

Southland Conservation Board Te Rōpū Atawhai o Murihiku

Annual Report

1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023



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Front Cover: Adult Southern New Zealand Dotterel
Photo Credit: Department of Conservation image library; Daniel Cocker

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1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

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1. Chairperson's report

2022-23 has been a year of productive activity for the Southland Conservation Board/Te Rōpū Atawhai o Murihiku. We held five in person meetings and one virtual. We have put in a lot of work to providing advice to the Department of Conservation on permission and concession applications and to Environment Southland on Coastal Permit Applications in the Fiordland marine area as well as participating in the Environmental Defence Society review of the conservation management system and forums on the Sealion Threat Management Plan Review and the Hector's Dolphin.

We welcomed two new board members, Alexandra McCrossin and Jennifer McGirr, both resident in Queenstown and with valuable skills and experience. They are already contributing a great deal to the Board's activities. We wish to acknowledge those who left the board this year, Peter McDonald and William Watt. Both Peter and Bill brought wisdom, skill and experience to the board and their perspectives and deep local knowledge will be greatly missed. We would also like to acknowledge the passing of Bubba Thompson (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu), a kaitiaki of the south with a huge passion and a warm generosity with his time. I would also like to recognise my Deputy Chair Alison Broad for her help and support to me personally and her commitment to a supportive and collegial Board culture. I would particularly like to recognise our Ngāi Tahu Iwi Representatives, Stewart Bull and Estelle Pērā-Leask for the invaluable perspective they bring to our board and were they give us to be the best we can be.

Areas of focus for us this year included long overdue progress with the Subantarctic Islands visitor management plan, understanding and responding to the Masterplan produced by the Milford Opportunities Project, and the proposals by the Fiordland Trails Trust for a new section of the Lake2Lake cycle trail in Te Anau.

Our concerns are loosely around two areas: the twin biodiversity and climate crises and the reform required to our legislative and conservation management processes to make them fit for purpose. As a result of the first concern, we brought attention to the dire plight of the yellow eyed penguin/hoiho, and the Southern NZ Dotterel/tūturiwhatu, and serious incursions on predator free islands such as Ulva/Te Wharawhara and Chalky/Te Kākahu-o-Tamatea, and the carbon implications of ungulates and pigs on conservation land. We have advocated strongly in this space all year. We also hope to see progress in the management planning space.

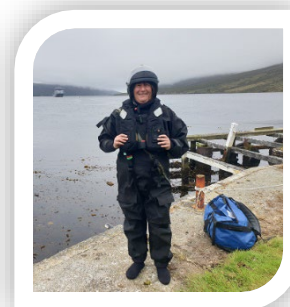
Highlights of the year were the chance to join the Operation Endurance joint Navy/DOC trip to Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. Another high point was welcoming the NZCA to our region and the shared experience of visiting Te Rau Aroha marae and learning from mana whenua.

We have enjoyed the excellent minute taking and organisational skills of Julieanna Little (our Board Support Officer) and wish her well in her new role as Supervisor - Community, Murihiku. We would like to acknowledge the support we receive from: Aaron Fleming (Southern Operations Director), Donna Shepard (Statutory Manager), the four Operations Managers (John Lucas, John McCarroll, & Jennifer Ross, Deirdre Vercoe) and all the DOC Staff who have facilitated the Board in its work. A particular thank you is due to Alex McLeod and Jessica Hosie of the Regional Planning team for the exceptional work they have put into trying to integrate CMS/Park Plan milestones into the business planning process.

Finally, my special thanks to the Southland Conservation Board/Te Rōpū Atawhai o Murihiku members, your passion, enthusiasm and integrity make this board a pleasure to lead



Shona Sangster
Chairperson



Shona Sangster on Campbell Island

2. Introduction

This is the 33rd Southland Conservation Board Annual Report.

The Southland Conservation Board had 11 members for the 2022-2023 year appointed by the Minister of Conservation under the terms of the Conservation Act 1987. Shona Sangster was Chair and Alison Broad Deputy Chair for the year.

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

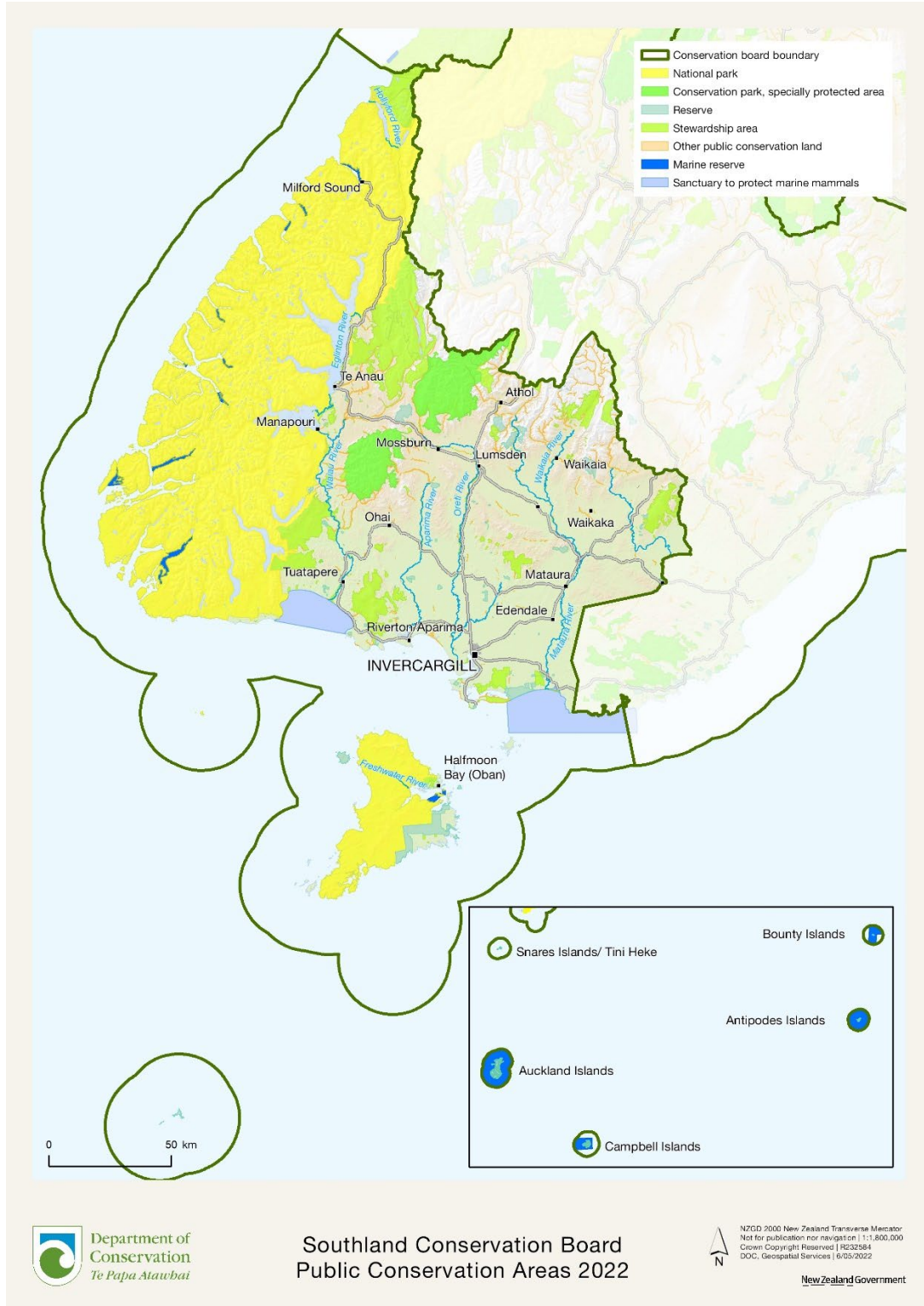


Figure 1. Southland Conservation Board Jurisdiction

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. hoiho, 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.
- 7) 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 expires on 30 June 2023,

The following table lists the membership of the Southland Conservation Board between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023 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	9 Years
Mark Bryan	Winton	01/07/21	30/06/24	2 Years
Stewart Bull	Invercargill	01/05/09	30/06/25	14 Years
Claire Jordan	Tuatapere	01/07/18	30/06/24	5 Years
Estelle Pērā-Leask	Bluff	01/07/18	30/06/24	5 Years
Peter McDonald	Dipton	01/07/17	30/06/23	6 Years
Shona Sangster	Rakiura	01/07/18	30/06/25	5 Years
Jerrie Valli	Winton	01/07/21	30/06/24	2 Year
William Watt	Rakiura	01/07/16	30/06/23	7 Years
Alexandra McCrossin	Queenstown	01/07/22	30/06/25	1 Year
Jennifer McGirr	Queenstown	01/07/22	30/06/25	1 Year

4.5 Member Profiles

Shona Sangster of Stewart Island (Chairperson)

Appointment term: 1 July 2018 - 30 June 2025

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 2025

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!".

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 Pērā-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 J (Bill) Watt of Invercargill

Appointment term: 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2023

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.

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.

Alexandra McCrossin of Queenstown

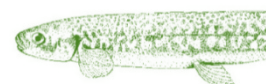
Appointment term: 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025

Alex holds extensive knowledge of National Parks and DOC reserves after 12 years of film permitting and photography in the South Island. Ms McCrossin also brings 20 years of experience in managing film crews to capture New Zealand's outstanding landscapes, whilst working closely with the Department of Conservation to preserve and support nature conservation efforts.

Jennifer (Jen) McGirr of Queenstown.

Appointment term: 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025

Jen holds experience in environmental science which includes environmental monitoring, data management, and interpretation. She brings project management and policy writing skills to the Board, alongside implementation experience and knowledge of iwi environmental plans.



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. Opportunities for members of the public to attend Board meetings was made available at all Board meetings.

Table 2: Board meeting dates and location

Board meeting date	Meeting location and venue
26 August 2022	The Pavilion, Rakiura
21 October 2022	Joint meeting with NZCA, Ascot Hotel Invercargill
14 December 2022	MS Teams
09 February 2023	Milford Opportunities Office, Te Anau
20 April 2023	MS Teams
22 June 2023	Department of Conservation, Invercargill



Southern brown kiwi, Tokoeka. Adult. Oban, Stewart Island - Photo credit: Glen Pure

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	3
Mark Bryan	5	2
Stewart Bull	6	3
Alexandra McCrossin	5	3
Claire Jordan	5	2
Estelle Pērā-Leask	5	2
Peter McDonald	5	3
Shona Sangster	6	3
Jerrie Valli	5	2
William Watt	5	3
Jennifer McGirr	6	3

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 Pērā-Leask (Awarua)
Shona Sangster	Tane Davis (Ōraka-Aparima)
Claire Jordan	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
Awarua Rūnanga	Estelle Pērā-Leask
Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust	Estelle Pērā-Leask
Environment Southland	Estelle Pērā-Leask
Kea Conservation Trust	Estelle Pērā-Leask
Predator Free Bluff	Estelle Pērā-Leask
Predator Free Rakiura	Estelle Pērā-Leask
Predator Free 2050 Ltd	Estelle Pērā-Leask
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



4.10 Training for members

The Board was keen to send members to attend Te Pukenga Atawhai courses as has been possible in the past but there was no opportunity for that this year. We did have the opportunity to join the NZCA in a hui at Te Rau Aroha Marae in Bluff.

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 2022/2023. Presentations were received from:

- Sharon Pasco, Member of the Rakiura community – Observation Rock upgrade.
- Chris Goddard – Milford Opportunities Project.
- Roy Sloan -Fiordland Wapiti Foundation.
- Tim Gale - New Zealand Animal Game Council.
- Charlie Parker, Sarah Smylie & Robyn Roberts, Department of Conservation – CMS Partial review for biking.
- Anna Cameron & Nicole Kunzmann, Department of Conservation – Stewardship Land
- Rebecca McLeod – Fiordland Marine Guardians
- Stephen Horn, Department of Conservation -Ulva Island re-eradication
- Richard Seed, Department of Conservation – (DOC) Hoiho Update
- Trudi Webster, YEPT – Hoiho Update
- Daniel Cocker, Department of Conservation – Southern NZ Dotterel Update

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 three field trips in the past year.

Field Trip date	Field Trip destination and purpose
25 August 2022	Paterson Inlet/ Whaka-a-Te-Wera and Ocean Beach
20 October 2022	<p>Te Rau Aroha Marae, Motupōhue Bluff Hill and the Southern Islands Quarantine Facility in Eye St, Invercargill</p> <p>The purpose of the visit to Te Rau Aroha Marae and the Quarantine Facility was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with mana whenua • Understand the challenges and aspirations of mana whenua together with the NZCA • Inform NZCA about some of the challenges in managing the remote and pristine Southern Islands. <p>After meeting with mana whenua, the Board and the NZCA took a short walk along the tōpuni track hosted by the Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust.</p>
08 February 2023	Field trip to Lake 2 Lake Cycle Trail, Homer Tunnel, Milford Sound/Piopiotaahi



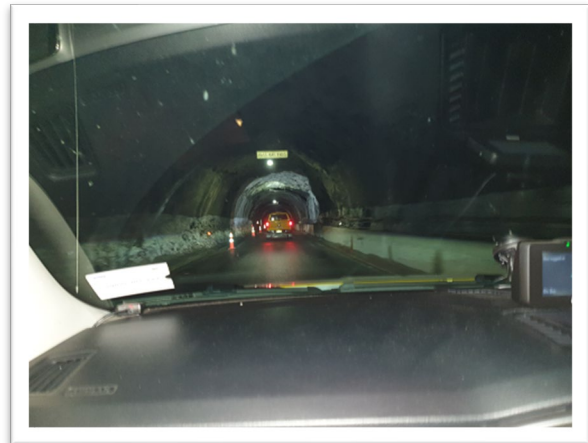


Photo previous page: The Southland Conservation Board members visiting Milford Sound/Piopiotahi

Top: The Southland Conservation Board members visiting the Homer Tunnel, Milford Sound/Piopiotahi

Below Left: The Southland Conservation Board members visiting the Homer Tunnel, Milford Sound/Piopiotahi . Photo Credit: Shona Sangster

Below Right: The Southland Conservation Board members visiting the Homer Tunnel, Milford Sound/Piopiotahi . Photo Credit: Shona Sangster

5. Statutory activity

The Southland Conservation Board is very passionate about advocacy. During this year we have followed the communications strategy we implemented last year ensure our communications are effective.

In the past year, the Board made one media release on the plight of the Southern New Zealand dotterel/tūturiwhatu and the yellow-eyed penguin/hoiho. We also formulated a position on the Milford Opportunities Project's Masterplan.

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. The Rakiura National Park Management Plan and CMS are also due for review as of 2022.

5.3 Implementation monitoring

The Board has worked closely with the Regional Business planning team to achieve greater integration between DOC's business planning process and the implementation of the management plans and strategies for Rakiura and Murihiku. This is still a work in progress.



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
Stewart Bull	Fiordland Marine Guardians
Estelle Pērā-Leask	Predator Free Rakiura Governance Group
Claire Jordan	Fish and Game Southland
Peter McDonald	Environment Southland
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 Jen Rodgers of the Otago Conservation Board. The Southland Conservation Board's Chair keeps in close contact with Otago Conservation Board Chair – Tim Barke. The two Boards now share a Board Support Officer, Eleanor Kettink which increase the opportunities for working closely. The Southland Board is also in regular contact with the West Coast/Tai Poutini Board, and their Chair, Mike Legge has attended meetings of the Southland Board.

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

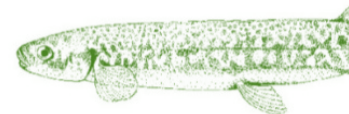
6.3 New Zealand Conservation Authority liaison

The Southland Conservation Boards NZCA liaison is Viv Shaw 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



6.5 Community advocacy and involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. This year meetings were held in Rakiura, Te Anau and Invercargill, with both physical and virtual opportunities for the public to attend Board meetings 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/>. As part of the Board's communications strategy columns were published in the Southland Express on June, July, August, October, November, December 2022. and May 2023

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 Pērā-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 Pērā-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 NZCA and 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 2023 with a full record of what was set out to be achieved and what was achieved.



Photo: Milford Sound, Fiordland. Mitre Peak - : www.queenstownnz.co.nz

Appendix 1 – Annual Work Plan

Southland Conservation Board Work Programme

1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

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 (CMSs) and support their progress effectively to promote strong conservation outcomes
- Embed the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in accordance with the obligations of section 4 of the Act in all aspects of work
- Support the transition to a lower-carbon conservation delivery model, having regard to the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019

Part B: Board-specific priorities

- Progress the review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan.
- Work within the framework of Te Mana o te Taiao – Te Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy to enable significant projects within the board's area, such as Predator Free Rakiura, to become a reality.
- Advocate for sustainable tourism activities in the conservation estate, referenced to environmental and social sustainability, reflecting treaty obligations and incorporating carbon minimisation.
- Focus on ungulate control, especially deer and pigs in the National Parks to restore the mauri of the ngahere on Rakiura and in Fiordland especially.
- Promote the carbon sink value of native ecosystems.
- Continue to strengthen Board members' relationships with tangata whenua and their understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Progress the Fiordland National Park Management Plan, Southern Rakiura Wilderness area gazettal, and assist with the stewardship land review in the Southland rohe.
- Advocate for sustainable tourism activities in the conservation estate, referenced to environmental and social sustainability, reflecting Treaty obligations and incorporating carbon minimisation.

Part C: General Expectations

- 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 and the Rakiura Conservation Management Strategy/Rakiura 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 continue to advocate for the belated review of the review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan and support the implementation of the current operative plan.		Review is not yet commenced. The board notes their disappointment that the letter written to the Director General has not yet been heeded. The board waits with eager anticipation.
B	The Board will seek assurances that the upcoming 10-year review of the Rakiura CMS & Park Plan will occur in a timely manner.		Assurances not yet received

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.		This milestone currently lacks mana whenua support. In view of our treaty partnership, it's not appropriate to continue without their support.
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.		Parked in favour in having time for an achievable process.

1.3 **Board objective:**

The Board will monitor the implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao, the Aotearoa NZ Biodiversity Strategy and the Department's collaboration with iwi & hapu, community organisations and 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 Te Mana o te Taiao Aotearoa NZ Biodiversity Strategy and encourage progress with this important work		The Board eagerly awaits the release of the first 5 year implementation plan by the Department.

2 Understanding the Board's contribution to giving effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi

2.1 **Board objective:**

The Board will embed the principles of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi in accordance with the obligations of Section 4 of the Act in all aspects of our 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.		Meeting held at Te Rau Aroha. Discussions and relationships are always an ongoing piece of work.
B	The Board's relationship with Ngā Rūnanga ki Murihiku and Ngai Tahu and Makaawhio.		Still work to be done in this space with Makaawhio.
C	To send at least one Board member to Te Pukenga Atawhai and seek other avenues for building cultural knowledge, awareness and appreciation of Board members.		Paused for now as this has not run in the southern region in this year. (Send DOC's Te Pukenga app to the Board?)
D	The Board will continue to support the implementation of Section 4 of the Conservation Act.		As reported by our Ngai Tahu rep we try to regard the treaty as a golden thread that flows through all the work that we do and is always something that we come back to rather than a siloed add on to our work.

2.2 **Board objective:**

The Board will support the transition to a lower-carbon conservation delivery model, having regard to the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019.

Planned Board activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary
A	The Board will support and monitor the Department & concessionaires transition to a lower carbon conservation delivery model.		The Board always has this as an important criterion of consideration throughout its work. The Board continues to advocate monitoring and taking a broad view of the subject.

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 consideration 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 appropriately reclassified.		The Board looks forward to the opportunity to have input into the stewardship reclassification process when it comes to our area.
B	The Board will meet with Fish and Game at least once a year to further our relationship and reflect our legal obligations and areas of common interest.		The Board looks forward to doing it soon
C	The Board will advise the Department on concession applications that meet the Board's triggers. The Board will follow up with the Department on whether the advice was heeded.		Still work to do on following up on the result of the advice.
D	The Board will support the creation of the Hump Ridge Great walk and will advise the Department through any statutory changes.		Advice to the Department has been given upon request.
E	The Board will advocate to the Department to fulfil its statutory role in increasing indigenous biomass within Public Conservation Land.		In progress.
F	The Board will continue to support the Whenua Hou Committee and advocate for adequate resourcing		In progress.

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 support and advocate for Predator Free Rakiura		In progress.
B	The Board support Predator Free Southland to advocate for the predator free cause in Southland		In progress.
C	The Board will support and advocate for other predator free initiatives such as Maukahuka /Auckland Island SIRCET		In progress.

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.		In progress. The consultation stage of the Regional Coastal Plan Review has not yet begun.
B	The Board will submit on relevant, Resource Management Act 1991, consent applications where we have been deemed an affected party.		In progress. The Board has had their affected party status reviewed and acknowledged by Environment Southland.
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.		In progress.
D	The Board will advocate for improved water quality in Southland and the enhancement and restoration of our wetlands.		In progress.
E	The Board will advocate for maximum conservation outcomes in the next stages of the Milford Opportunities Project.		In progress.

F	The Board will advocate on the threat of wilding conifers to biodiversity, and for responsible carbon farming.		In progress.
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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 helpful for the Board to make any worthwhile gains in conservation.		Relationship is in good heart.
B	Continue relationship building with relevant DOC staff.		In progress.
C	The Board in conjunction with the Department, will continue the 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.		Much work has been put in to this with the Regional Planning team

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.		In progress.

B	The Board will publicly support the National Eradication Programme in the Southern South Island Region.		In progress.
C	The Board will continue to support proposals to ensure adequate protected habitat for endangered species such as Whenua Hou diving petrel kuaka, Kākāpō, Takahē, Tūturīwhatu.		In progress.
D	The Board will continue to advocate for resources to reverse the decline in critically endangered species		In progress.

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, as well as appropriate.		Was not achieved in this year.
B	The Board to develop a relationship with the West Coast Board		An ongoing piece of work.
C	The Board Chair to continue to liaise with the Otago Board Chair.		Regular discussions occur and the Board Chair or a liaison person attend most meetings of the Otago Board.
D	Ensure ongoing participation in the Chair's conference.		Attended by 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.		In progress.
B	The Board works with regional authorities to promote conservation within the community.		In progress.

8.2 **Board objective:**

Board members may 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 may initiate informal community meetings in the region to engage with members of our community and promote conservation projects.		In progress.
B	The Board will hold a public forum at most of its meetings		In progress.
C	The Board may liaise with the Department to enable Board members attend public functions held by the Department and to enable opportunities to support DOC in the field.		In progress.
D	The Board investigates the use of social media to raise the Board's profile.		Investigations have determined that the Board does not have the resource to maintain a social media profile of it's own.
E	The board will write a regular column in the Southland Express.		Columns written.

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	There is a lot of work done by Board members outside of our bimonthly meetings. This can lead to Board fatigue.
C	MOP possibility for precedent setting special legislation which overrides conservation values or requirements of relevant Park Plan.
D	Under resourcing of board budget not permitting us to fulfil our statutory functions

10 Opportunities for conservation growth

A	See workplan above
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