

Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board
Te Runanga Papa Atawhai O Te Upoko O Te Ika me Te Matau a Maui

**Annual Report to the
New Zealand Conservation Authority
1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013**



**Serviced by
Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy, Department of Conservation
PO Box 10420, Wellington, New Zealand**

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Cover Photo: North Island Brown Kiwi chick at the Opouahi Pan Pac Kiwi Crèche in the Hawke's Bay

1. Introduction

The Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board has prepared this Annual Report for the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by Section 60 of the Conservation Act 1987. The Board also intends to distribute copies to many other individuals and organisations that may have an interest in the Board's role and activities.

This is the fourth report of the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board. The Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board was created in July 2009 following disestablishment of the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board.

1.1 Members of the Board

During 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 there have been 10 Board members, a reduction from the 12 members that the Board had in 2010. The reduction was due to the resignations of two members during 2011-12.

The terms of a number of the members were due to expire as at 30 June 2013. Nominations for new members were called for late in 2012 and received in January 2013. However, the Minister did not announce appointments. This is a consequence of upcoming structural changes of the Department of Conservation (DOC), which includes geographical boundary changes from Conservancies to new management Regions and a new partnerships operating model. The Minister intends to review the future of the conservation boards. Any changes to board membership have been postponed until that review is completed. Members whose nominated terms of appointment expired on 30 June 2013 have remained in office.

Nicky Nelson resigned as Deputy Chair at the 23 May 2013 Board meeting.

The following table summarises the Board's membership during the 2012/13 year.

Name	Area	Date first appointed	Term ends/ended	Years of service
Kevin Trerise, Chair	Hawke's Bay	05/08/2010	30/06/2014	3
Nicky Nelson, Deputy Chair till May 2013	Wellington	16/10/2006	30/06/2013	7
Rob McColl	Wellington	16/10/2006	30/06/2013	7
John Hancock	Wairarapa	01/09/2007	30/06/2013	6
Don Adams	Wairarapa	01/01/2011	30/06/2013	2.5
Garth Eyles	Hawke's Bay	01/01/2011	30/06/2013	2.5
Malcolm Guy	Manawatu	01/01/2011	30/06/2013	2.5
Anne Lawrence	Manawatu	01/01/2011	30/06/2013	2.5
Richard Steedman	Manawatu	19/9/2011	30/06/2014	2
Jonathon Procter	Manawatu	19/9/2011	30/06/2014	2



Board Members - From left: Nicky Nelson, John Hancock, Richard Steedman, Don Adams, Anne Lawrence, Malcolm Guy, Rob McColl, Garth Eyles, Kevin Trerise (Chair). (Absent: Jonathan Procter)

2. Functions and powers

The functions and powers of the Board are set out formally in sections 6M and 6N of the Conservation Act 1987. Key roles include:

- providing advice to the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA)
- recommending that the NZCA approves the next Draft Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)
- advocating for conservation in statutory processes and public forums.

Conservation management strategies are statutory documents which show how general policies will be implemented. They also establish objectives for the integrated management of natural and historic resources and for recreation, tourism and other conservation purposes.

3. Coverage

The Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board's coverage extends from the bottom of the North Island to the Turakina River and inland to just north of Taihape in the west, and across to the east coast where it extends to the Mahia Peninsula. It is the same area as the Department of Conservation's Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy without the Chatham Islands.

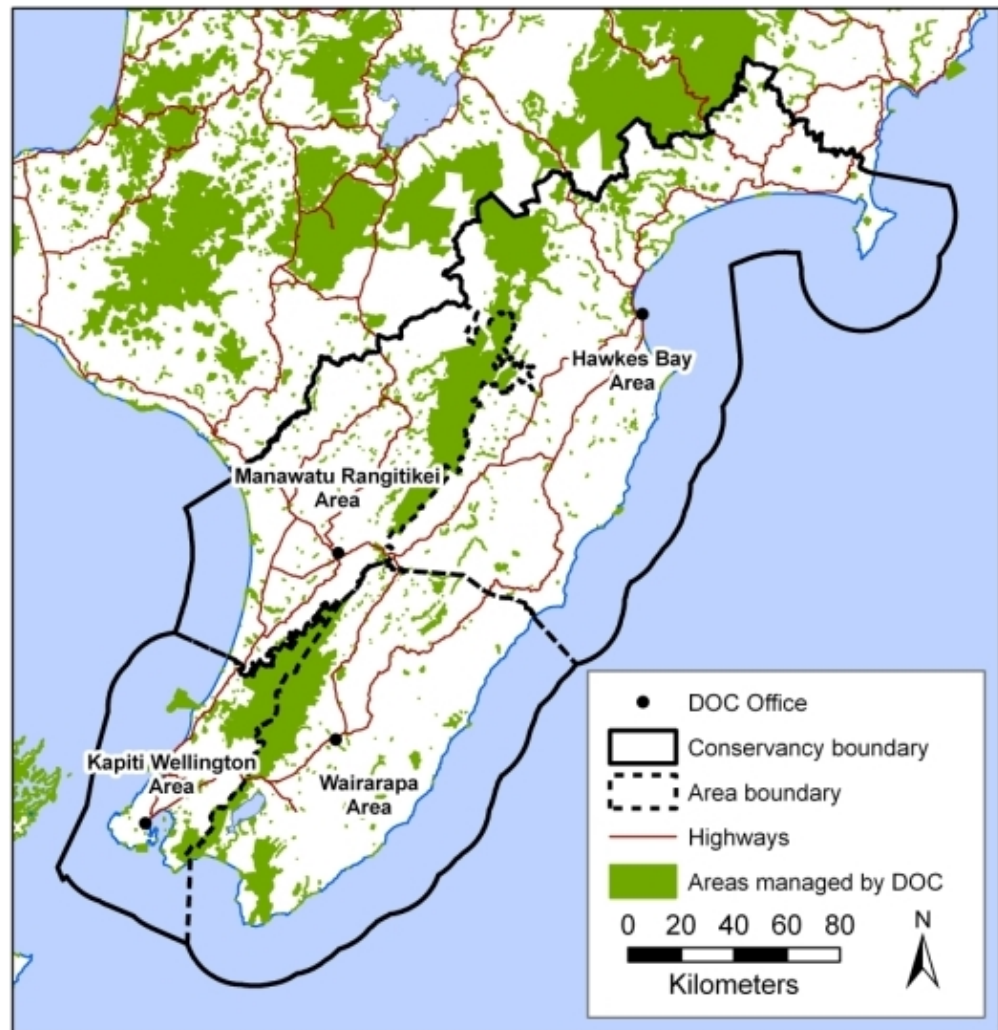


Figure 1: Map of the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board's area

3.2 Key places

Some of the key places managed by DOC in the Board's area are:

Lake Wairarapa Wetlands	Puketitiri Reserves	Rimutaka Forest Park
Ahuriri Estuary	Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve	Kaweka Forest Park
Castlepoint Scenic Reserve	Papaitonga Scenic Reserve	Tararua Forest Park
Cape Palliser	Tora Scenic Reserve	Aorangi (Haurangi) Forest Park
Pukerua Bay Scientific Reserve	Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve	Government Buildings
Otatara Pa Historic Reserve	Carter Scenic Reserve	Turnbull House
Snail Reserves, Horowhenua	Lake's Opouahi & Tutira	Dominion Observatory
Matiu/Somes Island	Colonial Knob	Taputeranga Marine Reserve
Mana Island	Makara Coast	Te Angiangi Marine Reserve
Kapiti Island Nature Reserve	Kapiti Island North Reserve	Kapiti Marine Reserve
National Wildlife Centre (Pukaha/Mt Bruce)	Boundary Stream Mainland Island	Cape Kidnappers Gannet Colony
Waikanae Estuary	Kohanga Lakes	Ruahine Forest Park
Putangirua Pinnacles Scenic Reserve	Turakirae Head Scientific Reserve	Pauatahanui Inlet, Porirua Harbour
Pukepuke Lagoon	Round Bush Scenic Reserve	Manawatu Estuary
Manawatu Gorge Scenic Reserve.	Tawhirihoe Scientific Reserve	Moana Roa Conservation Area.

Some of these sites are included in or subject to Treaty of Waitangi settlements

4. Meetings, visits and workshops

During the 2012/13 financial year, the Board's formal programme comprised four meetings and four field trips.

4.1 Meetings

The Board scheduled four full-day meetings:

- 3 August 2012 at Arohanui Hospice, Palmerston North
- 2 November 2012 at Hawke's Bay Area Office, Napier
- 14 February 2013 at the Taihape Town Hall, Taihape
- 23 May 2013 at Conservation House, Wellington.

4.2 Field Trips.

Visits to specific locations provide opportunities for the Board to:

- become more familiar with the conservation values of key places
- discuss management challenges and approaches with DOC staff and stakeholders
- monitor progress towards the objectives in the current CMS
- identify issues that may need to be addressed during the review of the CMS.

4.3 Field trip in the Manawatu Rangitikei Area

On 4 August 2012 the Board visited the Manawatu Gorge and Totara Reserve, Pohangina Valley. They started at the Balance end of the Manawatu Gorge to look at opportunities there. After lunch they walked to the Gorge Slip. The slip came down in August 2011 and, at this time, had closed the Manawatu Gorge Road for nearly a year. DOC, NZTA, and Higgins have turned an access track that enabled machinery to be taken into the top of the slip to enable the repair work into a now very popular walking track loop.

The Board then travelled on to Totara Reserve, Pohangina Valley. The management of Totara Reserve had recently been vested in Horizons Regional Council, and DOC is working with them to help provide a high standard of visitor assets. Totara Reserve is part of Destination Manawatu's regional tourism initiative "A Country Road", and is part of one of the New Zealand Cycle Trails.

4.4 Field trip in the Hawke's Bay Area

On 1 November 2012 the Board visited the Opouahi Pan Pac Kiwi Crèche and the Poutiri Ao O Tane Project.

The Board was accompanied on this field trip by a member of Maungaharuru Tangitū Inc.

The Opouahi Pan Pac Kiwi Crèche is a 40ha pest-free area surrounded by a 3.3km pest-proof fence. Kiwi chicks are rescued from the wild and brought to the safe haven to grow. When they are a 'stoat-proof' size (approx 800–1,000gm) they are released back into the wild.

The Poutiri Ao O Tane Project is supported by the Aotearoa Foundation. This is an aspirational Hawke's Bay region-wide project involving forest habitat restoration, community education and engagement, together with species relocation and population re-establishment. The Poutiri Ao O Tane project enjoys local and regional support and works closely with the Cape Kidnappers based "Cape Sanctuary Project". The project has strong linkages to the Kaweka Kiwi Restoration initiative, and Opouahi Kiwi Crèche/Educational facility and Boundary Stream Mainland Island. The Board visited or had discussions on the Project Work Streams, Kaka aviary, Tumanako Track and the Seabird site.

4.5 Field trip in the Manawatu Rangitikei Area

On 15 February 2013 the Board travelled to the end of Mokai Road south of Taihape. From there they flew by helicopter into the Te Potae o Awarua Project area in the north-west Ruahine Ranges and walked part of one of the stoat lines to Ruahine Corner Hut where they had lunch before flying out again.

The Te Potae o Awarua Project is a joint initiative by the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the Aorangi Awarua Trust (the Trust). Originally established as part of a research project looking at the effect of bait types in stoat traps the goal has grown to develop this site into a protection area and the establishment of a partnership that capitalizes on the knowledge and understanding of both DOC and the Trust.

Walking the stoat line gave the Board an opportunity to look at the stoat traps first hand and to discuss the different aspects of the project. A Board member who is also a member of the Trust was able to give detailed information on the project during the walk and after lunch at the hut. The Board was also accompanied on this field trip by another member of the Aorangi Awarua Trust.

4.6 Field trip in the Wellington Area

On 24 May 2013 the Board visited Watts Peninsula in Miramar, Wellington where they visited Fort Balance on the eastern side, the Massey Memorial at the northern end, and the Mount Crawford Heavy Anti Aircraft Battery on the western side of the peninsula.

Fort Balance and the area around Mount Crawford Heavy Anti Aircraft Battery are due to come under the management of DOC. During the visits the Board were able to discuss the history of the areas, the opportunities that they present for both historical preservation and recreation, and the challenges that are involved in doing so.

4.7 *Participation and fees*

Individual Board members' participation in Board activities during 2012/13 is shown in Appendix 1.

For approved Board activities, Board members are paid \$140 per day and the Board Chair \$190 per day.

5. **Public Involvement**

The Board informs and interacts with the public through forums, correspondence, its annual report and the DOC website. The Board's formal relationships with specific organisations are described in section 13.

5.1 *Public Forum*

During 2012/13, the Board welcomed individuals to the Public Forum, a session scheduled at each meeting to enable people to speak to the Board about agenda items or other conservation issues. The Board regards the Forum as an important opportunity to hear from the community and hopes to see more people take up this opportunity in 2013/14.

Matters raised by speakers who participated in these forums included the following:

- the Ruahine Forest Park Visitor Facility Network Management review
- visitor number to Kapiti Island
- current water issues in Hawke's Bay including the Tukituki catchment and the Ruataniwha Dam water storage scheme
- control of Old Man's Beard in the Taihape area
- Northland CMS Consultation
- Taita Scientific Reserve
- Tararua vegetation monitoring plots
- weed control on Matiu/Somes Island

5.2 Correspondence

The Board values receiving information from people who have specific interests and/or a long-term association with specific areas within the Conservancy.

5.3 Distribution of the Board's Annual Report

Although the NZCA is the primary audience for the Board's annual reports, the Board circulates its Annual Report more widely to increase awareness of the Board's role and conservation issues in the Conservancy. The distribution list includes public libraries, local members of Parliament, local media and a wide range of conservation and recreation groups.

5.4 The Board's website

The Board posts information about the conservancy, meeting agendas and minutes, all submissions made by the Board, and its annual reports, on its pages of DOC's website.

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/nz-conservation-authority-and-boards/conservation-boards-by-region/wellington-hawkes-bay/>

6. Advising on implementation of the Conservation Management Strategy (Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987)

6.1 Current CMS

Wellington's current Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) was published in 1996 and the Hawke's Bay CMS was published in 1994. Under the Conservation Act 1987, the Director-General is required to review each CMS as a whole not later than 10 years after the date of its approval. The Minister first approved an extension to June 2008, and more recently a commitment has been made to have all CMS documents delivered to the Conservation Authority by 2014.

The Board is responsible for monitoring the performance of the Conservancy in managing the conservation estate in the Conservancy, including holding DOC accountable for achieving the objectives/milestones in the current CMS and for providing a mechanism for the public/community to input to, comment on, or 'enquire' about the performance of DOC in the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy.

6.2 Conservation Action Plans

The Board has strongly supported the development of Conservation Action Plans (CAPs) which identify and prioritise conservation priorities in each Area and are an integral part of business planning for the Conservancy. A mechanism to rank the merit of conservation projects was developed in the Conservancy with Board input and is used in developing the CAPs.

The Wairarapa, Poneke and Kapiti Area CAPs were prepared in parallel with, and are consistent with, the Preliminary Non-statutory Draft of the Wellington CMS. The Hawke's Bay CAP was developed in the same format following inclusion into the conservancy, and Manawatu Rangitikei Area was available late 2011.

In the absence of a relevant current CMS, the Board received regular reports from the Conservator, Area Managers and key technical specialists on activities, priorities and

challenges in implementing current strategies and plans. This included priorities and progress in relation to one Area's CAP at each meeting. The CAPs will inform the new Wellington Hawke's Bay CMS.

7. Review of the Conservation Management Strategy
(Section 7H (4) of the Conservation Act 1987)

7.1 Preliminary work for the Wellington Hawkes Bay CMS

Work on a review of the Wellington CMS began in 2008/09. This review was undertaken by DOC people from across the Conservancy working together with the Conservation Board to set priorities, direction and forward aspirations for conservation in the greater Wellington region.

At the same time East Coast Hawke's Bay and Whanganui Conservancies were going through a similar process. The sections relating to Hawke's Bay and Manawatu Rangitikei Areas will be reviewed for incorporation in the new Wellington Hawke's Bay CMS. The addition of these two areas in 2010 more than doubled the physical size of the Conservancy and it is critical that the CMS reflects perspectives from the wide range of communities within it. A major review of and structural changes to the Department of Conservation during 2013 includes changes in the geographical boundaries of their Conservancies to create new Regions. A matching change for Conservation Boards would mean that the geographical area covered by the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board would be further extended to include much of the East Cape.

When work resumes on the new Wellington Hawke's Bay CMS all interested groups and the public will be able to comment via formal submission and hearing processes as required for the review and development of a CMS.

As part of a national programme to prepare CMS documents, teams were set up to work through national issue sections and provide consistency on format and content. Part of this process necessitated programming when individual CMS work will begin and Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy was programmed for early 2013. The review and structural change of the Department during 2013 has delayed this until late 2013.

8. Advocating for conservation within the Conservancy
(Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987)

The Board considers at each meeting the opportunities and priorities for statutory advocacy and the availability of members to prepare submissions. Submissions are progressed by email between meetings and ratified at the following meeting.

8.1 Local government plans and policies

Submission to the Hawke's Bay Regional Council on the Tukituki Choices discussion document

The Board made a submission on 15 October 2012 to the Hawke's Bay Regional Council on the Tukituki Choices discussion document.

In this submission the Board emphasised that it is essential that any development or changes to the natural Tukituki environment provides stringently for the fundamental aspects of sustainable management as set out in Part 2, Section 5 of the Resource

Management 1991. The Board strongly encouraged the Council to use its powers to give full consideration to water quality control and ecosystem and biodiversity protection.

The Board discussed benefits and costs in relation to dam projects, and expressed its belief that “balancing” environmental and economic interests has led in the past to economic benefits at the expense of the environment. The Board stated that it is now time to stop the resulting incremental environmental degradation and to expect industries that benefit from the use of natural resources to be prepared to use better methods, to take steps to avoid environmental loss and to assist in restoration where necessary; and that it is the duty of the Councils to facilitate this through setting clear expectations, defining environmental protection strategies and tools to achieve environmental protection. The Board would also like to see some stringent criteria regulated and enforced.

The Board considered that the Tukituki Choices document made insufficient reference to the protection and restoration of ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity.

The Board requested the Council:

- to make protection of biodiversity, aquatic ecosystems and instream uses a primary consideration in future water management decisions in the Tukituki River and its catchment
- to conduct a full ecosystem services study and evaluate the sustainability of the impounded river systems and build these into assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the dam project
- to ensure that any plan to increase agricultural production using water storage and increased irrigation explicitly includes clear, enforceable and publicly-agreed land and waterway management measures that will reduce the current nutrient, sediment and organic loadings arising from agriculture
- to implement a process to establish a public accord on water management in Hawke’s Bay
- to broaden the focus of the Tukituki plan to include specific health, indigenous biodiversity and trout habitat quality and introduce specific time-framed targets for these measures, and
- to both set measureable targets and implement management measures in order to demonstrably ensure that at the very least new water storage and agricultural developments do not cause any further deterioration in water quality, biodiversity, and aquatic ecosystem health in the Tukituki catchment.

Submission to the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council on the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Plan Change 6

The Board made a submission on 31 May 2013 to the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council on the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Plan Change 6.

Announced on 6 May 2013, Plan Change 6 to the Resource Management Plan relates to the Tukituki River and is part of the case that will be ‘called in’ and become part of the EAP review process. Many provisions in the Plan Change relate to water quality, water flows, and land use in the Tukituki river catchment. Some support land use intensifications and huge increases in the maximum nitrate levels allowable in the Waipawa and Tukituki Rivers.

In the submission the Board reiterated much of the earlier submission made on the Tukituki Choices discussion document and made similar requests of the council as in that submission.

The Board acknowledged that a considerable amount of Change 6 is focussed on, as stated in Change 6, 5.9.1 Freshwater objectives – ‘sustainably manage the use and development of land, the discharge of contaminants, and the taking, using, damming, or diverting of fresh water in the Tukituki River catchment’, and other water quality issues, but the Board questioned how the ‘sustainably managed’ aspect can be achieved when Ecosystem Services have not been identified, quantified or evaluated. The Board encouraged the development of an Ecosystem Services Index.

In summary, the Board stated:

- It is important Regional Councils start thinking about ecosystems as an extension of their asset base, part of their plant and machinery, and appreciating the value they deliver. Ecosystem protection, or the impact of ecosystem loss, needs to be factored into investment appraisal and capital allocation decision making.
- The Board seeks that an ecosystem services review is undertaken using a method that evaluates each ecosystem service with a selection of indicators including Provisioning Ecosystem Services, Regulating Ecosystem Services and Cultural Ecosystem Services as detailed in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.
- The Board believes that “balancing” environmental and economic interests has led in the past to economic benefits at the expense of the environment. We believe it is the duty of Councils under the RMA to set clear expectations of those industries and to help define environmental protection strategies and tools to achieve better environmental protection.

9. Advocating for conservation at the national level

(Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987)

Submission on the Crown Minerals (Permitting and Crown Land) Bill

The Board made a submission to the Commerce Committee Secretariat, Select Committee Office, Parliament Buildings on 29 October 2012 on the Crown Minerals (Permitting and Crown Land) Bill.

The Board supported the aspects of the bill that make important improvements and clarifications to mining legislation and remove some unnecessary processes.

The Board strongly disagreed with other aspects, especially provisions in the Bill which:

- established a joint ministers approach to decision making on future mining access to conservation land
- reduced the powers of the Minister of Conservation to declare or revoke areas for protection under the Conservation Act.

The Board does not object to all development for mining (or other purposes) on all conservation land. The Board believes there is a place for properly located and managed development. The Board’s objection centres on the need for clear and proper accountability mechanisms for conservation land decisions.

The Board believes there are better ways to provide for wise development of mineral resources on appropriate conservation land and made four recommendations.

The Board recommended that:

- the Committee note the Board's view that the Bill is fundamentally flawed in attempting to facilitate mineral extraction by diminishing the Minister of Conservation's powers,
- there should be no change to the powers of the Minister of Conservation in regard to declaring or revoking conservation land classifications and that the Bill should be rewritten to reflect that,
- the Bill should focus instead on improving the means to identify Crown land suitable for resource extraction, for example under the minerals programmes process set out in the Bill and by use of inter-agency planning processes, and then go through public consultation processes to determine their acceptability, and
- the Committee notes the Board's view, and historical precedent, that such processes would be more publicly acceptable than mechanisms that apply structural changes to ministerial accountabilities.

Letter to the Minister on Conservation Boards and changes to DOC structures and boundaries

The Board wrote to the Minister in June 2013 on the topic of the restructuring of the Department of Conservation (DOC) in the context of how that will impact on Conservation Boards and their ability to carry out their statutory requirements.

The Board expressed its willingness to accept potential changes to the boundaries from the current conservancy to DOC's Lower North Island region and the hope of seeing new members on the Board that can properly represent the people of the East Coast/Cape area.

The Board also expressed its support for the new direction of DOC and the view that more conservation can be achieved through increased partnerships with all aspects of our communities. However, in order to support this change the Board encouraged the Minister to take the opportunity when selecting new people for Board membership to increase the overall level of Board members skills and expertise/experience in building partnerships, in business and with greater contacts with industry.

The Board expressed that greater participation and partnerships with businesses for mutual economic gains cannot be at the expense of the public's rights and needs, that the Board should play an important role ensuring a balance is maintained and in providing an ethical voice to DOC to ensure a strong conservation principle is maintained.

The letter also contains some views on Iwi role in conservation: expressing that Iwi should be able to continue to use Conservation Boards to ensure that their voice is heard, that Iwi need to be given the same rights as those that have the financial power to engage with the new DOC, that the Board plays an important role in ensuring pre-settlement Iwi are recognised, that post-settlement Iwi that have the economic power to engage with DOC should be given an option to comment on any new partnership involving conservation land, and that the Board will have an important role in ensuring that where Iwi have specific Department protocols these are being enacted or adhered to.

Lastly the Board reiterated how important it is that Conservation Management Strategies (CMS) are up-to-date and in place, and offered to be the first board to develop a new CMS that recognises both our important places and species and also the partnerships

that can make a difference to conservation, and allows for the public to have a its say in the direction of DOC over the next 10 years.

10. Advice to the New Zealand Conservation Authority
(Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987)

No formal advice has been sent to the Conservation Authority

11. Advice to the Director-General of Conservation and the Conservator

11.1 Concessions in the Conservancy

The Board reviewed applications for and progress with concessions at each meeting.

The Board has an agreed trigger process with the Department of Conservation for concessions that need consideration by the Board. During the year the following concessions were commented on by the Board:

- The Printing Museum application for Concessionary land at QE Park in Paekakariki to set up a printing museum
- The Scout Association of New Zealand applying on behalf of the Kelburn Scout Troup for lease of the land the Kelburn Scout Hall sits on.

11.2 Project Kaka

Rob McColl represented the Board on the steering committee established in August 2009 to plan and implement Project Kaka: Tararua Nature Recovery, and reported back to each Board meeting. The project aims to restore native biodiversity in 22,000 ha of the Tararua Forest Park by controlling possums, rats and stoats and has strong monitoring and national research components. Co-ordination with Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Animal Health Board who carry out pest control in other parts of the Tararua range means that this is one of the largest combined pest control operations being conducted in New Zealand. The Project Kaka Steering Committee was extended to include Greater Wellington Regional Council and Animal Health Board members in 2012. The results of the first control operation in 2010 have been impressive with rifleman, whitehead, kakariki and other species increasing in the controlled areas in 2012 compared to the uncontrolled areas. Landcare Research studies have shown that native invertebrates also increased after pest control.

While adverse weather stopped October monitoring on the eastern side of the range, favourable weather over the summer meant that all monitoring operations for this period were completed on schedule. Bird monitoring analysis showed that some of the trends that appeared to be developing in 2012 had become less apparent.

Communications has been a strong point of the project and it has received good press coverage and involvement of schools and volunteers. During 2013, the Steering Committee agreed that an updated short report on the project will be drafted and distributed to external stakeholders (follows the initial detailed report from early 2012). Deer monitoring has continued and a short report on deer monitoring results is to be prepared for distribution to deerstalking groups.

A 1080 drop is planned for later the winter of 2013. The Steering Groups discussed delaying this to May 2014 to control a possible surge of pests in a predicted beech masting year but decided to keep to the project's design of 3 yearly cycles for aerial pest control.

12. Conservation Awards

Encore Awards

The Encore Awards were on Monday 3 December at City Gallery in Wellington. The Board Chair attended and gave a short talk focussing on the Conservation Board's role before announcing the finalists and winners of two awards: the Kaitiaki Award and the Community Partnerships Award.

13. Liaison

13.1 Fish and Game Council

John Hancock represented the Board at the Wairarapa Fish and Game Council meetings. John reported to the Board that during the year discussions of the Council included the ongoing issue of drain vs stream classification, scenic reserves and wildfowl shooting on Lake Wairarapa.

Garth Eyles represented the Board at the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council meetings. The major issue during the year for this group has been Hawke's Bay Regional Council's proposed Ruataniwha water storage scheme and Proposed Plan Change 6 to the Hawke's Bay Regional Resource Management Plan (together they are the Tukituki Catchment Proposal). Hawke's Bay Fish and Game worked through Te Taiao, Hawke's Bay Environment Forum (an amalgamation of environmental groups in the region) and has endeavoured throughout the year to ensure water quality and other biodiversity values are being protected. Of particular importance is the amount of nitrogen that will be allowable in the water under the scheme. Fish and Game have been unhappy with the way in which the Regional Council provided information at the last moment, not allowing sufficient time to assess it adequately. Fish and Game were also unhappy with the apparent lack of leadership shown by DOC in this process.

13.2 Lake Wairarapa Co-ordinating Committee

John Hancock represented the Board at the Lake Wairarapa Co-ordinating committee meetings. This committee was formed as a third tier of control to Wairarapa Moana sitting below the governance committee and the management group. It is comprised of local land-owners, Fish and Game, Forest and Bird, Ducks Unlimited and the Conservation Board.

During 2013 John reported that:

- discussion has continued about lake and surrounding lagoons water levels
- work is progressing well in the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Park
- monitoring is continuing regarding the difference in recovery of native plants on both grazed and ungrazed grassland
- DOC, Wellington Regional Council and landowners are experimenting with different systems of drain clearing at the north-east end of Lake Wairarapa to find a method that will protect native fauna and be satisfactory to all parties.

- a bird survey of the eastern wetlands has been done resulting in a positive bird count
- Spotless Crakes were found near the eastern shore of Lake Wairarapa
- in February 2013 Wairarapa Moana submitted a Ramsar request
- in May nesting boxes for Little Blue Penguins were put out along the coast from Te Kopi to Lake Ferry.

13.3 *Hawke's Bay water issue*

Kevin Trerise reports to the Board on water issues in the Hawke's Bay region.

As with the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council the key concerns for the year has been the Tukituki Catchment Proposal, in particular water quality issues. At the August 2012 Board meeting Kevin reported that Garth and he had attended a meeting on the dam and that the dam was going ahead.

At the February 2013 Board meeting Kevin reported on the Hawke's Bay Regional Council's Proposed Change 5 to the Regional Policy Statement. Proposed change 5 provides for enhanced guidance and direction to decision makers about how future management decisions will be made in an integrated manner for sustainable management of the region's land and fresh water resources. Kevin outlined some ways in which Change 5 will do this. Kevin asked if DOC was going to submit on any of the current or future plan changes or to the EPA process relating to this project. This question was put to the DOC Area Manager Hawke's Bay who responded that it was unlikely as they were working closely with the Regional Council and almost all their requests for changes had been accommodated. At the May meeting the Conservator modified this and said that it is still under discussion and it is likely that DOC will now submit to ensure that all issues are covered.

At the May meeting Kevin reported on Proposed Plan Change 6 to the Hawke's Bay Regional Resource Management Plan that was announced on 4 May. This has since been "called in" and is part of the matters that will be looked at by the EPA. Plan Change 6 seeks to address specific water allocation and water quality issues in the Tukituki River Catchment. Kevin pointed out that this is an important document that needed to be considered carefully for both the good and poor provisions. The Board agreed to do a submission on Proposed Plan Change 6 and this was sent in on 31 May.

During the year Kevin also reported that the Waipukurau and Waipawa sewerage schemes were changing from a land based discharge to a microbial process.

13.4 *Poutiri Ao o Tāne*

Over the 2012-13 year Kevin Trerise represented the Board on this important Hawke's Bay projects' advisory group.

It was another busy year for the project with much being achieved due in a large part to the volunteers, project partners and the community all working together.

Some of the achievements were:

- 3000 plants in the ground to kick-start our protection for the headwaters of the Lake Tūtira streams. More coming.
- the predator control programme over 80,000ha continues to gain control and maximize efficiency.

- research on a number of fronts continues with the 'Essence of Rat' looking quite promising. Move over Channel No 5!
- the predator fence is all up and working well.
- the translocation projects almost went off without a hitch
- over 100 artificial seabird burrows in the ground!
- Kākāriki and kākā are calling Maungaharuru home, anchored there by some incredible volunteers who spent weeks feeding and monitoring them.
- 48 tītī (Cook's petrel) were last seen disappearing out to sea.
- 50 kōrure (mottled petrel) burrows were built and put in the ground by a team of helpers from Hereworth School.

Pest Control Showing Great Results

We are now coming into our third year of top predator control (cats and mustelids) over the 8000ha being treated. The first year was about gaining control, this year is about maximizing efficiency. Next year it is all about making it sustainable.

Education and Engagement

Local schools around Hawke's Bay are benefiting from this project now. A popular education series run by the Department of Conservation and Ecoed features a lot of what is happening with this project. The Poutiri Ao ō Tāne Facebook page is taking off and the website is regularly visited.

Mottled Petrel Delayed

Fifty mottled petrel (kōrure) from Codfish Island (Whenuahou) were meant to arrive in April. Unfortunately the health of these birds meant that we were unable to bring any off the island. We will be trying again next year.

Maungaharuru-Tangitū Trust Signs Treaty Settlement

On 25 May 2013, the Maungaharuru-Tangitū Trust signed a Treaty Settlement on behalf of the Hapū of Tangoio Marae. The takiwā (traditional area) of the Hapū extends from Maungaharuru in the west to Tangitū (the sea) in the east. Included in the settlement is ownership of part of Opouahi Scenic Reserve, the beds and strata of lakes Opouahi, Waikōpiro, Orakai and part of Tūtira, Te Pōhue Recreation Reserve, Opouahi Station and part of the Esk Forest.

Governance

DOC as the signatory of the first project agreement with the funding body the Aotearoa Foundation continues to work to establish a governing body and structure for the project. This has been difficult due to the possible impact this may have on other voluntary groups ability to secure funding for the many and varied projects happening in the region. It is hoped to find a solution in the not too distant future.

13.5 *Hunting*

During the year the Board gave greatly increased focus to hunting issues and sought advice from the department on a number of areas of concern, particularly relationships between the department and recreational hunters and between recreational hunters and Wild Animal Recovery Operators (WARO). Issues included compliance with WARO hunting zones, Ruahine WARO rules and access to information. The Board has received

presentations from hunting groups and has greatly increased its understanding of hunting issues. The Board is pleased to note the progress being made in this area and the support hunter groups are giving to Project Kaka in the Tararuas and biodiversity initiatives in the Kawekas.

Wairarapa Deerstalkers Association

John Hancock attended the meeting of the Wairarapa Deerstalkers both in his own capacity and representing the Board. At the May Board meeting John reported back from the latest Deerstalkers meeting. The discussion was mainly around some aspects of Land Search and Rescue processes that they were not entirely happy with, and the resources that the Deerstalkers contribute for search and rescue operations.

Lower North Island Hunting Group

At the February meeting the Board discussed whether it was appropriate and worthwhile to have members attend the meeting of other hunting groups, with particular reference to the Lower North Island Hunting Group. Don Adams was asked to talk to the local DOC Area Managers about this, which he did, and he attended a meeting of the Lower North Island Hunting Group in May. It was chaired by Gordon George and was attended by a small executive group representing Deerstalkers Assoc from around the lower North Island. Much of the business centred on WARO issues, poaching, safety issues such as spotlighting on public land, excessive numbers of hunters hunting in the same general area during the roar and the normal concerns that hunters have around this time of the year.

Also discussed was the Management Plan they had produced and that they were disappointed by the lack of interest shown in it by DOC. They also considered that the 'Spyder' tracking logs should all be vetted and that these checks would ensure that animals harvested would have been taken well away from 1080 areas ensuring food safety issues never arise. Finally they also asked to be involved in the review of the WARO concessions in 2014.

Don considered it was worthwhile attending the meeting. Any of the animosity following some of the group's earlier correspondence to this Board was not evident at the meeting.

13.6 Ruahine Range

Anne Lawrence updates the Board on matter related to the Ruahine Range.

In August 2012 DOC's Ruahine Forest Park Visitor Facility Network Management review and draft Terms of Reference caused some concerns and discussion around future maintenance of huts and tracks, and the potential removal of some huts and track markers, especially where usage levels were low.

Meetings of DOC and users of the park, mainly representatives from tramping clubs and Deerstalker Associations, were set up to discuss these issues. These were known as the Ruahine Forest Park Visitor Facility Network Management Review meetings. Anne supplied the Board with the minutes of the meeting held in October 2012, the 3rd meeting of this group. These meetings then became the Ruahine Recreation Users meetings, to be held quarterly and facilitated by Palmerston North DOC; the first meeting was held in February 2013.

An online users group, The Ruahine Users Group, was set up attached to the website "Remote Huts Westland" run by Permolatt at www.remotehuts.co.nz. The group are keen

to set up their own website and are looking at how the costs of doing this can be distributed. Access to the Ruahine Forest Park and the maintenance of assets in the park are the key concerns for this group.

13.7 Napier Branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society

Garth Eyles updates the Board on the activities of the Napier Forest and Bird Society. During the year activities and concerns he has reported on included:

- the group's tree planting activities, including assisting with the Poutiri Ao O Tane project and concerns that the summer drought would affect the survival of winter plantings
- Lake Tutira: concerns about continual high water level limiting access, and about water quality and the resulting smells and algal blooms. The high water level was improved as a result of work was done by the Hawke's Bay Regional Council to remove some of the peripheral vegetation and having a digger take the depth of the outlet channel down to allow a greater flow
- labelling trees at Little Bush on the Napier-Taihape Road, and undertaking weed control at the site with the assistance of DOC
- concerns about insurance costs for the Branch's hut on DOC's Hartree Reserve.

13.8 Wairarapa update

Don Adams updates the Board on happenings in the Wairarapa. Among the items Don reported back to the Board on were track upgrades and bridge replacements in the Holdsworth-Powell-Atiwhakatu area and the upgrading of Holdsworth lodge, a visit to Pukaha Mt Bruce, Castlepoint Centenary celebrations, a meeting held by DOC to address public concerns around possible hut closures, Pukaha Mt Bruce changes to the management of the visitor centre and shop, the planned extension of the Atiwhakatu hut, and the initial stages of the proposed Wairarapa water/irrigation scheme.

14. Chairperson's Comment

The 2012/13 year has been a very busy year not only for Department staff but also for board members as DOC negotiates its way through significant restructure. This has generated a significant increase in inquiries from members of the public to Board members as they express their apprehension as to the uncertain future of the Department and the impact the changes will have on the Conservation effort. There have also been expressions of support for the new direction and the effort to involve a wider range of users of the Conservation estate.

The Conservancy continues to operate in the absence of an active Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) with the Hawke's Bay CMS published in 1994 and Wellingtons in 1996. The review of the CMS was programmed to commence in early 2013 but this has not happened due to awaiting the outcomes of the restructure. The restructure has had significant impact on the boundaries for the Boards area and how this will be addressed in line with CMS boundaries is yet to be determined.

The Board takes seriously its statutory roles of recommending that the NZCA approve the next Draft Conservation Management Strategy for the Conservancy and advocating for conservation in statutory processes and public forums. We hope that the areas that our CMS will cover will be determined promptly and that the WHB region is high on the list to be completed once the Department finds its feet in the new structure.

In the absence of CMS's the Board continued to receive a report from one Area Manager at each meeting on progress against the Conservation Action Plans (CAPs) which reflects the conservation priorities and challenges for the Area. The Board has found these reports, and associated field trips, very useful in building members' knowledge of the conservation assets and values in the Conservancy. Throughout the year the Board has met in each of the four areas of the Conservancy.

The Board has made a number of submissions to local and regional governments in the 2012-13 year on issues that could impact on conservation lands and/or conservation matters within the Conservancy. The Board continues to monitor the legislation being drafted to allow for the establishment of a New Zealand Game Animal Council

The role of Conservation Boards appears to be changing as the Department changes, and we are concerned to make sure our advice and support for conservation remains useful and used. Boards have a key role as one of the channels by which the Conservator and the Area offices hear 'the community voice'; and in providing support to conservation in a way that delivers best value for the Department in times where reducing resources need to be prioritised and carefully focused.

The Board has valued the regular flow of information from the NZCA, particularly the chairperson's, Kay Booth's, letters to Board Chairpersons.

Board membership has remained at 10 throughout the year and this has required all those remaining to make a greater contribution in preparing submissions and in providing advice to the Conservator regarding various planning matters that have arisen during the year. My thanks to all Board members for their continued effort and support for Conservation.

I would like to thank all Board members for their commitment to conservation throughout the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy. Members of the Board continue to work hard for conservation, not only through attendance at Board meetings, but also through their work on subcommittees and in many cases by being involved on other community-based, conservation-related organisations.

We have seen a number staff within the Department with whom we have worked over the year change roles and move onto new challenges within the Department. Special thanks to Leigh Romanos and Meg Dewhurst, our Board Support Officers, and to Phil Tisch for sharing his expertise and knowledge with the Board.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by our Conservator Alan McKenzie for his work and ongoing commitment to conservation.

We look forward to having a constructive and effective relationship with the Department in the coming year as new structures evolve and new people take on new roles.

Kevin Trerise
Chairman of the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board

Appendix 1: Board members' attendance at Board activities

Individual Board members' attendance at Wellington Conservation Board activities during 2012/13 is displayed in the table below:

- ✓ Present
- ✗ Apologies

	Treiser	Nelson	McCull	Hancock	Adams	Eyles	Guy	Lawrence	Procter	Steedman
Meeting 3 August 2012	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Field trip 4 August 2012	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Field trip 1 November 2012	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meeting 2 November 2012	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Meeting 14 February 2013	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Field trip 15 February 2013	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Meeting 23 May 2013	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Field trip 24 May 2013	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Total Meetings (4)	4	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	2
Total Field Trips (4)	4	2	3	2	3	4	2	3	3	3

Appendix 2: Conservancy achievements in 2012/13

<p>Department of Conservation Strategic Direction</p> <p><i>New Zealanders gain environmental social and economic benefits from healthy functioning ecosystems, from recreation opportunities, and from living our history.</i></p>	
Intermediate outcomes	Activities in 2012/13 which advanced the department's strategic direction
<p>Intermediate Outcome 1: The diversity of our natural heritage is maintained and restored</p>	<p>Intensive pest control programmes continue in Pukaha/ Mt Bruce Reserve and in the Manawatu Gorge. After year one the multi-agency Manawatu Gorge Biodiversity Project has recorded a significant reduction in rat and possum numbers especially on the southern side of the Gorge.</p> <p>Stage one of the Aorangi goat eradication project has reported 700 goats removed. The Project Kaka monitoring programme supported by community ground pest control at Mt Holdsworth is in year four.</p> <p>The Poutiri Ao o Tane Habitat Protection Project is progressing with a further 93ha protected at 7 sites across Hawke's Bay. Three different translocations occurred as part of the Species Reintroduction Project which saw 29 Kakariki and 6 Kaka established, and 50 Cook's Petrel successfully fledged.</p> <p>Natural Heritage Management System plans have been implemented at 8 sites in the Manawatu. The white bryony eradication programme has seen plant numbers decrease by approximately 300, willow control operations have occurred at several sites, and a large stand of invasive contorta adjacent to Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary has been felled as part of the Nature Central collaboration.</p> <p>The Bittern (Matuku) habitat restoration project initiated in 2011 has included fencing and earthworks around the upper reaches of the Ahuriri Estuary with support from Matua Winery. In the last year five juveniles have fledged from the previously dry upper reaches. Surrounding land owners and iwi support plans to fence and plant a downstream section of the Estuary margin.</p> <p>The Kapiti island stoat response was closed in February 2013 with three stoats caught in total, and marked improvements to system preparedness in the case of reinvasion. Mana Island Takahe have been transferred to several locations in Southland, Christchurch and Te Anau. Mitre 10 has supported and funded the building of additional capture pens on the island.</p>

<p>Intermediate Outcome 2: Our history is protected and brought to life</p>	<p>Manawatu DOC staff have collaborated with Ngati Hinemanu elders to capture cultural history stories. The cultural heritage concept design at Manawatu Gorge has progressed.</p> <p>Iwi groups associated with Kapiti island have collaborated on translocations involving kiwi and takahe. This multi-iwi collaboration has built a platform for engaging children and young people from Kohanga, Kura Kaupapa and Whare Kura in learning about protocols behind translocations on the island.</p>
<p>Intermediate Outcome 3: More people participate in recreation</p>	<p>Since the opening of the Tawa Loop track in the Manawatu Gorge track user numbers tripled. The Rangiwahia Carpark and track has been upgraded, and a Ruahine User Group has been established to increase involvement from stakeholders in Ruahine Forest Park recreation facilities.</p> <p>Kime Hut the highest hut in the Tararua Ranges is being rebuilt with better insulation to sleep more people.</p> <p>New visitor facilities on Rangatira Flat, Kapiti Island are intended to improve visitor experience. A new boardwalk has been built through the wetland, with further work scheduled including a new track, interpretation signs and upgrades to the visitor shelter and sewage system. The installation of renewable power and water reticulation systems on Matiu/Somes Island has resulted in reduced generator use, power consumption and improved water quality.</p> <p>Improvements in the Rimutaka Forest Park include track upgrades for Orongorongo and Big Bend tracks and seven new bridges built. Tracks to the Turere Lodge have been upgraded from Easy Tramping to Day Visitor standard. Track upgrades in the Tararua Forest Park includes building of new bridges and the introduction of electronic booking systems for high use huts such as Atiwhakatu and Powell Hut. Water and electrical work and hut painting has been completed in the Aorangi Forest Park.</p> <p>A new camp ground has been established at Wairarapa Lake shore Scenic reserve, and a long term plan was completed for future recreation developments at Wairarapa Moana. The construction of the Wairiro bridge was funded through a Walking access Commission grant.</p>

<p>Intermediate Outcome 4: More people engage with conservation and value its benefits</p>	<p>Across the Conservancy Conservation Growth Funds enabled a range of engagement initiatives. These included the development of QR codes and You Tube videos to promote sites in the Manawatu, funding for Aorangi Restoration Trust carrying out community pest control, and development of three new Kiwi Ranger sites for Ahuriri Estuary, Manawatu Gorge and Catchpool Valley.</p> <p>In addition to Conservancy growth fund schemes, area funding has supported the Aorangi Restoration Trust and the South Wairarapa Rotary Club in the Wairarapa, and 12 conservation projects initiated by community groups in the Hawke’s Bay.</p> <p>DOC continues to collaborate on resource management issues with Lower North Island partners under the Nature Central programme. Area staff have increased collaboration with regional council partners on projects such as Wairarapa Moana Wetland Park, Project Kaka, Nature Space and Poutiri Ao o Tane. A Greater Wellington staff member has been co-located in the Kapiti Coast DOC office, and DOC staff in Wairoa have been co-located in the northern office of the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council.</p> <p>The final year of Living Legends will be completed in September 2013. This programme has seen volunteers and school children plant 9000 plants in and around the Ahuriri Estuary.</p> <p>The Kaitiaki Board has completed training on the Kaitiaki Management Plan for Matiu/Somes Island. A 10 year management plan for Whareroa Farm was developed in partnership with the Whareroa Guardians Charitable Trust.</p> <p>Kapiti Wellington annual Restoration Day event for 2013 attracted over 200 restoration group members and landowners from the Wellington region. With the opportunity to attend workshops, talks and fieldtrips, this year’s theme was: ‘Restoration: Sustainable and Mainstreamed’, which focused on building partnerships and ensuring that restoration groups were sustainable.</p> <p>The Manawatu Volunteer Programme has focused on increasing capability through longer-term projects. Eight long-term volunteers have contributed a wide range of skills over the year. A volunteer roster has been established to monitor stoat traps in two coastal reserves, and the Manawatu Gorge and Oroua River stoat trapping projects continue to be community-led with minimal input from DOC.</p> <p>The Pukaha/ Mt Bruce Restoration volunteer project is up and running, with trapping and kiwi monitoring the key operations run by volunteers. The Host Volunteer programme has been set up to enhance visitor experience.</p>
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<p>Intermediate Outcome 5: More business opportunities delivering increased economic prosperity and conservation gain</p>	<p>The Dulux partnership has enabled several huts in the Aorangi Forest Park to be painted through corporate sponsorship and volunteer help.</p> <p>DOC handed over running of the Pukaha/Mt Bruce visitor centre and restoration work to Pukaha / Mt Bruce Board.</p> <p>DOC has joined Business and Community Shares (BACS) as a corporate responsibility partner, providing education and advice to business and community groups looking to invest in conservation.</p> <p>Initial scoping work has been done to investigate opportunities for commercial partnerships with both OMV and Resene.</p>
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Working with iwi

The Conservancy continues to work more closely with iwi as partners, especially as Treaty of Waitangi settlement processes are worked through.

Across the Conservancy DOC staff are working to build enduring structures with iwi yet to settle that can be retained post treaty settlement.

To better understand the implications of earlier settlements, staff have undertaken a range of training opportunities. Treaty settlement training looked at legislation under Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 and how it applies to Ngati Apa, Ngati Toa, and Taranaki Whanui treaty settlement protocols. One focus was how to approach cultural consultation in complex environments where there are multiple associations. Other training undertaken included mapping exercises to highlight iwi boundaries and significant areas, and training in Te Reo and marae protocol.

In the Wairarapa Hawke's Bay areas, Pahauwera has signed and settled, and Maungaharuru Tangitu has signed. The Area office has formal relationships with both Pahauwera and Maungaharuru in the form of Kawenata (agreement). Post settlement iwi focus on setting up new bodies to ensure their aspirations are heard, understood and utilised has meant less availability of iwi representatives to work with DOC.

In the Kapiti-Wellington area the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Block (Taranaki Whanui) has seen the Wellington Harbour islands returned to iwi, with DOC management. There is a new management plan in place for the islands.

Ngati Toa settlement has just passed into legislation which resulted in a Deed of Settlement that had no prescribed DOC protocols. Ngati Toa have aspirations of their next generation working in conservation, and developing business connections and education opportunities. Kapiti Wellington Area Office staff are working with Ngati Toa at a number of levels with Ngati Toa actively participating in translocations.

In the Manawatu-Rangitikei area Ngati Apa are emerging from post settlement developments and have established a new main base in Bulls. They would like to align aspirations for employment alongside conservation work opportunities, and are interested in opportunities to restore Ruakiwi (Simpson's reserve). The Manawatu Rangitikei Area office has revitalised the Coastal Iwi Forum which had been on hold for a year while changes to the structure and format of meetings were worked through.

Taihape and Porirua ki Manawatu are in pre-settlement inquiry stages. Taihape is currently researching in preparation for the hearing, and Porirua ki Manawatu is in the research planning phase.

Successful collaborations between hapu, iwi and DOC relating to development of new facilities and interpretation includes the development of a cultural heritage concept design at Manawatu Gorge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan McKenzie', is positioned above the typed name.

Alan McKenzie
Conservator, Wellington Hawke's Bay
August 2013