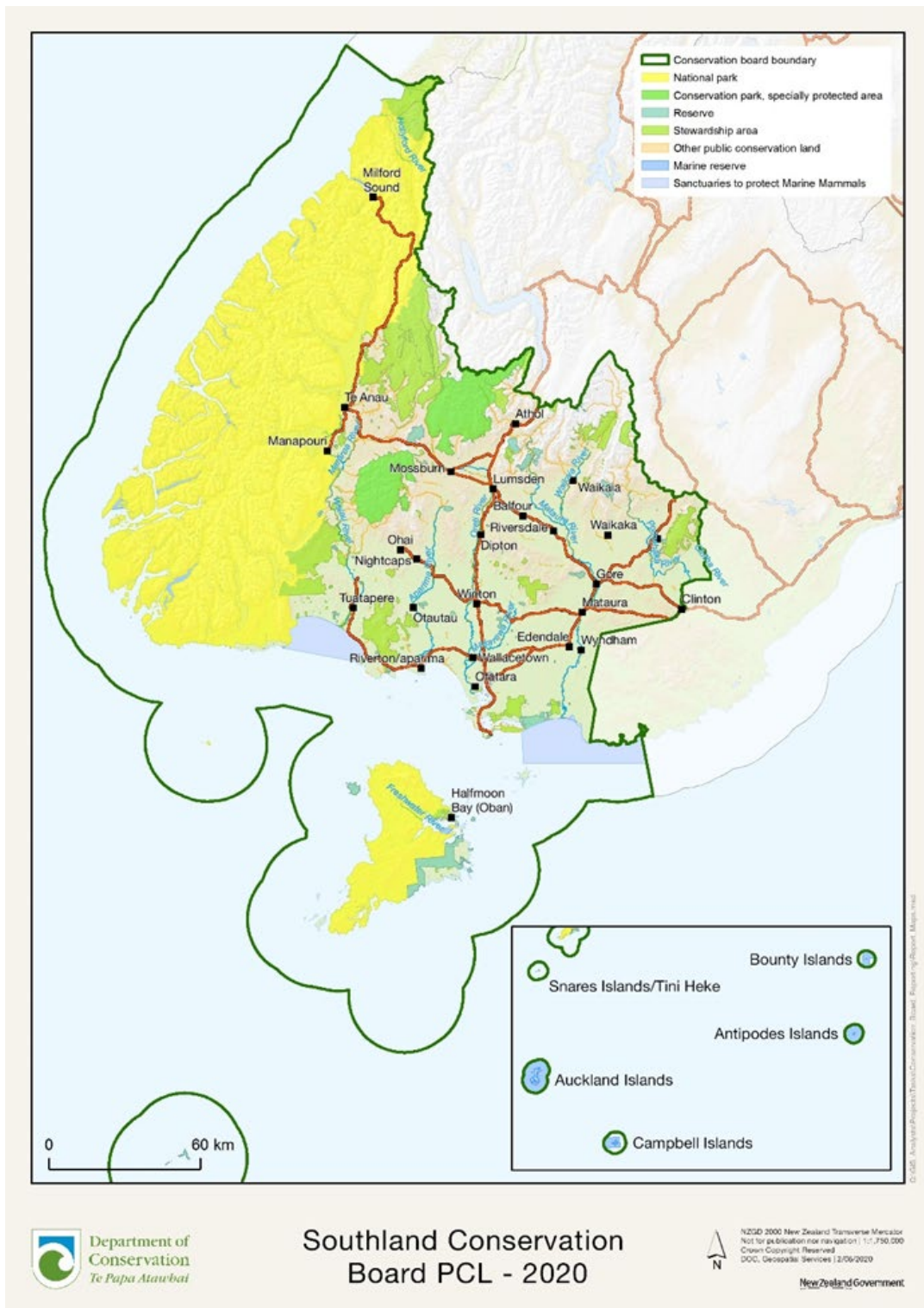


Figure 1. Southland Conservation Board Jurisdiction

There is a large number of issues which are of interest to the Board, these include;

- Indigenous ecosystem enhancement and the management and enhancement of our many threatened species e.g. kākāpō, takahē, kiwi, rock wren, snipe, and mistletoe, etc.
- Management of recreational and tourist facilities
- Management of historic sites
- Concession activities, including those relating to recreation and tourism activities, grazing, industrial use, beaches, filming, and gravel extraction
- Marine protection
- Climate change mitigation

Approximately 26.78% of New Zealand's public conservation land and area lies within Southland's board jurisdiction. The total area of the Southland Council Region comprises of 5,523,807 ha. Of this total, 96.8% (5,347,631 ha) is contained within the boundary of the Southland Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction.

Public conservation land and areas make up 49.83% of all land in the Southland Conservation Boards rohe. This consists of:

- 1,881,970.55 hectares of Public Conservation Land
- 658,556.9 hectares of Sanctuaries to Protect Marine Mammals
- 951,920.30 hectares of Marine Reserves

### **3.1 Conservation features of the Area**

- Fiordland National Park - 1,278,987 ha
- Rakiura National Park - 140,357 ha
- Eyre Mountains/Taka Ra Haka Conservation Park - 65,583 ha
- Catlins Conservation Park - 2.92 ha
- 72 Scenic Reserves - 26,952 ha
- 16 Recreation Reserves - 317 ha
- 3 Historic Reserves - 465 ha
- 15 Marine Reserves - 951,920 ha
- 3 Marine Mammal Sanctuaries - 658,556 ha
- 5 National Nature Reserves
- 1 Ecological Area - Lindsay Ecological Area - 127 ha
- 352 Stewardship Areas - 235,823 ha
- 2 Wilderness areas -Pembroke and Glaisnock Wilderness Area - 141,712 ha
- 2 World Heritage Areas - Subantarctic Islands and Fiordland part of Te Wāhipounamu
- 1 Ramsar site - Awarua Wetland
- 1 Dark Sky Sanctuary
- 700 Archaeological Historic Sites
- 120 Huts
- 1,200 Km of Track
- 3,600 Structures



## 4. Board Functioning

### 4.1. Board Functions Under Section 6m of the Conservation Act 1987

The functions of the Board are:

- 1) To recommend the approval by the Conservation Authority of conservation management strategies, and the review and amendment of such strategies, under the relevant enactments
- 2) To approve conservation management plans, and the review of amendments of such plans, under the relevant enactments
- 3) To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for the area within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 4) To advise the Conservation Authority or the Director-General
  - a. On any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance; and
  - b. On any other conservation matter relating to any area with the jurisdiction of the Board
- 5) To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 6) To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act

### 4.2. Powers of the Board under Section 6n of the Conservation Act 1987

- 1) Every Board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions.
- 2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), each Board may -
  - a) Advocate its interests at any public forum or in any statutory planning process; and
  - b) Appoint committees of members and other suitable persons, and delegate to them functions and powers.
- 3) The power conferred by subsection (2)(a) shall include the right to appear before courts and tribunals in New Zealand and be heard on matters affecting or relating to the Board's functions.

### 4.3 Board Functions under the National Parks Act 1980

There are two national parks within the Board's region: Fiordland National Park and Rakiura National Park. The Board also advocates on cross-boundary issues with Mount Aspiring National Park (which is the responsibility of the Otago Conservation Board).

#### 4.4 Board Membership

There were 11 Board members for the reporting year appointed by the Minister of Conservation; three whose terms expired on 30 June 2020, all of which were reappointed for a further 3-year term. Chantelle Subritzky resigned halfway through her term due to relocating. The Board chose not to replace this position at that time and to fill the vacancy during the next appointment process.

The following table lists the membership of the Southland Conservation Board between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021 and their term of office.

Table 1: Board Membership

Board member	Area	Term start	Term end	Term served
Alison Broad	Invercargill	01/07/14	30/06/23	7 Years
Chantelle Subritzky (resigned 01/01/21)	Invercargill	01/07/19	30/06/22	1.5 Years
Claire Jordan	Tuatapere	01/07/18	30/06/21	3 Years
Estelle Leask	Bluff	01/07/18	30/06/21	3 Years
Fiona Black	Te Anau	01/01/11	30/06/21	10.5 Years
John Whitehead	Te Anau	01/01/11	30/06/22	10.5 Years
Peter McDonald	Dipton	01/07/17	30/06/23	4 Years
Shona Sangster	Rakiura	01/07/18	30/06/21	3 Years
Stewart Bull	Invercargill	01/05/09	30/06/22	12 Years
Vaughn Filmer	Te Anau	01/07/17	30/06/23	4 Years
William Watt	Rakiura	01/07/16	30/06/22	5 Years

#### 4.5 Members Profiles

##### John Whitehead of Te Anau (Chairperson)

*Appointment term: 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2022*

Mr. Whitehead is a retired farmer. He is experienced in negotiating environmental outcomes and consensus building. He has a sound understanding of governance issues and conservation laws and policies. His lifelong interest is in natural history and conservation, in particular, high-country issues, rivers, and indigenous fisheries management and Predator Free 2050. He is chairman of the Pomona Island Charitable Trust (an Island restoration project), a trustee on the Waiiau Fisheries & Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Trust, a trustee on the Mid Dome Wilding Pine Trust and a member of the Whenua Hou Management Committee. His outdoor recreation interests are tramping and predator control.

##### Fiona Black of Te Anau

*Appointment term: 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2021*

Ms. Black is the Manager of Concessions and Consents for Real Journeys. She has a sound knowledge of legislation and good working relationships with Environment Southland and the Department. Ms. Black is well connected to the Te Anau community and knows the challenges with living and working in Milford Sound. She has a strong interest in marine wildlife conservation. Her outdoor recreation interests are tramping, photography, ornithology, natural heritage, conservation, and boating.

## **Alison Broad of Invercargill**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2023*

Ms. Broad is a consultant in community projects and processes, with a Masters degree in Education. Ms Broad has expertise in strategic thinking, policy development, advocacy, and development and governance for community benefit. Ms. Broad has extensive governance experience and is currently board chair of the Southern Institute of Technology as well as a trustee of several community-based organisations. Her outdoor recreation interests are walking, kayaking, and biking.

## **Stewart Bull of Riverton**

*Appointment term: 1 May 2009 to 30 June 2022*

Stewart is the chair of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnanga, a member of the Whenua Hou committee, Fiordland Marine Guardians, Chair of Te Ao Marama, iwi resource management committee, Chair of the Rakiura tītī committee, and a member of the Rakiura tītī administering body. Tangata tiaki/kaitiaki, customary fisheries management, Stewart has always had an interest and participated in environment and resource management throughout his adult life and has always felt the concept of Kaitiakitanga/stewardship is a responsibility he feels he has an absolute obligation to. Stewart believes many hands make light of the work and if we all participate in a positive manner, then he is sure the world will be a more comfortable living space for us and the future generations to come. We must not fail while on our watch as there will be consequences!

## **Vaughn Filmer of Te Anau**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2017 - 30 June 2023*

Vaughn Filmer is a teacher of Senior Geography, Outdoor Environmental Education, Junior Health and Physical Education and Social Studies at Fiordland College, a Green-Gold Enviroschool in Te Anau. He is also a founding member of 'Kids Restore the Kepler', a conservation and education project in Fiordland National Park. Mr. Filmer regularly carries out pest control, biodiversity monitoring, and education fieldwork as a part of this project and others. He was the Sir Peter Blake Trust Environmental Educator for 2017. His outdoor interests include trail running, mountain biking, snowboarding, kayaking, pack-rafting, mountaineering, tramping and camping - and he is a rock climbing/abseiling instructor. He is President of Te Anau Cycling Inc. and leading the development of the Fiordland Indoor Climbing Wall.

## **Claire Jordan of Tuatapere**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2018 - 30 June 2021*

Claire is an environmental planner and scientist who has worked in policy and science roles in central and local government and as a consultant. Claire is the third generation of her family to live on their dairy farm, 30 km north-west of Tuatapere on the western bank of the Waiiau River. Claire is an active member of the Waiiau Rivercare Group, which advocates on behalf of the Waiiau River and the surrounding community. Claire holds a First-Class Honours Degree from the University of Canterbury in Chemistry and Environmental Science. Claire currently divides her time between her young family and studying towards a Master of Resource and Environmental Planning Degree through Massey University. Claire loves tramping, particularly with the lure of a view, and spends as much time as she can in Te Anau with her family, enjoying time on the lake and in the national park. The experience of seeing the world through the eyes of her young children motivated Claire to become a member of the Southland Conservation Board so that they might have the same opportunities she has had to wonder at our precious, unique and spectacular country and its taonga as they grow.

## **Estelle Pera-Leask of Bluff**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2018 - 30 June 2021*

Estelle (Ngāi Tahu, Whakatōhea, Ngāti Ruanui) is a member of the Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust (BHMET) and the current chair. She is a Director on the Board of Predator Free 2050, and Awarua Runanga representative on the Whenua Hou Komiti. She is the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative on the Takahē Recovery Programme and supports the Department of Conservation Kākāpō Recovery Programme and Predator Free Rakiura Project. Together with her husband Peter, they help coordinate the BHMET volunteers undertaking predator control and habitat restoration. Born and raised in Bluff, she believes kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of the natural environment is a privilege and a responsibility. Her interests include growing native plants, mahinga kai, bushwalking, rongoa and Matauranga Maori.

## **Peter McDonald of Dipton**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2017 - 30 June 2023*

Peter together with his wife Kim Spencer-McDonald, daughter Laura and son William farm a 669-ha sheep farm in Dipton in the Caroline Valley. The McDonalds settled in Dipton in 1897 and have been sustainably farming the land ever since. Peter is active in community roles including as a volunteer fireman for twenty-five years, he is also a peer support for FENZ, support mental wellbeing of firefighters in Southland. He also sits on the Southland Regional Council. Peter has been involved in conservation at a local level for many years and is excited about continuing contribution at a provincial level.

## **Shona Sangster of Stewart Island**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2018 - 30 June 2021*

Shona is a Stewart Island/Rakiura resident who is passionate about conservation. She grew up in the Waitakere Ranges in Auckland which gave her a passion for the positive impact of predator control on native bush. She is the chair of the Stewart Island/Rakiura Community and Environment Trust, which protects 210 hectares of land on the Acker's Point peninsula. She co-edits the monthly Stewart Island News and works part-time for Glowing Sky Merino and the Southland District Council. She is a member of the Rakiura Marine Guardians and has volunteered for the Kākāpō Recovery Programme. She holds a Master of Arts in Philosophy from The University of Auckland and a Trinity College London Certificate in TESOL. Her interests include tramping, fishing, beekeeping and making art.

## **Chantelle Subritzky of Invercargill**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2019 - 30 June 2022*

Miss Subritzky is the strategic projects manager at Great South, Southland's Regional Development Agency. She has a Master's in Politics and experience working in both local and central government, in roles that were responsible for strategic planning, project management and communications. She is a keen outdoor enthusiast and enjoys heading out to explore the bush, rivers, lakes and mountains of Southland. She is passionate about enabling kaitiakitanga for the natural environments that New Zealanders work and play in.

## **William J (Bill) Watt of Invercargill**

*Appointment term: 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2022*

Mr. Watt is a retired planning and resource management consultant, now living on Rakiura, where he has enjoyed holidays since the early 1950s. He also has a long association with Murihiku (Southland), where he worked as a planner and senior executive in regional and local government from 1979 to 2010 and since then as a consultant. As a trained geographer and planner, Mr. Watt has a keen interest in the conservation values

of southern New Zealand, and also an appreciation of the values and needs of people and communities. Mr. Watt's outdoor interests include yachting, sea kayaking, bushwalking, and mountain biking

#### 4.6 Board Meetings

The Southland Conservation Board held six meetings during the reporting period. Venues for the Board meetings are to ensure wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board. The August Board meeting was held virtually through Microsoft Teams due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Table 2: Board meeting dates and location

Board meeting date	Meeting location and venue
20 August 2020	Virtual via MS Teams
22 October 2020	Department of Conservation, Invercargill
10 December 2020	Distinction Luxmore Hotel, Te Anau
25 February 2021	Department of Conservation, Invercargill
09 April 2021	Department of Conservation, Invercargill
17 June 2021	Department of Conservation, Invercargill

#### 4.7 Attendance

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

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

Table 3: Member Attendance

Board Member	Board meetings	Field Trips
Alison Broad	6/6	1/1
Claire Jordan	6/6	1/1
Estelle Leask	6/6	1/1
Fiona Black	6/6	1/1
John Whitehead	6/6	1/1
Chantelle Subritzky	3/6	1/1
Peter McDonald	4/6	1/1
Shona Sangster	6/6	1/1
Stewart Bull	5/6	0/1
Vaughn Filmer	4/6	0/1
William Watt	6/6	1/1

#### 4.8 Board Committees and Representation

In July 2017 it was moved at a Board meeting that all sub-committees be closed, except the Whenua Hou committee, as it is a requirement of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

##### 4.8.1 Whenua Hou Committee

This subcommittee was established under section 331 of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, as a part of a joint approach to the management of Whenua Hou. The Committee consists of one representative from each of the four Murihiku papatipu rūnanga and four from the Southland Conservation Board.

Table 4: Whenua Hou Committee

Board representatives	Runanga Representatives
Fiona Black	Cyril Gilroy (Waihōpai)
Stewart Bull	Estelle Leask (Āwarua)
John Whitehead	Tane Davis (Ōraka-Aparima)
Alison Broad	Rodney (Hom) Ryan (Hokonui)



#### 4.9 Representation

Members of the Board have strong links with many community groups in Southland and are active participants in a range of Conservation activities.

Table 5: Summary of the representation

Organisation/Activity	Board Member
Whenua Hou Committee	Alison Broad
Rakiura Marine Guardians	Bill Watt
Southland District Council	Chantelle Subritzky
Fish & Game	Claire Jordan
Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust	Estelle Leask
Predator Free Bluff	Estelle Leask
Fiordland Marine Mammal Liaison Group	Fiona Black
Leslie Hutchins Conservation Foundation	Fiona Black
Manapouri Doubtful Sound Commercial User Group	Fiona Black
Whenua Hou Committee	Fiona Black
DOC Community Fund	John Whitehead
Otago Conservation Board	John Whitehead
Pomona Island Charitable Trust	John Whitehead
Waiiau Wildlife and Fisheries habitat enhancement trust	John Whitehead
Waiiau Working Party	John Whitehead
West Coast Tai Poutini conservation Board	John Whitehead
Whenua Hou Committee	John Whitehead
Mid dome Wilding Pine Trust	John Whitehead
Environment Southland	Peter McDonald
Gore District Council	Peter McDonald
Predator Free Southland	Peter McDonald
Predator Free Rakiura	Shona Sangster
Rakiura Marine Guardians	Shona Sangster
Stewart Island Rakiura Environmental Trust	Shona Sangster
Ulva Island Trust	Shona Sangster
Fiordland Marine Guardians	Stewart Bull
Rakiura Tītī Committee	Stewart Bull
Rakiura Tītī Islands Administering Body	Stewart Bull
South West Endangered Species Charitable Trust	Stewart Bull
Whenua Hou Committee	Stewart Bull
Kids Restore the Kepler	Vaughn Filmer

#### **4.10 Training for members**

The Board held a full day joint climate change workshop with the Otago Conservation Board in April 2021. The workshop covered items such as national, regional and local climate change context and priorities, Ngāi Tahu view on climate change, NZCA's current work on climate change, and the future of tourism.

The Board also received training sessions on LGOIMA and Section 4. These sessions were facilitated by the Department of Conservation's Legal Services team, Governance team and Options Development Group. These sessions were valuable and ensured all Board members understood and interpreted the relevant legislation correctly.

The Board also receives regular updates on the Department's activities provided in the status report which is considered at each meeting. Topics covered this year were:

- Fiordland National Park current state
- Fiordland National Park Management Plan Review
- Predator Free Southland
- Permissions and statutory land management processes
- Tiakina ngā manu - Battle for our Birds
- Maukahuka Pest Free Auckland Island
- Deer Management Strategy
- Kākāpō Recovery Programme
- Tūturiwhatu/southern New Zealand dotterel protection

#### **4.11 Community and DOC Involvement in Board Meetings**

Public forums are offered at most Board meetings for members of the community to raise conservation issues with the Board. The December board meeting was held in Te Anau, with the Board holding a joint public forum with the Regional Forum (freshwater advisory group) the day prior.

The Board welcomed presentations from members of the public and Department staff at the meetings during 2020/2021. Presentations were received from:

- Dave Carlton, Department of Conservation - Deer Strategy
- Dr Ini-Isabee Gunn - Predator Free Southland
- Carl Walrond, Department of Conservation - Stewardship Land
- Zac Chittenden, Halfmoon Bay Primary School (Stewart Island) - Marine Protection in Port Pegasus
- Alison Undorf-Lay & Jaco Swart, Sandford - Open Ocean Salmon Farming
- Megan Willans, Te Anau Resident - Feedback on Fiordland Trails Trust proposal
- Roy Sloan, Fiordland Wapiti Foundation - Deer Management
- Paul Marshall & Andrew Hunt, Western Southland Trails Trust - Waiau River Trail Proposal
- Peter Wilson, Federated Mountain Clubs - Rakiura Wilderness Area
- Russell Halliday - Milford Opportunities Project

#### **4.12 Annual Work Plan**

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the full Board Annual Work Programme.

#### 4.13 Field Trips and site inspections

The Board had one field trip in the past year.

Field Trip date	Field Trip destination and purpose
09 December 2020	<p><b>Piopiotaahi Milford Sound</b></p> <p>The purpose of the visit to Piopiotaahi Milford was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• View the work done by the SSI flood recovery team.</li><li>• Try to conceptualise how the Milford Opportunities Project would overlay over the present situation at Milford and its surrounds.</li><li>• To see how Milford Sound was operating with no international visitors.</li></ul> <p>Milford Sound was very quiet! A stark difference compared to 12 - 18 months ago. The Board could see the amazing amount of work which had been done by the Milford Road Alliance to get the road repaired for both visitors and operators alike.</p> <p>The Board took a short walk up the Routeburn track to see the slip damage and the amount of work the Department has undertaken to repair the track. The Board was impressed with the amount of effort and hard work the Department has completed on this.</p>



**Above::** Southland Conservation Board members being updated on the Southern South Island Flood Recovery work taking place in Fiordland. Photographer: Bill Watt

## 5. Statutory activity

The Southland Conservation Board is very passionate about advocacy.

In the past year, the Board made three media releases on matters of interest. The Board also featured in five articles in local papers as a result of the content discussed at Board meetings.

### 5.1 Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

There are two CMSs in the Southland Conservation Board's area: The Southland / Murihiku CMS and the Rakiura CMS.

The Southland / Murihiku CMS was approved and published in 2016, the Rakiura CMS was approved and published in 2011.

### 5.2 Management plans

There are two National Park Management Plans in the Southland Conservation Board Area, the Rakiura National Park Management Plan and the Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

The Fiordland National Park Management Plan review has yet to begin. The Board has put a lot of effort into preparing for the review over the past year and are disappointed that this review has yet to begin.

### 5.3 Implementation monitoring

The Board considered implementation reports on the management plans and strategies for the Rakiura National Park, Fiordland National Park, and the Southland / Murihiku region. Members were impressed overall with the progress made and the range and amount of work completed. Once the Board read and approved the reports they were passed on to the New Zealand Conservation Authority.

## 6. Advice and Advocacy

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

The Board appointed various members to liaise with groups and agencies.

### 6.1 Liaison

Table 7: Liaison persons

Liaison Person	Group, agency or organisation
John Whitehead	DOC Community Conservation Fund
Stewart Bull	Fiordland Marine Guardians
Shona Sangster	Predator Free Rakiura Governance Group
Claire Jordan	Fish and Game Southland
Peter McDonald	Environment Southland
John Whitehead	Otago Conservation Board
Peter McDonald	Gore District Council
Peter McDonald	Predator Free Southland

### 6.2 Other Conservation Boards liaison

The Southland and the Otago Conservation Boards hold a close relationship. There are two liaison members, The Chair of the Southland Conservation Board and Robyn Shanks of the Otago Conservation Board. The Chairs; John Whitehead of the Southland Conservation Board and Tara Druce of the Otago Conservation Board, along with their two Board Support Officers Julieanna Little (Southland Conservation Board) and Teresa Murphy (Otago Conservation Board) keep in close contact, often attending each other's meetings.

The annual Board Chairs conference hosted by the NZCA is a great opportunity for Board networking nationally.

### 6.3 New Zealand Conservation Authority liaison

The Southland Conservation Boards NZCA liaison is Robin McNeill who attends most Southland Conservation Board Meetings. The Chair also receives regular letters from the Chair of the NZCA as well as their agendas and minutes which are passed onto the Board.

### 6.4 Department of Conservation advice

The Board provided both formal and informal advice to the Department on the following issues:

- Rakiura National Park
- Fiordland National Park
- Milford Sound
- Tenure Review
- Cycleway proposals
- Whitebait proposals
- Notified Concession applications
- The Board is still seeking ways to give meaningful advice on Departmental expenditure priorities

## **6.5 Community advocacy and involvement**

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

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

Public forum issues raised were:

- Marine Protection in Port Pegasus, Rakiura
- Proposed cycle trail in Te Anau
- The Fiordland Wapiti Foundation and their work with vegetation, whio & kea monitoring

## **6.6 Community visibility**

The Board maintains a presence on the Department's website. Information on being on a Conservation Board was also developed and advertised/displayed at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-boards/>.

## **6.7 District and Regional Councils advocacy and advice**

The Board appreciates the opportunities to meet with representatives of the four local Councils as there are several regional issues in which it is interested.

Over the past year the Board has communicated with the local councils via email, the Board also has Peter McDonald an Environment Southland Councillor.

## **6.8 Iwi liaison and advocacy**

Two members of the Board are nominated by Ngāi Tahu as required under the Ngāi Tahu Settlement Act 1998.

The Whenua Hou Management Committee (a Board subcommittee under the Ngāi Tahu Settlement Act) met two times during the year. One of these meetings was a three-day visit to Whenua Hou to look at any issues firsthand and to re-acquaint committee members with the whenua. Things of interest include the Whenua Hou Diving Petrel project and the archaeological site at hydro creek.

The Board also held a successful two-day noho and Board meeting at the Te Rau Aroha Marae in Bluff



## 7. Conclusion

In the past 12 months, the Board has achieved a lot. They have put a lot of effort into preparing for the Fiordland National Park Management Plan review and have also engaged well with the Southland community and advocated on a range of issues on their behalf. The Board has learned a lot in the last year and are looking forward to another year where they can achieve more for conservation. Attached is the Board's work plan for the year ending 30 June 2021 with a full record of what was set out to be achieved and what was achieved.



## Appendix 1 – Annual Work Plan

# Southland Conservation Board Work Programme 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

### Work Programme overview

This Work Programme has been developed in response to the Letter of Expectation from the Minister of Conservation dated 7 August 2020. It is structured in three parts, namely:

- Part A: Planned Board activities aimed at meeting the regional Work Programme contained in the letter:
  - Review/development/monitoring of statutory management plans including Conservation Management Strategies (CMS)
  - Improving the implementation of the Treaty of Waitangi partnerships and the requirements under section 4 of the Conservation Act.
  - Advise the Department on strengthening its climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives.
  - Implement Te Mana o te Taiao, the NZ Biodiversity strategy, working with Iwi & hapu, community, councils & the Department.
  - Other statutory functions for the Board
  - Advocate for conservation & connect with manawhenua & communities on local conservation issues.
- Part B: Planned Board activities aimed at general expectations contained in the letter:
  - Working with the Department of Conservation (the Department)
  - Taking account of the Ministerial priorities for the Department as contained in the Department's Four-year Plan
  - Working with adjoining conservation boards and the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority)
  - Understanding the Board's contribution to giving effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
  - General engagement with the community, including raising the profile of the Board.
- Part C: Risks/issues from the Board's perspective, and opportunities for conservation growth that are not covered above.

### Status indicator

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

## PART A: REGIONAL WORK PROGRAMME

### 1 Review / development of statutory management plans including conservation management strategies (CMS)

#### 1.1 Board objective:

The Board will be involved with the review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will work with the Department planners and Ngāi Tahu to initiate a review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan.		Still waiting for DOC to allocate resources to this major review.
<b>B</b>	The Board will seek assurances that the upcoming 10-year review of the Rakiura CMS & Park Plan will occur in a timely manner.		It appears that this is not a DOC priority at this time.

#### 1.2 Board objective:

In conjunction with the Department, the Board will determine priorities for the implementation of the Murihiku/Southland Conservation Management Strategy, the Rakiura Conservation Management Strategy and the Rakiura National Park Management Plan.

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress Commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will continue to work with the Department and the community on the Milestone in the Rakiura CMS on the gazettal of a Wilderness Area in the Southern Place Rakiura		Progress is happening through the Rakiura office. There is pressure from the NZCA for this gazettal to happen.
<b>B</b>	The Board will carry out its statutory role monitoring and reporting on the Murihiku/ Southland CMS to make sure it has achieved the five-year milestones.		The Board has carried out its annual monitoring. There is still a substantial number of milestones that have not been achieved. Making sure they are allocated resources in DOC's annual budget planning is crucial to see these milestones met.

### 1.3 Board objective:

Monitor the implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao, the Aotearoa NZ Biodiversity Strategy & the Department's collaboration with iwi & hapu, community organisations, councils

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress Commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will initiate a method to monitor the progress the Department is making on implementing the NZ Biodiversity Strategy		The Board is still waiting for DOC to come up with an implementation strategy. The Board asks for progress at each of our meetings.

## 2 Other statutory functions

### 2.1 Board objective:

The Board will continue to advise the Department on the reclassification of Stewardship Land in our rohe and on the issuing of concessions that meet the Board's triggers.

The Board will continue to further our relationship with Southland Fish & Game.

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will continue to advocate that all stewardship land that is within the Te Wāhipounamu World Heritage Area, along with all stewardship land within the Awarua wetland complex and Rakiura be reclassified.		The Board has written to DOC head office reiterating the Board's priorities on PCL reclassification
<b>B</b>	The Board will meet with Fish and Game at least once a year.		We have not had a formal meeting with F&G this year. Board members have informal contact with F&G staff & councillors
<b>C</b>	The Board will advise the Department on concession applications that meet the Board triggers. The Board will follow up with the Department on whether the advice was heeded.		The Board has given advice on all the concession applications that have met the triggers. DOC seem to have forgotten to give us feedback whether the advice was heeded, and the outcome of the application.
<b>D</b>	The Board will support the creation of the Hump Ridge Great walk and will advise the Department through any statutory changes.		The Board asks for any progress on the creation of the great walk at our meetings.

## 2.2 Board objective:

The Board will advocate for and support predator free initiatives both locally and nationally

### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will support and advocate for Predator Free Auckland Islands		Unfortunately, this project has been put into hibernation due to budgetary constraints caused by Covid-19.
<b>B</b>	The Board will support and advocate for Predator Free Rakiura		The Board is keen to see this large project happen
<b>C</b>	The Board will work with the Predator Free Southland Group to advance the predator free cause in Southland		Ongoing – The Board has written to the territorial authorities requesting more resources be allocated to Predator Free Southland.

## 3 Advocacy

### 3.1 Board objective

The Board will advocate strongly for conservation to the local Territorial Authorities and Regional Council.

### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress Commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will advocate strongly on Regional Resource Management Act 1991 policy documents. Including the Regional Coastal Plan Review		Ongoing – The Regional Coastal Plan has been put on hold due to Covid-19
<b>B</b>	The Board will submit on relevant, Resource Management Act 1991, consent applications where we have been deemed an interested party.		The Board has not submitted on any application so far this year
<b>C</b>	The Board will advocate to reduce light pollution in the night sky in Southland, Rakiura and the Subantarctic Islands.		The Rakiura International Dark Sky Sanctuary has been established & there are proposals for one in Fiordland. No work has been done in the Subantarctic Islands.
<b>D</b>	The Board will advocate for improved water quality in Southland and the enhancement of our remaining wetlands.		Ongoing.
<b>E</b>	The Board will advocate for maximum conservation & social outcomes in the development of the Milford Opportunities Project Master Plan.		The Board & Chair have had several meetings with the Milford Opportunities Project chair and supporting staff, pushing for maximum conservation & social outcomes



## PART B: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

### 4 Working with the Department

#### 4.1 Board objective:

Board members will maintain and develop good working relationships and open dialogue with directors, managers, board support officers and other staff in order to engage strategically in conservation for the region

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	A good working relationship with the Operations Director, Partnership Director, Statutory Land Manager, Board Support Officer and Operations Managers is critical for the Board to make any worthwhile gains in conservation		The Board has a good relationship with Department staff throughout the region
<b>B</b>	Continue relationship building with relevant DOC staff.		The Board continues to strengthen new and existing relationships with Department staff.
<b>C</b>	The Board, in conjunction with the Department, will initiate a process where the Board gains an understanding of the Department's budgetary planning and can have input at a strategic level. This may involve the Department providing an update on the 'thirdly budget reporting' which should include an analysis on how the work programme is tracking against the Department's priorities and outcomes.		The Board has worked hard on this but is still struggling to get much traction with the Department on priority setting. We have yet to see any thirdly budget reporting.

## 5 Taking account of Ministerial priorities for the Department

### 5.1 Board objective:

The Board will support Ministerial and local priorities

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will give advice to the Department and will advocate where possible on the threat of wilding conifers and other invasive weeds in Southland		The Board has major concerns over Douglas Fir plantations planted on vulnerable land in Northern & Western Southland.
<b>B</b>	The Board will publicly support 'The Battle for our Birds' programme in the Southern South Island Region		There has been no Beech mast in the Southern region this year so the Battle for our Birds programme has been scaled back. There is a possibility of a major mast next year. The Board will advocate for more resources & Predator Free 2050.
<b>C</b>	The Board will continue to support proposals to find new protected habitat for Kiwi, Kakapo and Takahe		Ongoing
<b>D</b>	The Board will work with the Department, Regional Authorities, Iwi and the community to support the 'Living waters' Programme.		The Board has not yet had input into this programme.

### 5.2 Board objective:

The Board will identify opportunities for building relationships to support the 'Healthy Parks / Healthy People' programme

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will work with, and advise, the Department on how to engage the community to recreate over a full range of the Conservation Estate whilst minimising the impact on biodiversity, landscape and social values.		Ongoing – this is part of the Board's core work.

## 6 Working with adjoining conservation boards and the Authority

### 6.1 Board objective:

Board members will liaise with neighbouring conservation boards in order to progress cross boundary issues and other matters of mutual interest.

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	To have at least one joint meeting with the Otago Board to discuss cross-boundary issues especially Park Plans.		The Board has had a joint meeting with the Otago Board to discuss the implications of and the effects of climate change on the conservation estate
<b>B</b>	The Board to develop a relationship with the West Coast Board		The Board Chair has had conversations with the West Coast Chair
<b>C</b>	The Board Chair to continue to liaise with the Otago Board Chair.		The Board chair is in regular contact with the Otago Board Chair.

## 7 Understanding the Board's contribution to giving effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi

### 7.1 Board objective:

The Board will understand and support the Board's and Department's obligations under Treaty settlements as well as principles under section 4 of the Conservation Act

#### Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	To have at least one meeting on a marae and be in active discussion with Ngā Rūnanga ki Murihiku over the Fiordland National Park Management Plan Review.		Due to Covid-19 lockdowns this has not been achieved this year
<b>B</b>	Strengthen the Board's relationship with Makaawhio Rūnaka on the West Coast.		No contact has been made with Makaawhio so far this year
<b>C</b>	To send at least one Board member to Te Pukenga Atawhai		There has been no Te Pukenga Atawhai courses available in our Region this year due to Covid-19

## 8 Engaging with the community, including raising the profile of the Board

### 8.1 **Board objective:**

Board members will liaise regularly with other conservation entities, such as district and regional councils, NGOs and community groups, in order to enhance the profile of the Board and pursue good working relationships on issues of mutual interest and concern.

#### **Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones**

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	Board members support the mahi of community groups in Southland working on conservation issues such as predator free, catchment and wetland improvement, and climate change.		Ongoing – The Board had a joint public meeting with the Land & Water Forum in Te Anau.
<b>B</b>	The Board works with regional authorities to promote conservation within the community.		Ongoing.

### 8.2 **Board objective:**

Board members will take the initiative to meet with community groups and the general public to gauge community reaction to conservation initiatives planned or implemented by the Department.

#### **Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones**

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
<b>A</b>	The Board will initiate informal community meetings in the region to gauge community reaction to and promote conservation projects.		The Board had a joint public meeting with the Land & Water Forum in Te Anau.  The Board Chair has also been involved with Kaimahi for Nature funding allocation.
<b>B</b>	The Board will hold a public forum at most of its meetings		There is an opportunity for the public to speak at most of our Board meetings. Attendance is mixed.
<b>C</b>	The Board will liaise with the Department to make sure Board members attend public functions held by the Department.		The Board has made it clear that we wish to be involved in DOC public functions. This has not always happened but is getting better.
<b>D</b>	The Board investigates the use of social media to raise the Board's profile.		The Board has a subgroup looking at better ways for the Board to communicate with the public. Social media is a platform they are investigating.

## **PART C: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **9 Risks from the Board's perspective**

<b>A</b>	Hopefully the Fiordland National Park Plan Review will be underway this year. This will lead to increased work for the Board or frustration if the review is further delayed.
<b>B</b>	The threat of Covid-19 on Department income & work output is a concern in achieving desired goals. Also, any rise in Covid-19 threat levels impacts on how the Board operates.
<b>C</b>	There is a lot of work done by Board members outside of our bi-monthly meetings. This can lead to Board fatigue.

### **10 Opportunities for conservation growth**

<b>A</b>	The Board sees an opportunity to be involved in Conservation week to raise awareness around conservation in the Board's region as well as raising the Board's profile.
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This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend Conservation Board meetings. If you would like more information on the Southland Conservation Board please see the website [www.conservationboards.org.nz](http://www.conservationboards.org.nz) or contact the Board Support Officer, at the Department of Conservation in Invercargill phone (03) 211 2400 or e-mail [southlandconservatioboard@doc.govt.nz](mailto:southlandconservatioboard@doc.govt.nz)