

Southland Conservation Board Te Rōpū Atawhai o Murihiku

Annual Report

1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022



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Front Cover: Southland Conservation Board Members, Awarua Rūnanga representatives and Department of Conservation staff at Te Rau Aroha Marae in Bluff, October 2021. Photo Credit: Julieanna Little

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1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022

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

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Contents

Contents	4
1. Chairperson’s report.....	5
2. Introduction.....	6
3. Conservation Board Region.....	7
3.1 Conservation features of the Area.....	8
4. Board Functioning.....	9
4.1. Board Functions Under Section 6m of the Conservation Act 1987	9
4.2. Powers of the Board under Section 6n of the Conservation Act 1987	9
4.3 Board Functions under the National Parks Act 1980	9
4.4 Board Membership.....	9
4.5 Members Profiles	10
4.6 Board Meetings	13
4.7 Attendance.....	14
4.8 Board Committees and Representation.....	14
4.9 Representation.....	14
4.10 Training for members	16
4.11 Community and DOC Involvement in Board Meetings.....	16
4.12 Annual Work Plan	16
4.13 Field Trips and site inspections	17
5. Statutory activity	20
5.1 Conservation Management Strategy (CMS).....	20
5.2 Management plans	20
5.3 Implementation monitoring	20
6. Advice and Advocacy	21
6.1 Liaison.....	21
6.2 Other Conservation Boards liaison	21
6.3 New Zealand Conservation Authority liaison.....	21
6.4 Department of Conservation advice.....	21
6.5 Community advocacy and involvement	22
6.6 Community visibility.....	22
6.7 District and Regional Councils advocacy and advice	22
6.8 Iwi liaison and advocacy.....	22
7. Conclusion	23

1. Chairperson's report

The Southland Conservation Board has been working hard this year despite the challenges and impacts of Covid-19. We were able to have six in person meetings which feels like quite an achievement in such unpredictable times. We have put in a lot of work to providing advice on permission and concession applications and planning requests as well as submitting on many consultation rounds.

A big focus for the board this year was designing and implementing a communications strategy to raise the profile of the work we do and to increase the Boards engagement with our community. This work has led to a more targeted approach to communicating, and a regular column in the Southland Express has both generated debate and allowed us to highlight successful conservation stories in our rohe. We are looking forward to building on this work over the next year to ensure ongoing contact with the communities we represent.

We remain concerned with the lack of progress towards the review of the Fiordland National Park Plan and note that as of this year the Rakiura National Park Plan and the Rakiura Conservation Management Strategy are also due for review. There is a wider concern with the large number of planning documents needing review and while we welcome the insight the Department has provided with an internal review, we believe it is imperative that more resource must be found for this work.

Ungulates are still a major issue for our native biodiversity. We welcome the development of the Te Ara Ki Mua adaptive management framework and hope to see some useful actions implemented in this space in the future. In our rohe, browsing impacts are threatening the health of our forests, and thereby also threatening the habitat of taonga species. This has been a priority for our advocacy work.

This year we have been able to work closely with Department to meet the ministerial requirement to have input into prioritisation of the Department's budget. We thank the Department for their work in this space.

We continue to follow the progress of the Milford Opportunities Project with interest, and while much good could come from aspects of this, we are also wary of setting any dangerous precedents or simply pushing the pressures over to other precious parts of the Fiordland National Park. We welcome the strengthening of our relationship with the Fiordland Marine Guardians and are pleased to now be regularly consulted as an affected party on regional coastal planning applications.

This is my first year as Chair, a role I assumed in February. Many thanks to John Whitehead for his guidance, help and advice as well as his many years of dedicated and humble service to the Board. Vaughn Filmer also resigned due to other commitments, and we would also like to recognise his service and the valuable insights he provided. We welcomed two new members as well, Mark Bryan and Jerrie Valli. Both are already contributing well to what is a high functioning and supportive Board. I would also like to recognise my Deputy Chair Alison Broad for her help and support to me personally and her commitment to our Board being the very best it can be. I would particularly like to recognise our Iwi Representatives, Stewart Bull and Estelle Pera-Leask for the invaluable perspective they bring to our board and the insight they give us into Te Ao Māori.

I have enjoyed a positive 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. Special thanks for all their hard work, especially that outside of meetings.



Shona Sangster
Chairperson

2. Introduction

This is the 31st Southland Conservation Board Annual Report.

The Southland Conservation Board had 11 members for the 2021-2022 year appointed by the Minister of Conservation under the terms of the Conservation Act 1987. John Whitehead was reappointed as Chair, and Alison Broad was elected as Deputy Chair. As per the Boards succession planning, John Whitehead stepped down as Chair at the Boards February 2022 meeting in order to mentor the new Chair prior to his retirement from the Board. Shona Sangster was then elected as Chair with Alison Broad retaining the Deputy Chair position. Vaughn Filmer also resigned from the Board in December 2021, whilst John Whitehead retired from the Board on the 30th June 2022.

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

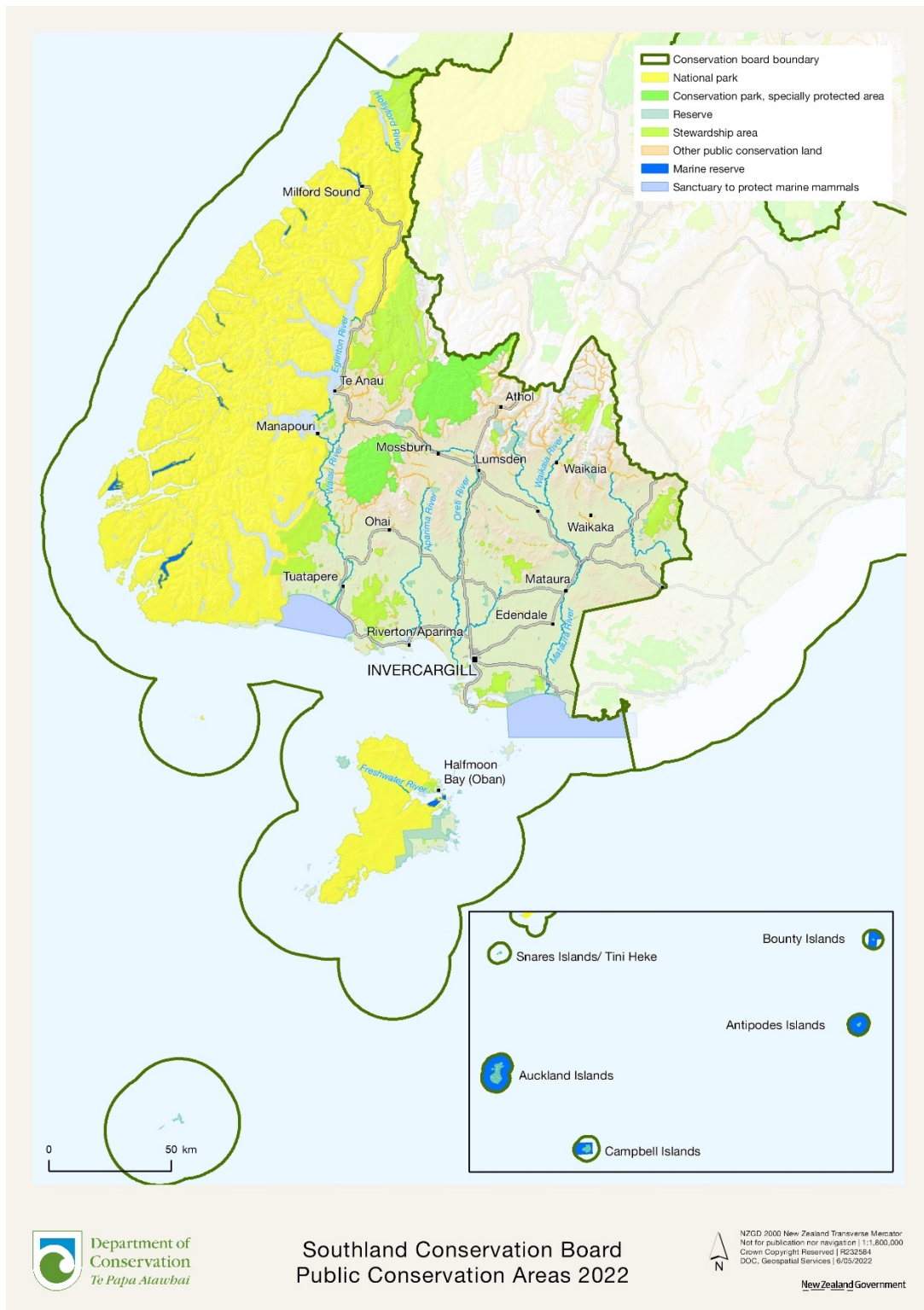


Figure 1. Southland Conservation Board Jurisdiction

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 24.23% of New Zealand's public conservation land and area lies within the Southland Conservation Boards 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 49.85% of all land in the Southland Conservation Boards rohe. This consists of:

- 1,882,868.11 hectares of Public Conservation Land
- 658,556.90 hectares of Sanctuaries to Protect Marine Mammals
- 951,919.43 hectares of Marine Reserves

3.1 Conservation features of the Area

- Fiordland National Park - 1,278,986.65 ha
- Mount Aspiring National Park - 3.94 ha
- Rakiura National Park - 140,357.89 ha
- Eyre Mountains/Taka Ra Haka Conservation Park - 65,583.88 ha
- Catlins Conservation Park - 2.92 ha
- 72 Scenic Reserves - 26,951.80 ha
- 16 Recreation Reserves - 317.67 ha
- 3 Historic Reserves - 465.83 ha
- 15 Marine Reserves - 951,919.43 ha
- 3 Marine Mammal Sanctuaries - 658,556.90 ha
- 5 National Nature Reserves
- 1 Ecological Area - Lindsay Ecological Area - 126.93 ha
- 350 Stewardship Areas - 235,829.25 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; four whose terms expired on 30 June 2021, 3 of which were reappointed. Vaughn Filmer resigned in November 2021 due to other commitments. 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 2021 and 30 June 2022 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	8 Years
Mark Bryan	Winton	01/07/21	30/06/24	1 Year
Stewart Bull	Invercargill	01/05/09	30/06/22	12 Years
Vaughn Filmer (<i>resigned Nov 2021</i>)	Te Anau	01/07/17	30/06/23	4.5 Years
Claire Jordan	Tuatapere	01/07/18	30/06/21	4 Years
Estelle Leask	Bluff	01/07/18	30/06/21	4 Years
Peter McDonald	Dipton	01/07/17	30/06/23	5 Years
Shona Sangster	Rakiura	01/07/18	30/06/21	4 Years
Jerrie Valli	Winton	01/07/21	30/06/24	1 Year
William Watt	Rakiura	01/07/16	30/06/22	6 Years
John Whitehead	Te Anau	01/01/11	30/06/22	11.5 Years

4.5 Member Profiles

Shona Sangster of Stewart Island (Chairperson)

Appointment term: 1 July 2018 - 30 June 2022

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. Shona is the Chair of the Stewart Island/Rakiura Community and Environment Trust, which controls pests and weeds around the Halfmoon Bay area. She co-edits the monthly Stewart Island News and works part-time for Glowing Sky Merino and the Southland District Council. Shona is also a member of the Rakiura Marine Guardians and has volunteered for the Kākāpō Recovery Programme. Shona 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.

Alison Broad of Invercargill

Appointment term: 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2023

Alison is a consultant in community projects and processes, with a Masters degree in Education. She has expertise in strategic thinking, policy development, advocacy, and development and governance for community benefit. Alison 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.

Mark Bryan of Winton

Appointment term: 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024

Mark is a rural veterinarian, farmer, and business owner. He is a Senior Lecturer of Dairy Cattle Medicine at Massey University, Director of Aquila Sustainable Farming Group, and has experience in a number of other executive and governance roles.

Stewart Bull of Riverton

Appointment term: 1 May 2009 to 30 June 2022

Stewart is of Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Māmoē, and Waitaha descent and was nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. He was the former Chair of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnanga, a member of the Whenua Hou committee, Fiordland Marine Guardians, former 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; he says, "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 (Resigned November 2021)

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 2024

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 Waiau River. Claire is an active member of the Waiau Rivercare Group, which advocates on behalf of the Waiau River and the surrounding community. Claire holds an 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 2024

Estelle is of Ngāi Tahu, Whakatōhea, Ngāti Ruanui descent and was nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Estelle 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 Limited, a Trustee on the Predator Free NZ Trust and Awarua Rūnanga representative on the Whenua Hou Komiti. She is a Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu trustee on Mauri ora Kākāpō Trust and supports the Department of Conservation Kākāpō Recovery Programme. She is also a Ngāi

Tahu representative on Te Puka Rakiura Trust supporting Predator Free Rakiura, and a Trustee on the Kea Conservation Trust.

Together with her husband Peter, they help coordinate the BHMET to undertake predator control, habitat restoration and indigenous biodiversity protection. Born and raised in Bluff, she believes kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of the natural environment an obligation and responsibility. Her interests include growing native plants, mahinga kai, bushwalking, rongoa and Te Ao Māori.

Peter McDonald of Dipton

Appointment term: 1 July 2017 - 30 June 2023

Peter, with his wife Kim Spencer-McDonald and two children, 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 just over twenty years. Peter has been involved in conservation at a local level for many years and is excited about continuing making a contribution at a provincial level.

William (Bill) Watt of Stewart Island

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. Bill is accredited with NZOIA as a Sea Kayak Leader and is also a certified Level 1 Animal Flow instructor.

John Whitehead of Te Anau

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 Waiau 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.

Jerrie Valli of Winton

Appointment term: 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024

Jerrie has eight years' experience in a senior leadership role for Sport Southland, providing skills in strategic direction and operational delivery, as well as an understanding of local government processes and experience working alongside resource management policy staff. She was previously a journalist, and has extensive experience in communications, marketing, and advocacy.

4.6 Board Meetings

The Southland Conservation Board held six meetings during the reporting period. Generally, various venues are used for the Board meetings to ensure wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board. Due to the impacts of Covid-19 and the associated restrictions, this was not possible. However, opportunities for members of the public to attend Board meetings virtually was made available at all Board meetings.

Table 2: Board meeting dates and location

Board meeting date	Meeting location and venue
16 August 2021	Department of Conservation, Invercargill
08 October 2021	Department of Conservation, Invercargill
30 November 2021	Department of Conservation, Invercargill
18 February 2022	Invercargill Working Mens Club, Invercargill
11 April 2022	Department of Conservation, Invercargill
09 June 2022	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
Mark Bryan	4/6	1/1
Stewart Bull	6/6	1/1
Vaughn Filmer	0/6	0/1
Claire Jordan	4/6	0/1
Estelle Leask	4/6	1/1
Peter McDonald	4/6	1/1
Shona Sangster	6/6	1/1
Jerrie Valli	6/6	1/1
William Watt	4/6	1/1
John Whitehead	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	Rūnanga Representatives
Alison Broad	Deborah Paterson (Waihōpai)
Stewart Bull	Estelle Leask (Awarua)
Shona Sangster	Tane Davis (Ōraka-Aparima)
John Whitehead	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
Fish & Game	Claire Jordan
Waiau Working Party	Claire Jordan
Waiau Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Trust	Claire Jordan
Waiau Rivercare Group	Claire Jordan
Āwarua Rūnanga	Estelle Leask
Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust	Estelle Leask
Environment Southland	Estelle Leask
Kea Conservation Trust	Estelle Leask
Predator Free Bluff	Estelle Leask
Predator Free Rakiura	Estelle Leask
Predator Free 2050 Ltd	Estelle Leask
DOC Community Fund	John Whitehead
Mid dome Wilding Pine Trust	John Whitehead
Otago Conservation Board	John Whitehead
Pomona Island Charitable Trust	John Whitehead
Waiau Wildlife and Fisheries habitat enhancement trust	John Whitehead
Waiau Working Party	John Whitehead
West Coast Tai Poutini conservation Board	John Whitehead
Whenua Hou Committee	John Whitehead
DOC Animal Ethics Committee	Mark Bryan
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 Community & Environmental Trust	Shona Sangster
Ulva Island Trust	Shona Sangster
Whenua Hou Committee	Shona Sangster
Environment Southland	Stewart Bull
Fiordland Marine Guardians	Stewart Bull
Predator Free Rakiura	Stewart Bull
Rakiura Tītī Committee	Stewart Bull
Rakiura Tītī Islands Administering Body	Stewart Bull
South West Endangered Species Charitable Trust	Stewart Bull
Te Ao Marama Inc	Stewart Bull

Whenua Hou Committee	Stewart Bull
Kids Restore the Kepler	Vaughn Filmer

4.10 Training for members

The Board held a full day hui at Te Rau Aroha Marae in Bluff. This visit was a great opportunity for the Board to experience the hospitality of the Awarua whanau. The Board was welcomed onto the marae with a mihi whakatau, which some members had not experienced before. This was followed with a hui with mana whenua where the Board had the opportunity to hear and learn about the local tīpuna and gain an understanding of tikanga.

The Board also received an informative presentation from Department staff regarding the Departments climate change response and strategy for mitigation, adaptation and sequestration. This session was valuable for the Board to understand the challenges the Department faces, the climate change goals they are aiming to achieve and their methodology to do so.

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

- Fiordland National Park current state
- Fiordland National Park Management Plan Review
- Predator Free Southland
- Sea lion monitoring
- Hoiho monitoring
- Permissions and statutory land management processes
- Tiakina ngā manu - Battle for our Birds
- 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 Board welcomed presentations from members of the public and Department staff at the meetings during 2021/2022. Presentations were received from:

- Morgan McLean - Department of Conservation - Tier 1 Monitoring Programme
- Kevin Carter, Department of Conservation - Tier 1 & Tier 2 Monitoring on Rakiura
- Stacey Wrenn, Department of Conservation - Management Planning System
- Anna Cameron & Eoin Moynihan, Department of Conservation - Stewardship Land Reclassification
- Liane Gilbert & Jenny Christie, Department of Conservation - Climate Change
- Rachel McMillan, Department of Conservation - Milford Opportunities Project
- Simon Moran & Louise Pagan, Southland District Council - Milford Opportunities Project
- Paul Norris - Leslie Hutchins Foundation
- Tane Davis - Whenua Hou Committee
- Haylee Preston, Roger Wilson & David Boniface, Milford Sound Tourism Ltd - Knobs Flat proposal
- Roger Wilson & James Stokes, Destination Milford Sound - Milford Opportunities Project Masterplan
- Campbell Leckie - Predator Free Rakiura

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
07 October 2021	<p>Te Rau Aroha Marae & Motupōhue Bluff Hill</p> <p>The purpose of the visit to Te Rau Aroha Marae was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connect with mana whenua<li>• Understand the challenges and aspirations of mana whenua<li>• Provide cultural awareness and training for Board members <p>After meeting with mana whenua, the Board took a short walk along the tōpuni track hosted by the Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust.</p> <p>The Board was impressed with the amount of effort and hard work the Trust has undertaken in predator control. The amount of restoration and regenerative growth in the understory is a great testament to their efforts.</p>



Photos on the previous page

Top: The Southland Conservation Board meeting with mana whenua representatives at Te Rau Aroha Marae, Bluff. Photo Credit: Julieanna Little

Middle Left: Southland Conservation Board members discussing the regenerating forest on Motupōhue / Bluff hill with Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust Project Leader David Swann. Photo Credit: Julieanna Little

Middle Right: Southland Conservation Board members Stewart Bull, Estelle Leask, Alison Broad and John Whitehead enjoying the bird song along the tōpuni track, Bluff. Photo Credit: Julieanna Little

Bottom: Southland Conservation Board Members, Department of Conservation staff and Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust Project Leader David Swann at Stirling Point, Bluff. Photo Credit: Julieanna Little

5. Statutory activity

The Southland Conservation Board is very passionate about advocacy.

In the past year, the Board made one media release on matters of interest. The Board also featured in one article 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 Southland Conservation Boards previous and current Chairs; John Whitehead and Shona Sangster along with their Board Support Officer Julieanna Little, keep in close contact with Otago Conservation Board Chair – Tara Druce and her Board Support Officer, Felicity Hattrell. All are in regular contact, often attending each other’s meetings when able to.

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
- Feral Cat Research
- Notified Concession applications
- Stewardship Land Policy
- Wildlife Act

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. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions, Board meetings were unable to be held in as many parts of the region as the Board would have liked. Alternatively, virtual opportunities for the public to attend Board meetings were made available and advertised.

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, Estelle Leask and Stewart Bull on the regional council – Environment Southland.

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 Boards Ngāi Tahu representatives are Estelle Leask and Stewart Bull.

The Whenua Hou Management Committee (a Board subcommittee under the Ngāi Tahu Settlement Act) met once during the year. Areas of interest for the Committee include the Whenua Hou Diving Petrel project, the archaeological site at hydro creek and the Kākāpō breeding programme.

The Board also held a successful hui with mana whenua at Te Rau Aroha Marae in Bluff in October 2021.

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, advocating on a range of issues on their behalf.

The Board is 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 2022 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 2021 – 30 June 2022

Work Programme overview

This Work Programme has been developed in response to the Letter of Expectation from the Minister of Conservation.

Part A: Government and ministerial priorities

- 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 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) Act

Part B: Board-specific priorities

- Progress the review of the Fiordland National Park Plan, and where required work with the Department to support the implementation of the current operative plan. (Minister).
- Progress and complete the gazetting of the proposed Rakiura Southern Wilderness Area.
- Advocate for improved environmental and conservation outcomes during the review of the Southland Coastal Plan.
- Progress the reclassification of stewardship land on Rakiura and mainland Southland.
- Advocate for, and progress, a predator free Rakiura.

Part C: General

- Your community – being active and visible in our local communities.
- Working with DOC – maintain a good working relationship with senior management.
- Working with other conservation boards & the NZCA – develop good working cross border relationships.

Part D: 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: GOVERNMENT & MINISTERIAL PRIORITIES

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
A	The Board will work with the Department planners and Ngāi Tahu to progress the review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan and support the implementation of the current operative plan.		
B	The Board will seek assurances that the upcoming 10-year review of the Rakiura CMS & Park plan will occur in a timely manner.		

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
A	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		
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.		

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
A	The Board will monitor the progress the Department is making on implementing the NZ Biodiversity Strategy		

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

2.1 **Board objective:**

The Board will embed the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in accordance with the obligations of Section 4 of the Act in all aspects of work

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
A	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.		
B	Strengthen the Board's relationship with Makaawhio Rūnaka on the West Coast.		
C	To send at least one Board member to Te Pukenga Atawhai		Board members were willing, but no opportunity was available
D	The Board will continue to support the implications of Section 4 of the Conservation Act .		

PART B: BOARD SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

3 Other Statutory Functions

3.1 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
A	The Board will continue to advocate that all stewardship land that is within the Te Waipounamu World Heritage Area, along with all stewardship land within the Awarua wetland complex and Rakiura, be reclassified.		
B	The Board will meet with Fish and Game at least once a year.		
C	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.		
D	The Board will support the creation of the Hump Ridge Great walk and will advise the Department through any statutory changes.		
E	The Board will support and monitor the Department & concessionaires transition to a lower carbon conservation delivery model.		
F	The Board will advocate to the Department to increase its statutory role in increasing indigenous biomass within Public Conservation Land.		
G	The Board will continue to support the Whenua Hou Committee		

3.2 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
A	The Board will work with the Predator Free Southland Group to advance the predator free cause in Southland		
B	The Board will support and advocate for Predator Free Rakiura		

4 Advocacy

4.1 Board objective:

The Southland Conservation 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
A	The Board will advocate strongly on Regional Resource Management Act 1991 policy documents. Including the Regional Coastal Plan Review		
B	The Board will submit on relevant, Resource Management Act 1991, consent applications where we have been deemed an interested party.		
C	The Board will advocate strongly for the importance of forest/ecosystem health for the mitigation of climate change and the positive carbon implications of controlling introduced browsing species		
D	The Board will advocate for improved water quality in Southland and the enhancement of our remaining wetlands.		
E	The Board will advocate for maximum conservation & social outcomes in the development of the Milford Opportunities Project master plan.		
F	The Board will support any changes required to the status of land which is the		

	home of threatened species, such as Anchor / Pukenui and Chalky / Te kakahu Islands.		
G	The Board will advocate on the threat of wilding conifers on biodiversity, and for responsible carbon farming.		

PART C: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

5 Working with the Department

5.1 **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
A	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.		
B	Continue relationship building with relevant DOC staff.		
C	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 Statutory Plans		

6 Taking into account Ministerial priorities for the Department

6.1 **Board objective:**

The Board will support Ministerial and local priorities

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
A	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.		
B	The Board will publicly support 'The Battle for our Birds programme in the Southern South Island Region.		

C	The Board will continue to support proposals to find new protected habitat for Kiwi, Kākāpō and Takahē.		
D	The Board will continue to advocate for resources to reverse the decline in critically endangered species		

6.2 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
A	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.		

7 Working with adjoining Conservation Boards and the Authority

7.1 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
A	To have at least one joint meeting with the Otago Board to discuss cross-boundary issues especially Park Plans.		Unable to do so due to Covid-19 risk and restrictions
B	The Board to develop a relationship with the West Coast Board		Mike Legg (West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board Chair) attended the Boards October 2021 Board Meeting.
C	The Board Chair to continue to liaise with the Otago Board Chair.		

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
A	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.		
B	The Board works with regional authorities to promote conservation within the community.		

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
A	The Board will initiate informal community meetings in the region to gauge community reaction to and promote conservation projects.		Unable to do so due to Covid-19 risk and restrictions
B	The Board will hold a public forum at most of its meetings		
C	The Board will liaise with the Department to make sure Board members attend public functions held by the Department.		
D	The Board investigates the use of social media to raise the Board's profile.		

PART D: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

9 Risks from the Boards perspective

A	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	The threat of Covid 19 on Dept. income & work output is a concern in achieving desired goals. Also any rise in covid threat levels impacts on how the Board operates.
C	There is a lot of work done by Board members outside of our bimonthly meetings. This can lead to Board fatigue.

10 Opportunities for conservation growth

A	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 or contact the Board Support Officer, at the Department of Conservation in Invercargill phone (03) 211 2400 or e-mail southlandconservatioboard@doc.govt.nz