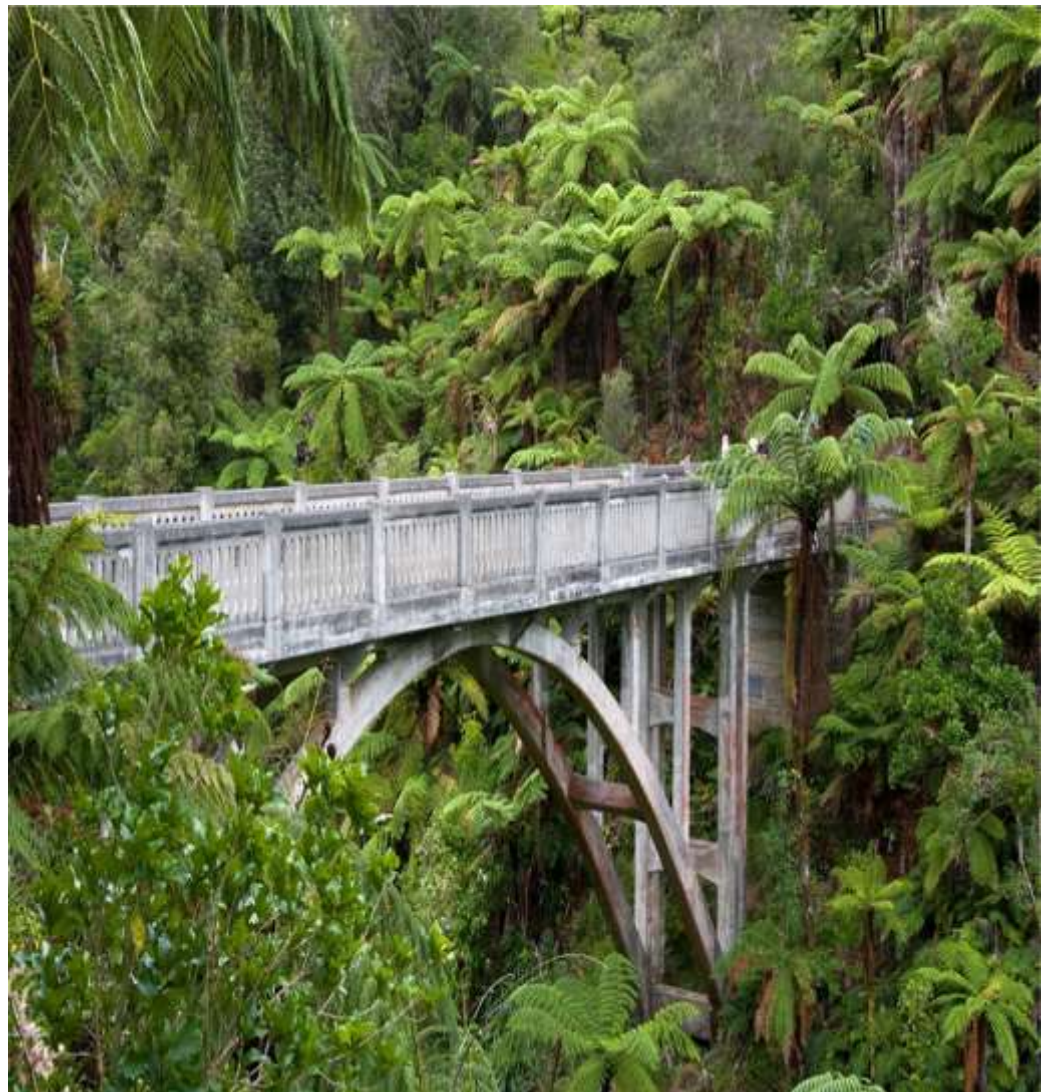


Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board

Taiao ā-uta, Taiao ā-tai
Atawhaitia mai te taiao e te taitangata e!

Annual Report 2020 – 2021



Pg 1: Image courtesy of Department of Conservation
Bridge to Nowhere - Whanganui

Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board Annual Report 2020 – 2021

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

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act and is distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend Conservation Board meetings.

If you would like more information on the Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board, please refer to:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-Boards/taranaki-whanganui/>

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1. Chairperson's Report

Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board has, this period, again been exploring options to meet its Conservation Management Strategy statutory obligations. Department of Conservation resource delays in development of second-generation strategies have left our Board with many challenges and issues that were unforeseen when first generation CMS were developed. We have worked with what we have and encouraged the Department reports to us to include references to the CMS where they are able, this period the department provided a resource to assist an internal Board review of the current CMS.

During this period the Department started an internal review of the Management and Planning System (which includes CMS processes) at the same time as the Options Development Group was formed to do partial reviews of the Conservation General policy and General policy National parks. Conservation Boards were consulted as part of this internal review however, no outcome to date re this process.

Trans-Tasman Resources Limited v The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board and others continues to follow the processes available via the New Zealand court system. This Board has been part of the process from submission against the application to the Environmental Protection Authority (2016) through to the High Court, Court of Appeal and will continue to the last available step in the process – Supreme Court. The Supreme Court heard the last appeal on 18 and 19 November 2020. There has been no decision yet.

Board Chairs Conference August 2020 - Was informative and allowed for connection with other Board Chairs from around the motu. As a consequence of this conference a Conservation Boards improvement process has been implemented by the Department to better meet the needs of modern Conservation Boards.

Maunga Taranaki negotiations- Taranaki Maunga negotiations with the crown have been ongoing during this period and the Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board have been kept up to date on progress.

Whanganui Iwi settlements: Still some way to go for the Whanganui settlements process although Te Awa Tupua, the Whanganui River Settlement, statute is in place and operational. Board representation is vested via Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui.

Taranaki Iwi settlements Ngāti Maru treaty settlement, the last of Nga iwi o Taranaki to negotiate its settlement was brought to completion during this period.

Ngāi Tai decision to give effect to treaty of Waitangi was a ground-breaking decision made in New Zealand Supreme Court and has made way for the Treaty of Waitangi to have much more weight across the Department of Conservation. Alterations to s4 of the Conservation Act were made during this period to better reflect the Courts decision.

As a consequence of the above Supreme Court decision The Director General of Conservation started a process of partial review of the Conservation General Policy and General Policy National Parks. A 12-person panel was appointed by the DG including three Chairs from Conservation Boards from around the country. I was privileged to be chosen as one of those people. The process started in September 2020 due for completion September 2021.

COVID Impact

This reporting period included more interruptions because of COVID-19. It impacted on our regular Board hui and, quite rightly, shifted the Departments staff attention onto the practicalities working remotely. The Board had cancelled field trips and had to hold virtual meetings once again.

During this period the Government announced a substantial amount of funding to go towards nature called 'Jobs for Nature', as a response to the COVID crisis, which caused the loss of many jobs in some sectors. The significant opportunity created by 'Jobs for Nature' will enable a workforce for the future of the environment and hopefully mitigate and advance adaption strategies for climate change in our rohe.

The Brand

This period the Board also developed a Brand (essentially just a logo and strap line) that we hope to further develop next year, to encourage more engagement with our communities and the public forum element of every Board agenda.

The Board

This reporting period the Board appointed a deputy chair, ably taken on by new Board member Drew Castle, thank you Drew for your support and assistance, much appreciated.

The Board would like to acknowledge outgoing members Novena McGuckin and Sam Tamarapa for their contribution to conservation governance in Taranaki and Whanganui.

To all the Department of Conservation staff, especially our hard-working Board Support Officer Adrienne Corfe and Statutory Manager Michelle Lewis, we thank you for providing us with the information and guidance requested in these trying circumstances. We look forward to developing and progressing the CMS process with you next year!

To all the Taranaki Whanganui Board members I thank you for your time, persistence, patience, and generosity during this period and look forward to working with you in the coming year.



Noho ora mai
Vicky Dombroski



2. Introduction

This is the Taranaki- Whanganui Conservation Board Annual Report as required under Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987.

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

The Conservation Board has several statutory roles under various Acts including:

- advising the Department of Conservation and the NZCA on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice
- 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 status of land of national and international significance
- liaising with Fish and Game Council on conservation matters
- carrying out other powers delegated by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act, or any other Act

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act requires Conservation Boards to provide the NZCA with an annual report as soon as practical after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board submits this annual report.

The Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board is appointed by the Minister of Conservation under section 6(P) of the Conservation Act 1987. Board functions are outlined in section 6(M) and the powers, which enable the Board to carry out those functions, are under 6(N) of the Act.

The Conservation Act specifies that the Board's role is to:

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

The Board has a number of functions under section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980. These functions include recommending the review or amendment of national park management plans and recommending approval of these plans by the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA).

Section 6 (O) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires Conservation Boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority with an annual report as soon as practicable after the 30th of June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board submits this annual report.

3. Conservation Board Region

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction encompasses some 15,000 sq. km of land extending from the Mokau River in the north to the Turakina River in the south and inland to Ohura and Taumarunui. Approximately 298,000 ha of public conservation land is administered by DOC which represents almost 20% of the total area of the Board's district.

In addition to a number of scenic, historic, and recreational reserves, the district includes both the Egmont National Park and its associated array of recreation opportunities, and the Whanganui National Park with its unique history and strong cultural connections.

The coastal boundary that extends along the Board's district includes the Tapuae and Paraninihi marine reserves as well as the long-established Ngā Motu/Sugar Loaf Islands Protected Area.

Volcanoes, wild and scenic rivers, huge tracts of forest, rugged mountain ranges and a dynamic coastline provide for a great diversity of landscapes, habitats, plants, and animals.

The area also extends out to the 12-nautical mile limit with respect to coastal and marine issues, and out to the 200-nautical mile limit, with respect to protected species.

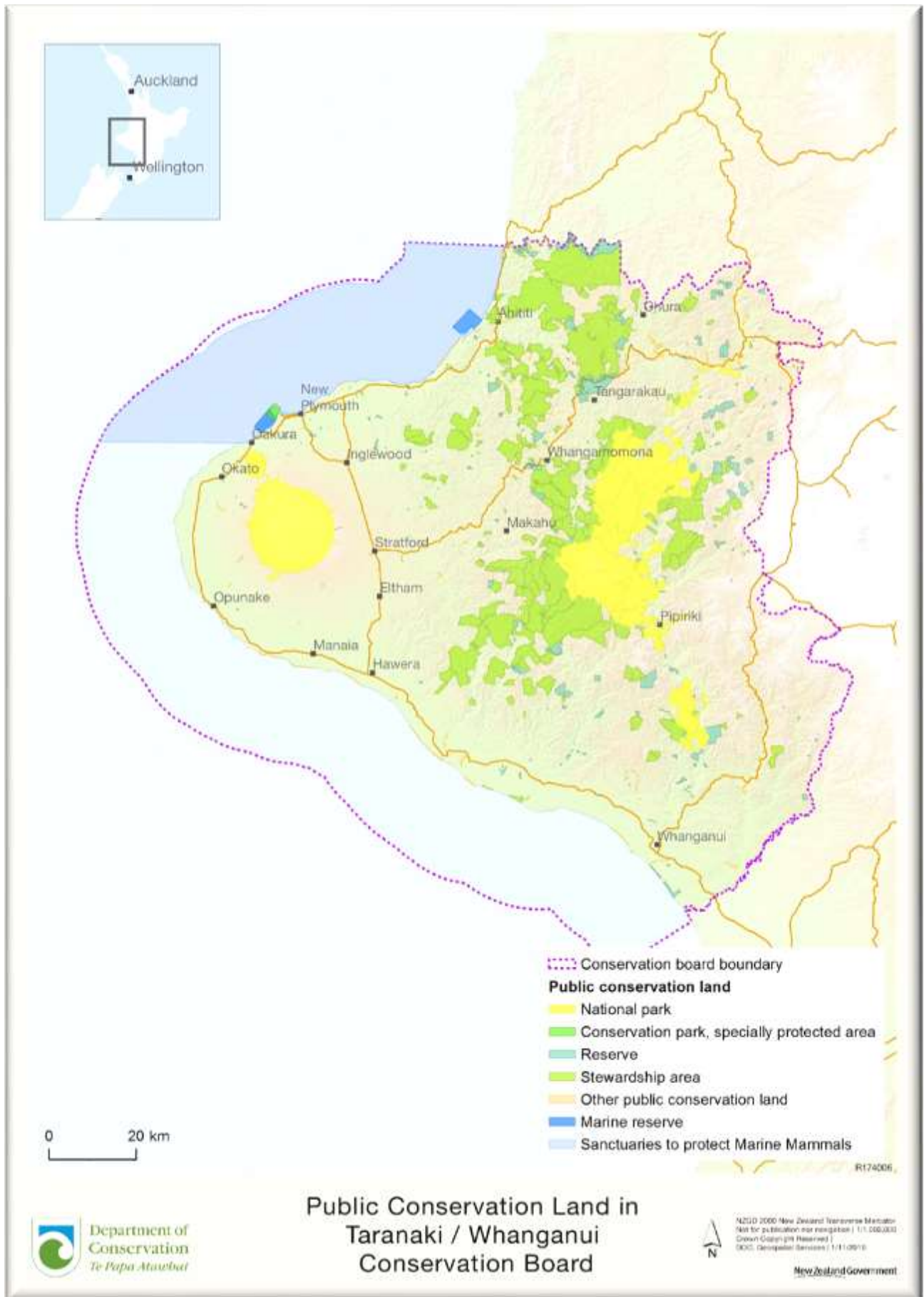


Figure 1. Public Conservation Land in Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board

Public Conservation Land (hectares by legislative section) in the Taranaki / Whanganui Board Area – 1ST November 2019

Recreation Reserve	<i>58.19 ha</i>
Historic Reserve – <i>31.60 ha</i>	<i>31.60 ha</i>
Scenic Reserve (sec 19 1a)	<i>20,078.93 ha</i>
Scenic Reserve (sec 19 1b)	<i>4.72 ha</i>
Conservation Park	723.44 ha
Scientific Reserve	<i>259.4 ha</i>
Government Purpose Reserve	<i>455.85 ha</i>
Sanctuary Ara	1.34 ha
Local Purpose Reserve	<i>168.42 ha</i>
Moveable Marginal Strip	<i>56.24 ha</i>
Fixed Marginal Strip	<i>649.78 ha</i>
Stewardship Area	<i>160,929.93 ha</i>
National Park	<i>108,463.07 ha</i>

3.1. Conservation features of the Area

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

Wetlands, lakes, and rivers

Waverley Lake network

Island sanctuaries off the coast of New Plymouth

Sugar Loaf Islands Conservation Sanctuaries

North Island West Coast dunes and estuaries

Whitiau Scientific and Scenic Reserves, Tapuarau Conservation Area, Patea Harbour

Mainland Sanctuaries

Uenuku

Rotokare (Scenic Reserve)

Bushy Park

Community Projects on Conservation Land

TMP, Kaitake, ETET

Historic pre-European and Remnants from the Land War Areas

e.g. Mangapapa, Tieke, Koru Pa, Fort St George, Omata Stockade, Pukerangiora, Okau Pa.

Vast areas of intact lowland forest

Whanganui National Park, Waitotara Conservation Area, Tangarakau Conservation and Scenic Reserves and North Taranaki Conservation Areas

Marine reserves

Paraninihi and Tapuae Marine Reserve

Marine mammals

West Coast North Island Marine Mammal Sanctuary, Māui Dolphin, Proposed Blue Whale Sanctuary and New Zealand Fur Seals

Whanganui River

Te Awa Tupua Settlement

Taranaki Mounga

The Whanganui National Park

The extensive forest of the Park is at the heart of a vast area of intact native forest, the second largest on the North Island. It holds the largest remaining Kiwi population in the North Island. Covering a total area of 74'231 hectares.

The large number of issues which are of interest to the Board include:

Taranaki Mounga

Wetlands, lakes, and rivers

Island sanctuaries off the coast of New Plymouth

North Island West Coast dunes and estuaries

Vast area of intact lowland forest

Marine reserves

Marine mammals

Whanganui River

Large scale pest control

Intensive management of endangered species

Consents and Concessions

Recreational Activities and Tourism

Biosecurity

Climate Change

COVID 19

Legislation Reform

Treaty Settlements

4. Board Functioning

4.1. Board functioning under 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 and amendment 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

7. Every Board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions.
8. 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.

9. 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. Responsibilities under other Sections of the Conservation Act 1987

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 states "This Act shall be so interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi".

As a Board established under the Conservation Act 1987, section 4 applies to the Board in the discharge of its functions.

With two statutory member appointments and other members with Iwi roles, the Board is well abreast of the treaty landscape and advises the Department of key tangata whenua issues when relevant.

4.4. Board Functions under the National Parks Act 1980

There are two national parks within the Board's region: Mt Egmont National Park and Whanganui National Park. Both National Parks will be subject to Treaty Settlement Negotiations in the coming years.

4.5. Board membership

The Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board had nine members for the 2020-2021 year appointed by the Minister of Conservation under the terms of the Conservation Act 1987.

There was one new appointment, Ms Bonita Bigham, from Manaia, and one re-appointment, Mr Mathew Vujcich, from Inglewood.

At the Board meeting held on the 25th of April 2020, Vicky Dombroski was appointed as Chair, for a term of 12 months (February 2020-February 2021) and Andrew Castle was appointed Vice Chair, for a term of 12 months (February 2020 – February 2021).

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

Table 1: Board membership

Board Member	Area	Term Start	Term End	Term served
Dombroski, Vicky	Waitara	01/05/2014	30/06/2022	7
Castle, Andrew	Inglewood	01/07/2019	30/06/2022	2
Cribb, Robert (Boy)	Whanganui	01/07/2019	30/06/2022	2
Juffermans, Allen	New Plymouth	01/07/2019	30/06/2022	2
McGuckin, Novena	Whanganui	01/05/2014	30/06/2021	7
Poutu, Liana	New Plymouth	01/07/2015	30/06/2022	6
Tamarapa, Sam	Waitara	01/05/2014	30/06/2021	7
Vujcich, Mathew	Inglewood	01/07/2017	30/07/2023	4
Bigham, Bonita	Manaia	01/07/2020	31/07/2023	1

4.6. Members profiles

Vicky Dombroski of Waitara

Appointment term: 1 May 2014 to 30 June 2022

Ms Dombroski has over 20 years' experience in management and leadership. She has an extensive background working with Boards, councils, and committees in the local community. Her career in economic, community, tourism, and environmental development along with her extensive networks and passion for Taranaki and its people, give her an ideal background for a role on the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board. Her outdoor recreation interests are monitoring the health of the sea and local reefs, kayak fishing, horse riding, and tramping. She is of mixed indigenous South American, English, Cornish, and German.

Andrew Castle of Inglewood

Appointment term: 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022

Mr Castle is a self-employed IT professional with 20 years' experience in the IT industry and has more recently been involved in other governance activities in the Taranaki community. He is strongly involved in local conservation efforts and is looking towards how IT can support and enhance conservation initiatives. Drew has always had a keen interest in outdoor activities, and is an advocate of habitat protection, repopulation efforts of native birdlife, and the recognition of the uniqueness of local ecologies.

Robert (Boy) Cribb of Whanganui

Appointment Term: 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022

Boy is nominated by the Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui Trust. He has strong governance experience and is currently chair and member on several Boards/trusts.

Allen Juffermans of New Plymouth

Appointment Term: 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022

Allen is an active volunteer and business owner. He has local land and community knowledge and experience in project management, strategy, resource management planning and technical advice. He is currently a member of the NZ Institute of Surveyors, Consulting Surveyors of NZ, and Resource Management Law Association.

Novena McGuckin of Whanganui

Appointment term: 1 May 2014 to 30 June 2021

Novena McGuckin has over 15 years of Governance and Management experience and works for Te Tumu Paeroa, who administer over 2000 Land Blocks. Novena travels extensively, meeting with owners supporting them to achieve their aspirations for their land. Novena is a Trustee on the Whanganui Lands Settlement Trust and is a member of other various land trusts in the Whanganui Region.

She actively supports conservation and is an advocate of protecting indigenous ecosystems on Māori land and encouraging private landowners in New Zealand to protect special natural and cultural features on their land with open space covenants particularly with Ngā Whenua Rāhui. Novena enjoys outdoor recreation and walking and annually canoeing the Whanganui River, researching, and visiting historical sites.

She is of Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangī, Ngāti Patutokotoko, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Maniapoto Iwi.

Liana Poutu of New Plymouth

Appointment term: 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2022

Ms Poutu has a legal background with a strong focus on Treaty of Waitangi, Treaty Settlement negotiations, Māori land and Māori governance issues. She has represented iwi groups before the Māori Land Court and Waitangi Tribunal, specifically in the Wai 262 Flora and Fauna, Aquaculture, Foreshore & Seabed, Management of Petroleum, and National Park inquiries. She is currently the Chair of Te Kotahitanga o Te Atiawa Trust (the post settlement governance entity responsible for managing Te Atiawa's Treaty Settlement). Ms Poutu also holds a number of other governance roles including National Science Challenge Sustainable Seas Kāhui Advisory Group Chair. She is of Te Atiawa, Taranaki, Whanganui and Maniapoto descent.

Samuel (Sam) Tamarapa of Waitara

Appointment term: 1 May 2014 to 30 June 2021

Mr Tamarapa is an iwi communications officer for the Taranaki Regional Council. He has a broad knowledge of public policy, legislation, the Treaty of Waitangi, and Board governance. He has experience in environmental management and has a strong personal interest in native freshwater species protection. His outdoor recreation interests are fishing, diving, hunting and sport. He is of Ngāti Ruanui, Ngā Rauru, Te Atiawa, Taranaki, Te Arawa, Te Ati Haunui-a-Pāpārangī, Ngāti Maru and Moriori descent.

Mathew Vujcich of Inglewood

Appointment term: 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2023

Mr Vujcich has over 30 year's involvement in local and regional government. He has experience in parks and recreation management and has expertise in biodiversity restoration and pest eradication projects. He has a strong personal interest in integrating farming and sustainability issues and currently farms in Inglewood.

Bonita Bigham of Taranaki

Appointment term: 7 July 2020 – 30 June 2023

Bonita (of Ngāruahine and Te Atiawa) is Poutakawaenga of Te Korowai o Ngāruahine Trust. She provides experience in policy and strategy and has strong skills in communication, facilitation, and Taranaki reo and tikanga.

4.7. Board Meetings

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board held four Board meetings and two extraordinary meetings during the reporting period. Venues for the Board meetings vary each year to ensure a wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board.

Table 2: Board meeting dates and location

Board meeting date	Meeting location and venue
28 August 2020	The Novatel, Cnr Hobson & Leach Street, New Plymouth
16 October 2020	Extraordinary Meeting (Teleconference)
30 October 2020	The Department of Conservation, 34-36 Taupo Quay, Whanganui
8 December 2020	The Devon Hotel & Conference Centre, 390 East Street, New Plymouth
24 February 2021	Virtual Meeting (Field Trip cancelled – due to COVID19)
30 April 2021	Dawson Falls Lodge, 1960 Manaia Road, Mt Taranaki National Park
29 June 2021	Te Korowai o Ngāruahine Trust, 147 High Street, Hawera

4.8. Attendance

The table below summarises the number of Board meetings (5) and (1) extraordinary meeting 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: Board Member Attendance

Board Member	Board Meetings	Field Trips	Workshops
Dombroski, Vicky	6/6	0	1/1
Castle, Andrew	6/6	0	1/1
Cribb, Robert (Boy)	5/6	0	1/1
Juffermans, Allen	5/6	0	1/1
McGuckin, Novena	6/6	0	1/1
Poutu, Liana	6/6	0	1/1
Tamarapa, Sam	6/6	0	1/1
Vujcich, Mathew	6/6	0	1/1
Bigham, Bigham	5/6	0	1/1

4.9. Board Committees and Representation

Table 4: Board Committees and Representation

Sam Tamarapa	Hector's and Māui Dolphin Stakeholders Threat Management Plan Review
Sam Tamarapa	Ngāti Tama Joint Advisory Committee

Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)

The Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) has its origin with the signing and ratification of the Treaty of Waitangi Deed of Settlement between the Crown and Ngāti Tama in 2001. This settlement then became law in November 2003.

The JAC is made up of six members, with Ngāti Tama providing three of the six members, the Department of Conservation having two members and the remaining position being a nominee of the Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board.

The purpose of the JAC is to provide advice to the Minister of Conservation about the preservation of conservation values and the annual work programme for that part of the Whitecliffs Conservation Area remaining in Crown ownership. It will also approve conservation management plans for the Parininihi Marine Reserve.

The committee will also provide advice to Ngāti Tama on conservation matters affecting the Parininihi/Whitecliffs, Uruti and Mt Messenger sites transferred to Ngāti Tama.

In 2017 Sam Tamarapa was appointed as the Conservation Board member to the JAC. The Ngāti Tama representatives were Greg White (Committee Chair) Davis McClutchie (jnr) and Karla White. The DOC representatives were shared between Darryn Ratana, Gareth Hopkins, Gemma White, and Nicola Palmer.

At the Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board meeting held 20 April 2021, Sam Tamarapa briefed members on the outcome of committee discussions regarding the proposal from Waka Kotahi for mitigation works related to the Mt Messenger Bypass, including proposal to de-risk trees within the covenant area.

4.10. Field trips and site inspections

Field trips are an excellent opportunity for Board members to become more aware of conservation issues within their region.

Regrettably, due to the impact of COVID19 and subsequent lockdown in February 2021 the field trip scheduled for Whanganui Awa was cancelled.

The board meeting on 30 April 2021 was held at Dawson Falls Lodge, 1960 Manaia Road, Te Papakura o Taranaki for members to acknowledge the old building and understand Ngā Ruahine's aspirations for the site.

The owners, Te Rere o Kapuni, a subsidiary of Te Korowai o Ngaruahine have decided a full rebuild of the lodge is the best option. Construction will start late 2021 and will be completed in late 2022.



Image courtesy: TWCB Member - Dawson Falls Lodge - Te Papakura o Taranaki

Images Courtesy
TWCB Member -
Vicky Dombroski
outside Dawson
Falls Power Station,
Te Papakura o
Taranaki



4.11. Training for members

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board held one workshop at the The Novatel, Cnr Hobson & Leach Street, New Plymouth on the 27 August 2020 to complete an induction for new member, Bonita Bigham, and to finalise their Annual Work Plan 2020-2021.

4.12. Department involvement in Board meetings

Department staff that have attended meetings throughout the reporting period have included the Hauraki- Waikato-Taranaki (HWT) and Central North Island (CNI) Director of Operations, Whanganui and New Plymouth Operation Managers, Statutory Managers – HWT and CNI, Community Rangers and Pou Tairangahau.

There has been regular phone and virtual conferencing between the Board Chair, Deputy Board Chair, Statutory Manager and Board Support Officer to discuss information of relevance to the Board. A newsletter is then collated and distributed most Friday's.

5. Statutory Activity

The Board have received updates from the Director of Operations, Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki, and operational reports from the Taranaki/Whanganui Operations staff. Additional to these reports the Board have received briefings on:

25 th June 2020	National Park Status and Trend Report – circulated via email to members
28 August 2020	Lamprey Reddening TWCB Member – Sam Tamarapa
19 th October 2020	Giving effect to the Treaty of Waitangi (DOC presentation to the New Zealand Conservation Authority) – circulated via email to members
30 October 2020	Jobs for Nature Darryn Ratana – Director of Partnerships, DOC
30 October 2020	Te Kaupapa a Te Papa Atawhai's new purpose 'Papatūānuku Thrives'
30 October 2020	Outcome of the Hector's and Maui Dolphin Threat Management Plan – Kristina Hillock, Technical Advisor, Marine, DOC
8 December 2020	Poukai Taranaki Crossing Update - Carl Whittleston, Strategic Projects Manager Pouakai/Raoul and Kareno Wano, Project Stream Lead, Strategic Engagement, DOC
8 December 2020	TWCB Communications Strategy - Jeff Neems, Regional Communications Advisor-DOC
19 th February 2021	DOC's Heritage and Visitor Strategy – circulated via email to members
24 February 2021	Management Planning System Review - Michelle Lewis, Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki, DOC
30 April 2021	Conservation General Policy and General Policy for National Parks – In Committee

29 June 2021	New Whitebait Regulations – Neil Deans, Principal Advisor, Freshwater and Dr Elizabeth Heeg, Director Aquatic, DOC
29 June 2021	Eradication of the Pest Fish <i>Gambusia affinis</i> , Nathan Lightbourne, Ranger, Freshwater Pests and Migratory Fish Species, DOC

5.1 Resource Management Issues

Quarterly RMA and Management Planning reports have been received by the Board. These reports provide the Board with an update on active Resource Management Act and Management Planning activity currently being led by the Shared Services Unit, DOC.

Conservation Board Seabed Mining

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board (TWCB) has been working with iwi, seafood, and other environmental organisations to prevent Trans-Tasman Resources from mining 66 square kilometres of South Taranaki Bight seabed for iron ore.

In a judgement handed down in April 2020, the Court of Appeal upheld the concerns of the various groups, in identifying multiple overlapping errors of law in the approach of the Decision-Making Committee (DMC) of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) when initially granting a marine consent to Trans-Tasman Resources Ltd (TTR) to mine sand in the Taranaki Bight. The Board worked collectively with other appellants to protect the Taranaki Bight environment, through the consent and court systems in a case which stretches back to 2016.

The three key points in the Court of Appeal judgment for the Conservation Board were:

- The EPA’s DMC failed to assess TTR’s application against the “protect the environment from pollution” purpose in the Exclusive Economic Zone Act.
-
- The EPA’s DMC not favouring caution, when information from TTR was inadequate or uncertain.
-
- The EPA’s DMC had not considered whether TTR’s proposal would be inconsistent with environmental “bottom lines” established under the Resource Management Act through the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.
- The Trans-Tasman Resources Ltd appealed that decision and the Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board and its legal advisors determined to continue to work collectively with other appellants to cross appeal to the highest Court possible, being the Supreme Court.
- The appeal took place in November 2020 and was heard by five Supreme Court Judges. No outcome has yet been released.

5.2. Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

Implementation monitoring

Conservation Boards have a critical role in the operational Management Strategies and with preparation, review, amendment, and approval of statutory planning documents (Conservation Management Strategies (CMS's) and Conservation Management Plans (CMP's) and National Park Management Plans (NPMP's).

The operative Whanganui Conservation Management Strategy, 1997-2007, is currently overdue for review.

In each Board meeting the TWCB considers the Whanganui Conservation Management Strategy as per the statutory functions and requirements of the Board. At the time of this report the CMS is 13 years overdue.

Since 2014 the TWCB has reviewed the CMS document once and made some general observations and feedback, which are in themselves possibly now null and void, given the time that has lapsed and the myriad of changes both physically (i.e., Climate Change) and politically (changes to Government and how the department operates) since that review. Trying to monitor the changes against an outdated strategy is time consuming, confusing and lacks a consistent approach - both by the Board and the Department.

Considering the changes identified above, and changes to the Departments operational areas of responsibility (half of the TWCB area, Whanganui, is in the Central North Island Rohe and the other half, Taranaki, is in the Hauraki/Waikato/Taranaki rohe the changes that we have advocated for are logical and would assist with aligning CMS objective 48.1 against work that the Department is doing.

As mentioned briefly in Chairs report the Department has undertaken a review of all its management planning systems during this period and consulted with the Board on its experiences with the system. The Board has been unable to meet some of its own and the Ministers expectations due to delays in even setting a date for review of the CMS.

Below, from the Wanganui Conservation Management Strategy

48.1 Objective:

Ensure that the CMS is a current and effective policy document through on-going monitoring, subsequent amendment, and review.

48.3 (iv) Review or amend the CMS when:

- directed by the Director General of Conservation
- when general policy or government directions represent a significant departure from provisions of the CMS
- when CMS monitoring indicates that its provisions are impractical or have been super-ceded by new information or evidence
- if the Department intends to prepare a conservation management plan but there is no provision for it in the CMS.

As a consequence of the CMS challenges that the Board has faced this year, we were unable to meet our objectives from the Annual workplan. (See project five objectives)

5.2. Management plans

The functions of Boards are set out in Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987 and in the National Parks and Reserves Acts.

We acknowledge that the Egmont National Park Management Plan is also out of date. However, given that there are treaty negotiations are still ongoing with regards to the governance and management of the Taranaki Maunga and its surrounding park and the fact that we have been kept abreast of those negotiations, it feels prudent to wait for the outcome of the negotiations before embarking on the process of updating a new NPMP- indeed it may not even be the role or function of the Board to do so in the future.

5.3. Concessions

The TWCB had overview and comments to make on some of the concessions being considered during the year. When needed, we have advocated on behalf of our communities as there still doesn't seem to be a weighting system for providing communities and people who live in the area to have first right of refusal to/for concessions. It is especially important when considering our role under section 4 of the Act.

6. Advice and Advocacy

6.1. Other Conservation Board Liaisons

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board's immediate neighbours are the Waikato, Taupo/Tongariro and Wellington Conservation Board. The Board agendas and meeting papers are electronically forwarded to neighbouring liaisons.

Flora Bartholomew from the Waikato Conservation Board and Honey Winter from the Tongariro Taupō Conservation Board have attended throughout the reporting period.

6.2. New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA)

Puke Timoti and Maxine Shortland are the New Zealand Conservation Authority appointed liaisons to the Board.

Agenda's, meeting minutes and the bi-monthly letter from the New Zealand Conservation Authority are forwarded to members electronically as they arrive.

6.3. Community advocacy and involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. Meetings are advertised and meetings were held in different parts of the Taranaki Whanganui region with members of the public attending to speak on matters relating to:

- The Chronic Effects of Chronic Long-Term effects of 1080 on humans as covered by the Taranaki District Health Board report from February 2019.
- DOC Communications

Presentations were also received from the following organisations:

- Taranaki Trail Trust Introduction/Aspirations
- Project Reef Life / Introduction/Aspirations/
- Taranaki Kiwi Trust / Introduction / Aspirations

The Board is also a member of 'Wild for Taranaki'- a Regional Biodiversity Trust, that gives a voice to all the people and organisations that work in the conservation, environmental areas. The department is also a member. This forum is a very good place to learn about the work being undertaken in the Region.

6.4. District and regional council advocacy and advice

The Board has had limited opportunity to meet with representatives of the six local Councils in the last reporting year. However, individual Board members have from time to time been able to provide feedback to the Board by providing information gained during their normal day to day employment.

6.5. Iwi liaison and advocacy

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board continues to be served well by several members who have strong connections to the iwi within the boundaries of the conservation Board. The two statutory nominees to the Board from Ngā Tangata Tiaki and the Taranaki Māori Trust Board along with an additional three Board members, help provide insights into key matters affecting iwi within the conservation estate and on conservation issues more generally. These insights included clarifying iwi perspectives on various activities of the Department of Conservation and monitoring the Department's responsibilities under section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987. Presentations to the Conservation Board from that iwi currently negotiating Treaty of Waitangi settlements were supported also by Board members engaged directly in those negotiations. With further Treaty settlements set to be completed, the ability to maintain close relationships between the Board and the iwi of this region will be crucial in the ongoing management of Conservation estate.

7. Acknowledgements

The Board wishes to thank the Department for their support, Department staff that have attended meetings and provided updates, and staff throughout the rohe that have hosted the Board on field trips.

8. Annual Workplan 2020 - 2021

Performance indicators

To ensure we actively engage with our outcomes throughout the year, we adopt the following performance indicators:

Outcomes	Projects	Performance Indicators	Meeting 1 28 August 2020	Meeting 2 16 October 2020 Extraordinary Meeting	Meeting 3 30 October 2021	Meeting 4 8 Dec. 2020	Meeting 5 24 Feb. 2021	Meeting 6 30 April 2021	Meeting 7 25 June 2021
Outcome 1 Represent community interests in the Marine environment.	Project 1: To participate in thesea-bed mining andTrans-Tasman Resources Limited decision.	TWCB case is presented to the Supreme Court.	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved
	Project 2 Partner with other Conservation Boards to monitor the implementation of the Hectors/Maui Dolphin Threat Management Plan	Combined engagement/hui with Waikato Conservation Board	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved
Outcome 2: The immediate review of the Conservation Management Strategy for Taranaki Whanganui in accordance with our statutory obligations.	Project 1: Workshops for CMS review with Board and DOC's Planning staff.	1. We shall actively advocate with the Minister of Conservation, Director General of the Department of Conservation Authority for the review of CMS's for Taranaki/Whanganui.	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved
	Project 2: A framework for CMS Monitoring /reporting tabled by the Department for the Board.	2. The Department provides reports on CMS in areas of priority focus for the Board.	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved

Outcomes	Projects	Performance Indicators	Meeting 1 28 August 2020	Meeting 2 16 October 2020	Meeting 3 30 October 2020	Meeting 4 8 Dec. 2020	Meeting 5 24 Feb. 2021	Meeting 6 30 April 2021	Meeting 7 25 June 2021
Outcome 3: The Department is monitored on the delivery of its obligations under Treaty of Waitangi Deeds of Settlement within the Taranaki-Whanganui regions.	Project 3: To uphold the mana of the Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement Act 2017) To contribute to the Crown/Iwi Settlement for Mounga Taranaki processes.	Department is providing regular reports under their Treaty Waitangi Deeds of Settlement.	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved
Outcome 4: Co-ordinated regional climate mitigation strategy.	Project 4: Advocate for co-ordinated strategy.	1. Engage within the community.	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved
Outcome 5: The aspirations of Taranaki-Whanganui communities are reflected in the development of policies, strategies and plans that affect the environment.	Project 5: To contribute to national, regional and district policies, strategy and plan development, and reviews.	1. Record submissions and comments made on strategies and plans where appropriate.	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved
Outcome 6: Increased community profile and interaction with the Board.	Project 6: The Board develops a communication strategy.	1. The Board implements a communications strategy.	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved	Achieved OR Not Achieved

Status indicator

Colour	Indicates
	Achieved
	Started and is ongoing
	Not achieved