



Annual Report of the
**New Zealand
Conservation Authority**

Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa

FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2020 TO 30 JUNE 2021

*Presented to the Minister of Conservation and tabled in the House of
Representatives pursuant to section 6E of the Conservation Act 1987*

Cover: Spotted skink, Matiu/Somes Island.

Back cover: Lake Pukaki looking towards Aoraki/Mount Cook.

Photos: Lorna Travers, NZCA Servicing Officer

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PO Box 10420

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www.conservationauthority.org.nz

nzca@doc.govt.nz

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Hon Kiritapu Allan
Minister of Conservation
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Tēnā koe Minister

I submit, in terms of section 6E of the Conservation Act 1987 (the Act), the annual report of the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority) for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. The Act requires that the Authority report each year to the Minister on the exercise of its functions and powers.

The Authority has maintained a high level of productivity whilst managing a reasonably high membership change as the terms of the eight serving members ended. I wish to acknowledge the significant contribution the retiring members provided to the work of the Authority during their tenure. It was pleasing to see how quickly the incoming members gained their feet and have continued the momentum of the Authority's work.

Meetings

The Authority has maintained a schedule of four meetings in Wellington and two held in the regions. The visits outside Wellington included a meeting in Blenheim coupled with a field trip to Pelorus Sound to learn more about the exemplar catchment project 'Te Hoiere'. The second region visited was Napier, which included a field trip to several reserves and conservation sites including the historic Ōtātara Pā. The visits were marked by the welcome received from tangata whenua, and meeting conservation board members, conservationists and Department staff in the field.

The Authority also hosted its annual Conservation Board Chairpersons Conference, which continues to prove a productive way to build collaboration between the Authority and conservation boards, strengthen understanding of their roles and review issues of moment. Authority members continue to maintain good liaison and links with conservation boards through their individual attendance at conservation board meetings and field trips. Such attendance is a useful way to understand the context of various issues and matters at the conservancy level.

The Authority also hosted and heard from a broad range of speakers from outside of the Department on a variety of topics relevant to the Authority's strategic priorities, and this information sharing has been helpful.

The approval of plans

The Authority received no plans or conservation management strategies during the period. The Authority's Management Planning Committee met during the term with the Department's planning staff to address the issue of the timeliness in which conservation management strategies and management plans are being addressed, and to seek solutions.

Functions under the National Parks Act 1980

The partial review of the General Policy for National Parks is underway, and the Authority has provided advice to the Department throughout the reporting period. This review aims to fully give effect to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Investigate and/or advise on conservation matters of national importance

The Authority continued to schedule strategic sessions at each meeting with the Director-General or a member of the Department's Senior Leadership Team on issues relevant to their business group. These included discussions on the Department's role or response to the following: the Ngāi Tai decision and partial reviews of the General Policies; strategy for climate change; the New Zealand science and funding system; understanding of Te Tiriti obligations and cultural competency; developing a programme of working with others; and the future of the PF2050 programme.

During the year the Authority has taken the opportunity to provide advice to the Minister on the following strategic issues: future-focused sustainable tourism; adequate environmental science funding, research and data provision; conservation board performance; marine issues, including seabird conservation and a national ocean strategy; the management of tahr in national parks; and the Department's statutory management planning processes.

Committees

The Conservation Act 1987 enables the Authority to establish committees to carry out functions or tasks delegated by the Authority. In the reporting period the active committees included: Biocontrol, Conservation Board Manual, Management Planning, Marine, NZ Biodiversity Strategy, Otago Conservation Management Strategy, Paparoa National Park Management Plan, Treaty Partnerships, and Tourism.

Advocacy

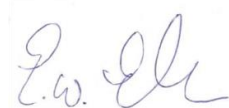
The Authority advocated its interests during the reporting period through public submissions on the following items: Te Pēwhairangi (Bay of Islands) Marine Mammal Sanctuary, freedom camping, the future of tourism, Tahr Control Plan 2020-21, and the Proposed Southeast Marine Protected Areas.

Minister Allan, we are thankful your health status has allowed your return to ministerial duties and our thoughts and prayers are with you now and in the future, mauriora. We thank Minister Verrall for her role as Acting Minister of Conservation, we valued our interaction and the commitment the Minister demonstrated in that role. During the initial stage of the reporting period, we also enjoyed the Ministerial association, advocacy and leadership of the Hon Eugenie Sage; thank you one and all.

The challenges to conservation remain and the ever-present threat to endangered species requires vigilance. COVID-19 has presented Aotearoa with the opportunity to reset tourism in a way that is sustainable. The task of achieving timely and efficient management planning processes is also highly desirable.

Nō reira

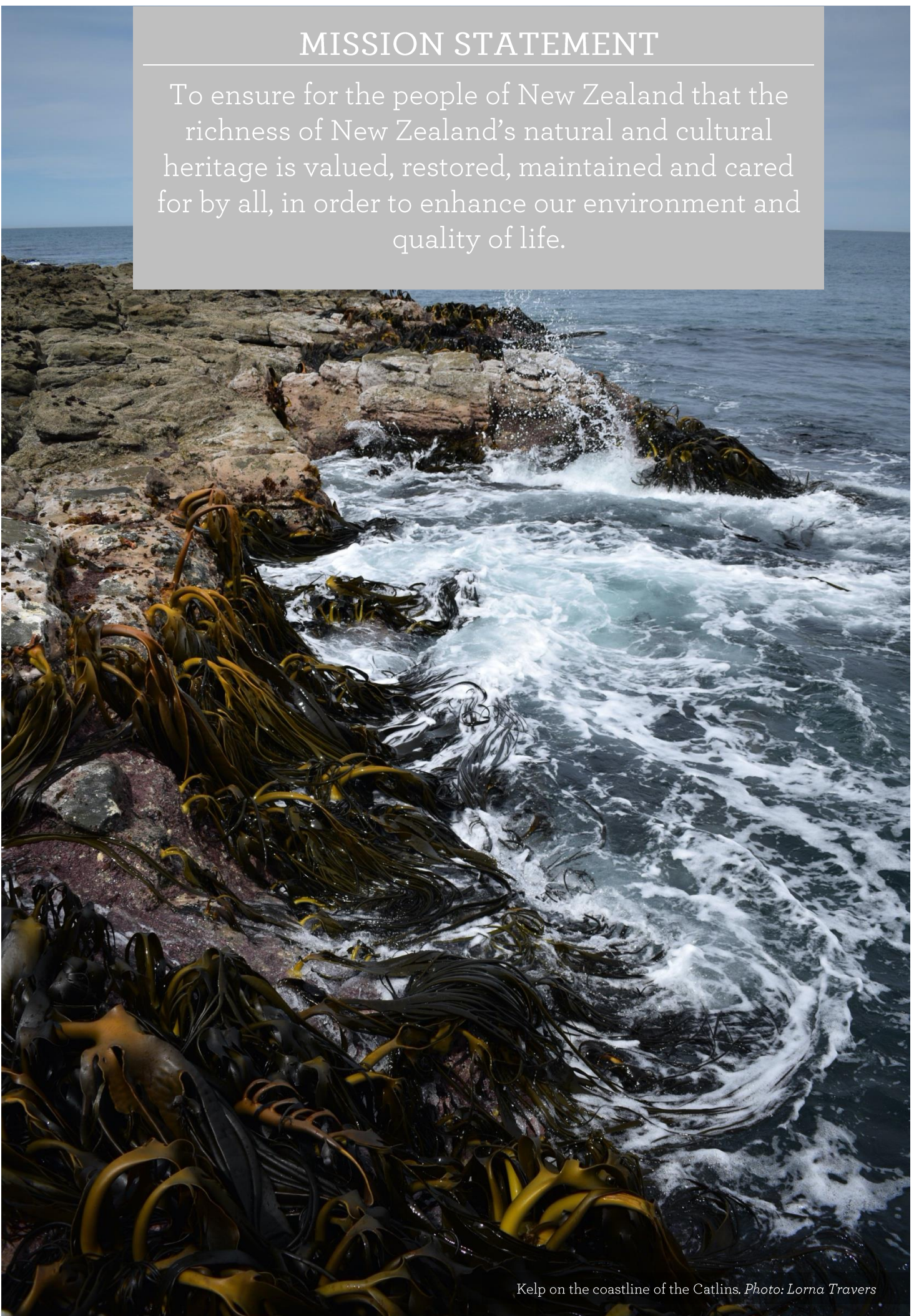
E noho ora mai



Edward Ellison ONZM
Chairperson, New Zealand Conservation Authority

MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure for the people of New Zealand that the richness of New Zealand's natural and cultural heritage is valued, restored, maintained and cared for by all, in order to enhance our environment and quality of life.





1. INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHORITY

The New Zealand Conservation Authority / Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa (the Authority) is a national statutory body that provides strategic advice to the Minister of Conservation (the Minister) and to the Director-General of Conservation, on conservation issues of national importance. The Authority was established by section 6A of the Conservation Act 1987.

The functions of the Authority are set out in the Conservation Act 1987 (the Act), the National Parks Act 1980, the Wildlife Act 1953, the Marine Reserves Act 1971, the Reserves Act 1977, the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 and the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978.

The Authority also has specified responsibilities, set out in Treaty claims settlement legislation, in relation to engagement with tangata whenua. These include establishing respectful working relationships, exercising mana recognition, and acknowledging kaitiakitanga as an important foundation for Māori conservation outcomes.

A major responsibility of the Authority is the approval of the 10-year conservation management strategies and national park management plans that guide the management of public conservation lands, waters and species by the Department of Conservation (the Department).

The Authority is committed to collaborative models in the management of public conservation resources. This is embodied in the long history of formal engagement of New Zealand citizens in the conservation management of Aotearoa, and in the diverse make-up of the Authority and conservation boards. The partnership between conservation boards and the Authority is a long-standing legislative mechanism that enables conservation through partnerships.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

The Authority has 13 members, appointed by the Minister of Conservation. Authority members are appointed for 3-year terms, unless otherwise stated, and may be reappointed. The process of appointment ensures that a range of perspectives, life experiences, and geographical knowledge contributes to the advice and decisions made by the Authority. The Authority is made up of:

- Two appointments in consultation with the Minister of Tourism, two appointments in consultation with the Minister for Māori Development, and one appointment in consultation with the Minister of Local Government
- One appointment on the recommendation of the Royal Society of New Zealand, one on the recommendation of Forest & Bird, and one on the recommendation of Federated Mountain Clubs
- One appointment on the nomination of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
- Four appointments following nominations from the public.

MAXINE SHORTLAND MNZM of Russell, appointed after consultation with the Minister of Tourism. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

TAK MUTU of Rotorua, appointed after consultation with the Minister of Tourism. Term: April 2021 to June 2023.

NICOLE ANDERSON of Kerikeri, appointed after consultation with the Minister for Māori Development. Term: June 2018 to June 2023.

PUKE TIMOTI of Hamilton, appointed after consultation with the Minister for Māori Development. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

PENNY HULSE MNZM of Auckland, appointed after consultation with the Minister of Local Government. Term: August 2020 to June 2023 (resigned April 2021).

TĀNE DAVIS MNZM of Invercargill, appointed on the nomination of Te Rūnanga O Ngāi Tahu. Term: October 2018 to June 2023.

WENDY NELSON of Wellington appointed on the recommendation of the Royal Society Te Apārangi. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

SALLY GEPP of Nelson, appointed on the recommendation of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of New Zealand. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

ROBIN MCNEILL MNZM of Invercargill, appointed on the recommendation of the Federated Mountain Clubs. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

EDWARD ELLISON ONZM of Dunedin, appointed from public nominations, is Chair of the Authority. Term: January 2019 to June 2023.

VIV SHAW of Te Anau, appointed from public nominations. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

ROBYN JEBSON of South Westland, appointed from public nominations. Term: July 2017 to June 2022.

TONY LEPPER ONZM of Alexandra, appointed from public nominations. Term: July 2017 to June 2022.

The diversity amongst the members brings together a wide range of knowledge, focus, and skills



Authority members, October 2020. *Left to right:* Rick McGovern-Wilson (NZCA Executive Officer), Wendy Nelson, Robin McNeill, Penny Hulse, Robyn Jebson, Maxine Shortland, Sally Gepp, Edward Ellison (Chair), Viv Shaw, Nicole Anderson, Puke Timoti, Tony Lepper, Bruce Parkes (DOC Deputy Director-General Policy and Visitors), Ngaire Best (DOC Director Governance), Tāne Davis. *Inset:* Tak Mutu (appointed April 2021)



3. MEETINGS

The Authority met on six occasions during the year: in August, October, and December 2020, and in February, April, and June 2021. Each meeting takes place over two days, and those held outside of Wellington involve a one-day field trip on the first day alongside the local conservation board. The October 2020 meeting was held in Blenheim, with the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board, and the April 2021 meeting was held in Napier with the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board. All other meetings were held in Wellington.

3.1 Stakeholder engagement

The Authority hosted and heard from numerous speakers from outside of the Department at its meetings.

- Tim Gale, General Manager, and Grant Dodson, Chair of the Game Animal Council, spoke about tahr and deer management in Aotearoa, the role of the council, and the involvement of hunting in conservation efforts, in August 2020.
- Janice Molloy, Convenor of Southern Seabirds, gave a presentation on seabird bycatch and the National Plan of Action for Seabirds 2020, in August 2020.
- Ray Grubb, Chair of New Zealand Fish & Game Council, spoke about the statutory relationship between the Authority and New Zealand Fish & Game Council, and the future-focussed mindset of the organisations pending results from the governance review, in February 2021.
- Grant Webster, Co-Chair of the Tourism Future Taskforce, provided an overview of the Taskforce, its findings and its recommendations, in February 2021.
- Keith Turner, Chair of the Milford Opportunities Project, provided an overview of the master plan for the future management of Piopiotahi / Milford Sound, in June 2021.
- Roxanne Hilliard, National Manager Risk Reduction, Gary Lockyer, Service Delivery Sector Partnership Manager, and Tim Mitchell, Service Delivery Wildfire Manager, of Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ), spoke about the work of FENZ across government, to increase understanding and mitigation of fire risk in Aotearoa, in June 2021.

3.2 Strategic advice to the Department

A member of the Department's Senior Leadership Team attends part of each meeting to engage the Authority on a strategic issue important for their business group. The purpose of these discussions is to get strategic advice and guidance from the Authority on issues important to the Department's future success.

- Michelle Hippolite, Deputy Director-General Kahui Kaupapa Atawhai, discussed the Department's response to the Ngāi Tai decision and the partial reviews of the General Policies, in October 2020.
- Rachel Bruce, Deputy Director-General Corporate Services, and Ken Hughey, Chief Science Advisor, provided a succinct presentation on the Department's strategy for climate change, in December 2020.

- Michelle Hippolite, Deputy Director-General Kahui Kaupapa Atawhai, was joined by Kayla Kingdon-Bebb, Director Policy Te Pae Whakatere, and Kimba Stainton-Herbert, Senior Policy Advisor, to provide further update regarding the partial reviews of the General Policies, in December 2020.
- Ken Hughey, Chief Science Advisor, was joined by two Principal Advisors Science Investment (PASI), Katrin Webb and Susanne Becken, to speak to these new PASI roles and New Zealand’s wider science and funding system, in December 2020.
- Bruce Parkes, Deputy Director-General Policy and Visitors, led a strategic discussion on the future of tourism, in February 2021.
- Mike Slater, Deputy Director-General Operations, was present to discuss the Department’s role and performance as a regulator, and the findings of the Department’s internal review of its management planning system, in April 2021.
- Michelle Hippolite, Deputy Director-General Kahui Kaupapa Atawhai, presented on the progress being made in the Department to instil better understanding of Te Tiriti obligations and improved cultural competency, in June 2021.
- Ginny Baddeley, Deputy Director-General People, spoke about the vision of FutureDOC, and led a strategic discussion on the Department’s developing programme of Working with Others, in June 2021.
- Kevin O’Conner, Acting Deputy Director-General Biodiversity, and Brent Beavon, Programme Manager Predator Free 2050 (PF2050), discussed the future of the PF2050 programme, seeking the Authority’s view on potential challenges and opportunities, in June 2021.

3.3 Attendance at meetings 2020/21

Member	Number of meetings attended (total of 6)
Nicole Anderson	5
Tāne Davis	6
Edward Ellison (Chair)	6
Sally Gepp	5
Penny Hulse (August 2020 – April 2021)	4 (of 4)
Robyn Jebson	6
Tony Lepper	6
Robin McNeill	5
Tak Mutu (since May 2021)	1 (of 1)
Wendy Nelson	6
Viv Shaw	5
Maxine Shortland	6
Puke Timoti	4

3.4 Field trips

Field trips are a vital part of the Authority's way of operating, giving members the chance to view on site, the concerns and opportunities raised in public submissions, and to appreciate the local context faced by Departmental staff and communities in managing public conservation lands. It is also an opportunity for the Authority to spend time with local conservation board members, discussing matters important to their regions.

The Authority held a meeting in Blenheim on Thursday 15 and Friday 16 October 2020. The field trip, hosted by the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board, took place on the Thursday and began with a pōwhiri at Te Hora Marae of Ngāti Kuia.

The day proceeded with an introduction to Te Hoiere Project and the Kotahitanga Alliance, a journey to Pelorus Bridge facilitated further insight into Te Hoiere Project, with members hearing from Ngāti Kuia, Marlborough District Council, Forest & Bird, and the Department of Conservation. The field trip ended with a visit to Cullen's Point in Havelock, which included a short walk to the lookout, and a discussion on aquaculture in the area.



Conservation dog at Opouahi Scenic Reserve with Tony Lepper, NZCA member, and DOC staff. *Photo: NZCA Servicing Officer*

The Authority's April 2021 meeting was held in Napier and included a field trip, hosted by the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board on Thursday 15 April 2021.

The fieldtrip began with a pōwhiri at the Department of Conservation Napier office. Members visited Opouahi Scenic Reserve, Ahuriri estuary, and Ōtātara Pā Historic Reserve throughout the day. The Authority heard from a number of passionate local conservationists, including Hans Rook, a 'retired' local conservationist legend; Sue MacDonald and Angie Denby, Secretary and Chair of Ahuriri Estuary Protection Society; Koro Matiu, who led a safe passage into and around Opouahi Scenic Reserve; and Chad Tareha, Chair of Ngāti Pārau Hapū Trust.

The Authority is grateful for the engagement and commitment of those involved in the organisation of these field trips, and for the kōrero they provide

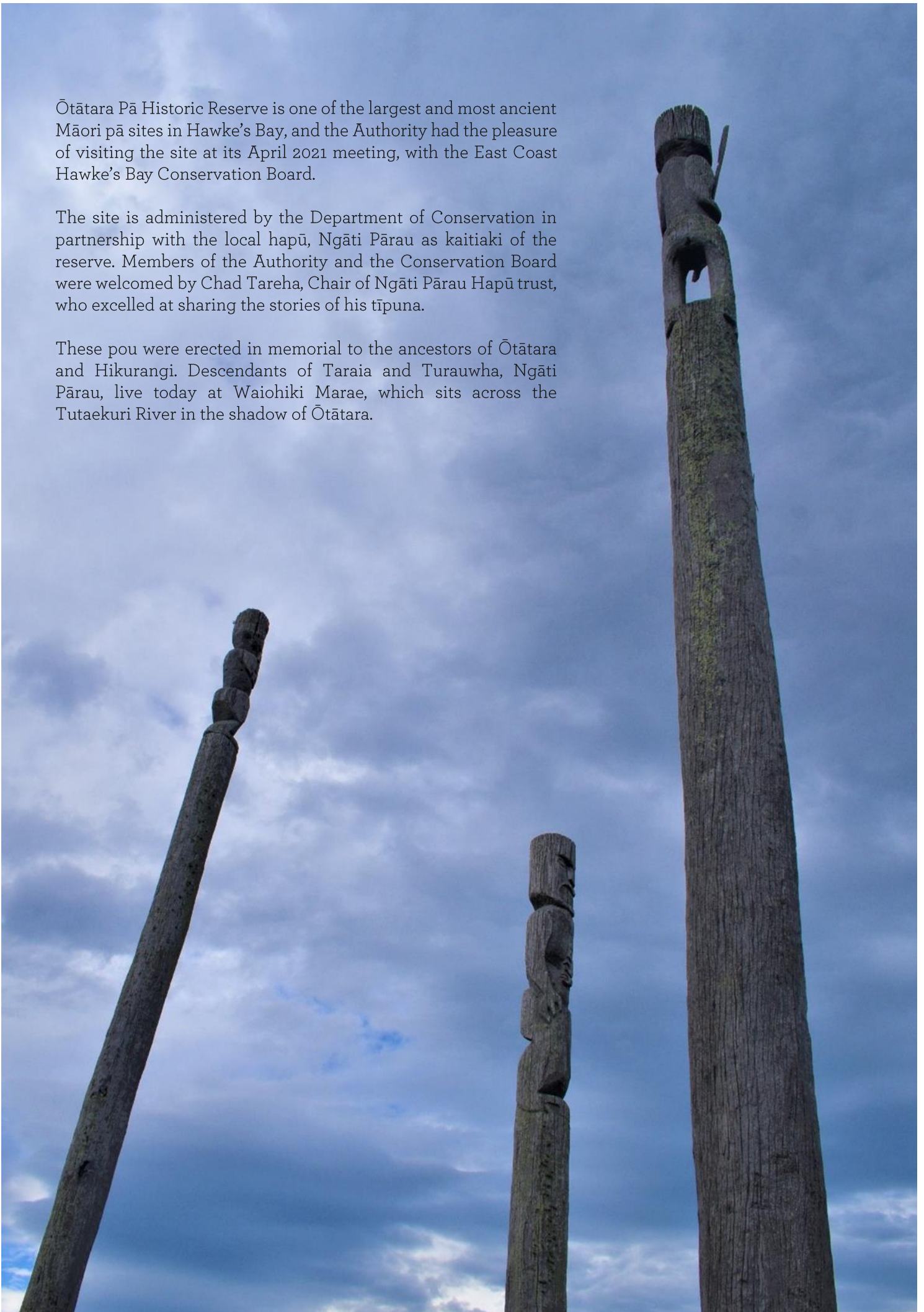


NZCA April 2021 field trip. *Photo: NZCA Servicing Officer*

Ōtātara Pā Historic Reserve is one of the largest and most ancient Māori pā sites in Hawke's Bay, and the Authority had the pleasure of visiting the site at its April 2021 meeting, with the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board.

The site is administered by the Department of Conservation in partnership with the local hapū, Ngāti Pārau as kaitiaki of the reserve. Members of the Authority and the Conservation Board were welcomed by Chad Tareha, Chair of Ngāti Pārau Hapū trust, who excelled at sharing the stories of his tīpuna.

These pou were erected in memorial to the ancestors of Ōtātara and Hikurangi. Descendants of Taraia and Turauwha, Ngāti Pārau, live today at Waiohiki Marae, which sits across the Tutaekuri River in the shadow of Ōtātara.



4. BUDGET, FEES AND ALLOWANCES

The Authority's budget for 2020/21 was \$146,000. Fees and allowances are paid in accordance with the Fees and Travelling Allowances Act 1951. The chairperson receives a daily meeting fee of \$700, and other Authority members receive a daily meeting fee of \$450.

5. THE CONSERVATION ACT 1987

5.1 Section 4 of the Act

Section 4 of the Act states: 'This Act shall so be interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.' As a body established under this Act, section 4 applies to the Authority in the discharge of its functions.

The Authority established the Section 4 Policy Committee in August 2018, which was renamed as the Treaty Partnerships Committee in May 2020 to better reflect the role and mahi of the Committee. During the reporting year, the Treaty Partnerships Committee has been working closely with the Department on a host of work following the Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki Supreme Court Decision in December 2018. This has included work on the General Policy for National Parks Partial Review, the Department's Kāhui Kaupapa Atawhai work programme, and the Taranaki Maunga settlement.

5.2 Functions of the Authority

Section 6B of the Act sets out the functions of the Authority.

(a) Advise the Minister on statements of general policy

General policy is the highest level of statutory planning for conservation outcomes. The Authority is working with the Department on the partial review of the General Policy for National Parks.

(b) Approve conservation management strategies

A conservation management strategy is a 10-year statutory document. Its purpose is to implement general policy and to establish objectives for the discharge of the Department's functions in the area covered by the strategy, and for recreation, tourism and other conservation purposes. Conservation management strategies are developed by Departmental planning staff in partnership with local conservation boards and tangata whenua. No strategies were received by the Authority for consideration during the reporting year.

(c) Approve conservation management plans

Although the Authority may be asked to approve conservation management plans, they are usually approved by conservation boards, in some cases jointly with an iwi authority, as provided for in Treaty Settlement legislation. No plans were received by the Authority for consideration during the reporting year.

(d) Review the effectiveness of the Department's administration of general policies

When approving statutory planning documents, the Authority seeks to satisfy itself that appropriate effect is given to the two statements of general policy: The Conservation General Policy, and the General Policy for National Parks.



NZCA April 2021 field trip. Photo: NZCA Servicing Officer

(e) Investigate and/or advise on conservation matters of national importance

On top of the strategic discussions undertaken with the Department's senior leadership (outlined in section 3.2), other conservation matters of national importance discussed with the Department during the reporting period included:

- implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy
- the Department's management planning process
- budget planning and reporting
- New Zealand's representation on the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF).

These discussions were iterative; further discussion will take place as more information is received and understanding and thinking evolves. Advice as above was also provided to the Minister. Other topics included:

- future-focused sustainable tourism
- environmental science funding, research and data provision
- conservation board performance
- seabird conservation in an international context
- a national ocean strategy
- management of tahr in national parks.

(f) Change of land status – stewardship land

In April 2015 the then Minister, Hon. Maggie Barry, requested the Authority's views on the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's recommendation to the Minister that the Authority provide "guidance on the principles and processes that should be used when making decisions on net conservation benefit", in the context of land exchanges under section 16A of the Conservation Act 1987. In response, the Authority provided the report 'Stewardship Land: Net Conservation Benefit Assessments in Land Exchanges' in January 2016, which was revised in March 2018.

As of June 2021, the Authority is still working with the Department to progress these issues and is disappointed by the slow progress.

(g) Education and publicity

Minutes, agendas and other information regarding the Authority's functions and activities, including its meetings which are open to the public, are available on the Authority's website. No education or publicity activities were undertaken during the reporting period.

(h) Priorities for expenditure by the Department

The Authority established a formal process with the Department to ensure the Authority's advice is considered in the Department's budget process. The Authority provided the Minister and the Director-General of Conservation with its priorities for expenditure of money for 2021-22 on 16 December 2020.

(i) New Zealand Fish & Game Council liaison

Section 6B(1)(i) of the Conservation Act 1987 provides for the Authority to liaise with the New Zealand Fish & Game Council. The Authority and New Zealand Fish & Game Council provided each other with copies of agendas and meeting papers during the reporting period.

Ray Grubb, Chair of New Zealand Fish & Game Council, attended the Authority's meeting in February 2021. It was agreed that the Chairs of each body would attend a meeting of the other annually. Edward Ellison, Chair of the Authority, expects to attend a meeting of the Council in the next reporting year.

(j) Ministerial delegations

The Minister did not delegate any ministerial powers or functions to the Authority during the reporting period.



Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and Blowholes Walk *Photo: Lorna Travers*

5.3 Powers of the Authority

Section 6C of the Act sets out the powers of the Authority.

(a) Committees

The Conservation Act 1987 enables the Authority to establish committees to carry out functions or tasks delegated by the Authority. Committees that were active during the reporting period, and members involved in those committees included:

- o **Biocontrol Committee: Tony Lepper and Wendy Nelson**

The National Parks Act 1980, section 5A(2)(a) stipulates that before authorising the introduction of any biological control organism in any national park, the Minister shall consult with the Authority. This reporting year, this committee, under delegation from the full Authority, reviewed an application to release Ragwort plume moth (*Platyptilia isodactyla*) into Fiordland National Park to control ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), and recommended to the Minister that authorisation be granted.

- o **Conservation Board Manual Committee: Viv Shaw, Robin McNeill and Robyn Jebson**

This committee was established in February 2021, to provide advice and feedback primarily on the draft Conservation Board Manual, a product of a series of governance improvements efforts by the Department in its servicing capacity to conservation boards. The committee also provided advice on the draft Code of Conduct for Conservation Board Members.

- o **Management Planning Committee: Edward Ellison, Sally Gepp, Penny Hulse, Robyn Jebson, Tony Lepper, Viv Shaw and Barry Wards (Wellington Conservation Board)**

This committee has continued to work closely with the Department's Planning, Permissions and Land Unit on the issues of the planning systems and framework. On 15 December 2020 the committee submitted a

report to the Minister and the Director-General of Conservation, on the Authority's perception of issues with, and recommendations for, the statutory management planning process. On 24 March 2021, the committee provided an addendum to this report reiterating its recommendations.

- o **Marine Committee: Wendy Nelson, Nicole Anderson, Viv Shaw, Sally Gepp and Edward Ellison**

This committee was established in October 2020 to enhance the work of the Authority in advocating for marine conservation issues. The committee has initially been concerned with gaining better understanding of the marine landscape, and the Department's role within this. The committee submitted on the proposed Te Pēwhairangi (Bay of Islands) Marine Mammal Sanctuary in May 2021.



Gannet. Photo: Lorna Travers

- **New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy Committee: Wendy Nelson, Edward Ellison, Nicole Anderson, Viv Shaw and Puke Timoti**

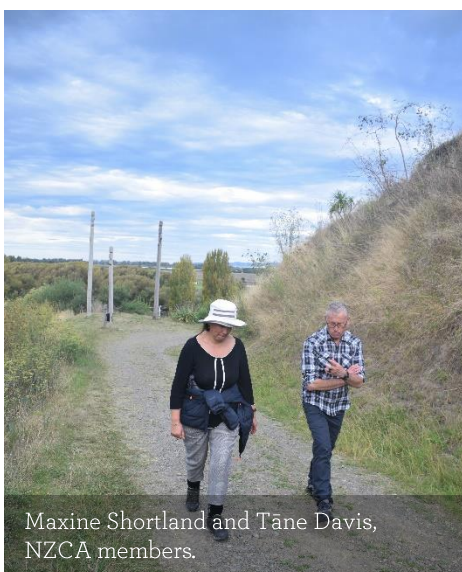
Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy was launched in August 2020. The Authority has noted the implementation of this strategy as a priority focus area, and the importance of data to enable evidence-based decision-making in this area. Regular updates on progress have been scheduled into the Authority’s work programme.

- **Otago Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) Committee: Robyn Jebson, Tony Lepper and Viv Shaw**

Submissions for the Otago CMS partial review closed on 21 December 2020. Following public consultation, the Department will revise the draft, provide this to the Otago Conservation Board who will consider this revised draft before providing it to the Authority for approval. This committee expects to receive the document in the 2021-22 reporting year.

- **Paparoa National Park Management Plan (NPMP) Review Committee: Edward Ellison, Robyn Jebson and Tāne Davis**

In October 2020, the Authority released a Joint Statement with the



Maxine Shortland and Tāne Davis, NZCA members.

Department of Conservation and the Royal Forest and Bird Society of New Zealand Inc regarding the Paparoa NPMP court proceeding. This is available to read on the Authority’s website. The High Court heard this judicial review on 15 March 2021 and released its decision on 27 May 2021.

- **Treaty Partnerships Committee: Nicole Anderson, Tāne Davis, Edward Ellison, Maxine Shortland, Puke Timoti and Tania Simpson (co-opted)**

This committee was established in August 2018. This year, the committee has held regular meetings with Michelle Hippolite, Deputy Director-General Kāhui Kaupapa Atawhai, on the implications for the Department of the Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki Supreme Court decision.

- **Tourism Committee: Maxine Shortland, Nicole Anderson, Penny Hulse, Robyn Jebson, Viv Shaw and Tara Druce (Otago Conservation Board)**

This committee was established in August 2020, instigated by the March 2020 COVID-19 national lockdown, to explore what the future of tourism could be post-COVID-19. The committee has been active in responding to various documents and discussions.

This reporting year, the committee has submitted to the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment on the Future of Tourism and Freedom Camping consultation documents, and have provided advice to the Minister on the Department’s Heritage and Visitor Strategy, published in February 2021, and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment’s February 2021 report ‘Not 100% – but four steps closer to sustainable tourism’. Maxine Shortland represented the Authority on the Tourism Futures Taskforce Advisory Group



New Zealand parakeet/kākāriki, Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre. Photo: Lorna Travers

(b) Advocacy

The Authority advocated its interests during the reporting period through several public submissions, available to read through its website:

- **Te Pēwhairangi (Bay of Islands) Marine Mammal Sanctuary, submitted 18 May 2021**
The Authority supported the proposed Marine Mammal Sanctuary, however noted disappointment in the current state. At the time of writing, there are fewer than 30 bottlenose dolphins. The Authority stressed the need for monitoring, compliance and enforcement.
- **Freedom Camping, submitted 14 May 2021**
The Authority supported stronger regulation for freedom camping. Although acknowledging it as a problem area, the Authority noted concern about missed opportunity if the focus is on achieving quick wins, rather than implementing major changes required to make tourism sustainable and regenerative.
- **Future of Tourism (MBIE), submitted 22 September 2020**
The Authority submitted that tourism in New Zealand relies extensively on the inherent natural beauty of Papatūānuku and noted that COVID-19 provides an opportunity to reassess tourism management, with increased focus on environmental sustainability and prioritisation of Treaty partnerships and relationships.
- **Tahr Control Plan 2020-21, submitted 3 August 2020**
The Authority supported the Department's Tahr Control Operational Plan 2020-2021. The Authority further submitted that the Department should explore potential employment opportunity through the Jobs for Nature initiative and include an integrated monitoring and research programme in the Control Plan 2020-2021.
- **Proposed Southeast Marine Protected Areas, submitted 29 July 2020**
The Authority agreed with implementation of the proposed network of Marine Protected Areas, as presented in Option 2, but suggested consideration of options to achieve a balance between conservation of marine biodiversity and the sustainable fishing practices of the local rūnanga.

Members also represented the Authority at multiple events and meetings throughout the year. This year, Tony Lepper attended a Tahr Liaison meeting on 16 March 2021, and Puke Timoti represented the Authority at the Predator Free 2050 Summit on 10 June 2021.



6. THE NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980

6.1 Functions of the Authority

(a) Review of the General Policy for National Parks

The partial review of the General Policy for National Parks is underway, and the Authority has provided advice to the Department throughout the reporting period. This review aims to fully give effect to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

(b) National park management plans

No reviews of national park management plans were conducted during the reporting period.

(c) Additions to, and deletions from, national parks

No additions to, or deletions from, national parks were advised during the reporting period.

(d) National park investigations

No national park investigations were undertaken during the reporting period.

(e) National park determinations

No determinations were made during the reporting period.

7. MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

7.1 JD Stout Trust

The Stout Trust was established to provide grants for the preservation of natural or historic sites or amenities for public enjoyment, and the promotion, creation or preservation of works of art, including visual, audio or literary arts.

The Authority has a representative that sits on the Historical and Natural Sites Panel, a board that advises on grants made by the Trust. Wendy Nelson is the Authority's representative on this panel, and attended the Trust's annual meeting on 10 November 2020 in Wellington.

7.2 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is a democratic membership union that utilises the world's most influential organisations and experts to conserve nature and work towards sustainable use of natural resources. The IUCN has over 1,400 members from over 170 countries. The Authority, along with another government agency, is one of eight members of the New Zealand Committee of the IUCN. The Committee meets quarterly. Wendy Nelson is the Authority's representative on the Committee.

The World Conservation Congress is normally held every 4 years and was due to be held in June 2020 in Marseille, France. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Congress was postponed. This is now set to take place as a hybrid in-person and virtual event from 3-11 September 2021. COVID-19 triggered the need for alternative ways to approach decision-making and for approval of budgets and other key decisions. Voting on procedural motions took place in February 2021 via a series of 128 motions that were distributed in October 2020 for online voting.

Wendy Nelson attended a meeting of the New Zealand Committee of the IUCN on 25 May 2021 where items discussed included climate change, the Committee's online presence, the International Marine Protected Area Conference 6 (IMPAC6), and the IUCN Congress to be held in September 2021.

7.3 Land and Water Forum

The Authority is a member of the Land and Water Forum. Details about the activities of the Forum during the reporting period are available at www.landandwater.org.nz. Having completed its first phase of work, the Forum took a formal break from July 2018.



8. CONSERVATION BOARDS

8.1 Conservation board boundaries

There were no changes to conservation board boundaries in the reporting period.

8.2 Conservation board nominations

The Minister is required to consult with the Authority prior to appointing public members to conservation boards. The Authority provided its advice to the Minister on the appointment process for 2021. The Authority was encouraged by the high standard and a high number of nominations received. It was heartening to see great diversity across these nominations, not only of ethnicity, gender and age, but of also of experience, knowledge and skills.



8.3 Authority/Conservation board liaison

One Authority member acts as liaison with each conservation board. This liaison function includes attendance at board meetings and informal liaison with the board chairperson. Interactions, highlights and issues are reported back to the Authority at each meeting.

Conservation Board	Liaison member
Te Hiku o te Ika	Nicole Anderson
Northland	Nicole Anderson
Auckland	Penny Hulse (resigned)
Waikato	Penny Hulse (resigned)
Bay of Plenty	Puke Timoti
East Coast Hawke's Bay	Maxine Shortland
Tongariro Taupo	Maxine Shortland
Taranaki Whanganui	Maxine Shortland / Puke Timoti
Wellington	Wendy Nelson
Chatham Islands	Edward Ellison
Nelson Marlborough	Sally Gepp
West Coast Tai Poutini	Robyn Jebson
Canterbury Aoraki	Tony Lepper
Otago	Tony Lepper
Southland	Robin McNeill



Conservation Board Chairs' Conference 2020. Photo: NZCA Servicing Officer

8.4 Annual Conservation Board Chairs' Conference 2020

The Authority hosted the annual Conservation Board Chairpersons' Conference on 22 and 23 August 2020, at the West Plaza Hotel in Wellington. These conferences are designed to build collaboration between the Authority and conservation boards, and for the boards to develop stronger working relationships with each other and the Department. They provide the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the Government's expectations of the boards, and the role they play in conservation leadership within their communities. It is a vital opportunity to share ideas and practices.

Main topics on the conference's agenda for 2020 included:

- Conservation Board Letters of Expectation and annual work programmes
- Board support and servicing
- Treaty Partnerships
- Budget 2020: Nature-based employment
- Management planning process
- Lobbying and public sessions at board meetings
- NZ Fish & Game Governance review.

8.5 Annual reports

Conservation boards are each required by section 60 of the Conservation Act 1987 to provide the Authority with an annual report. These reports are available from the boards and posted on their individual pages on the Department's website.

8.6 Implementation of conservation management strategies

Most conservation boards have adopted a systematic process for monitoring the progress of the implementation of the conservation management strategy for their region, and for advising the Department's operations directors in that respect. Boards report on this monitoring in their annual reports.

Under the Conservation General Policy, the Department is required to provide each conservation board with a report (at least annually) on the implementation of the conservation management strategy for its region.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Authority reviewed its performance and strategy in June 2021. It was noted that this was the first year that the Authority had received a letter of expectation from the Minister, and that, moving forward, an annual work plan would be developed to allow for the Authority to better monitor its performance against its own priorities and the Minister's expectations. An annual work plan for 2021-22 will be developed and included in next years' annual report.

The Authority observed the need to ensure that it receives information necessary to adequately advise the Minister and the Director-General. The Authority is clear in its role to gather information from the Department, other government organisations, and interest groups, and provide advice as required to the Director-General and/or delegated senior leadership staff.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank members of the Authority past and present for their commitment and contribution to the work of the Authority, and importantly to our executive staff, Dr Rick McGovern-Wilson and Lorna Travers, who have efficiently and effectively underpinned our work. I also acknowledge Lou Sanson, Director-General, and the departmental staff for the many engagements with the Authority and its committees on myriad subjects large and small. It is appreciated and an extremely important component of the Authority's functions.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the conservation boards and their members, who play such an active part in local and regional conservation kaupapa across the county, and value the interaction that the Authority has had over the past year.

Edward Ellison ONZM
Chairperson, New Zealand Conservation Authority

11. SCHEDULES

First schedule

Conservation management strategies: approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2021. The statutory expectation is that each conservation management strategy will be reviewed at 10-year intervals.

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	DATE APPROVED	STATUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2021
Te Hiku o Te Ika	Conservation board est. 2015	Work under way
Northland	8 September 2014	Current
Auckland	9 October 2014	Current
Waikato	8 September 2014	Current
Bay of Plenty	4 December 1997	Under review
East Coast/Hawke's Bay	14 October 1998 (East Coast), 19 October 1994 (Hawke's Bay)	Under review
Tongariro/Taupo	30 May 2002	Overdue for review
Wanganui	9 April 1997	Overdue for review
Wellington	20 January 2019	Current
Chatham Islands	12 August 1999	Overdue for review
Nelson/Marlborough	12 September 1996	Overdue for review
West Coast	15 April 2010	Due for review
Canterbury (Waitaha)	1 June 2016	Current
Otago	1 June 2016	Under partial review
Southland Murihiku	1 June 2016	Current
Stewart Island/Rakiura	9 February 2011	Due for review

Second schedule

National park management plans: approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2021.

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN	DATE APPROVED	STATUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2021
Tongariro	12 October 2006	Overdue for review
Egmont	14 February 2002	Overdue for review
Whanganui	9 August 2012	Due for review
Abel Tasman	9 October 2008	Overdue for review
Kahurangi	13 June 2001	Overdue for review
Nelson Lakes	10 October 2002	Overdue for review
Paparoa	1 February 2017	Current
Arthur's Pass	13 December 2007	Overdue for review
Aoraki/Mount Cook	12 August 2004	Overdue for review
Westland Tai Poutini	21 December 2001	Overdue for review
Mount Aspiring	23 June 2011	Due for review
Fiordland	21 June 2007	Overdue for review
Rakiura	9 February 2011	Due for review

Third schedule

Address list for conservation boards.

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN	BOARD ADDRESS (c/o Department of Conservation)
Te Hiku o Te Ika	PO Box 842 Whangarei 0140
Northland	PO Box 842 Whangarei 0140
Auckland	Private Bag 68908 Wellesley Street, Auckland 1141
Waikato	Private Bag 3072 Hamilton 3204
Bay of Plenty	PO Box 528 Taupo 3351
East Coast/Hawke's Bay	Private Bag 11010, Manawatu Mail Centre Palmerston North 4442
Tongariro/Taupo	PO Box 528 Taupo 3351
Taranaki/Whanganui	Private Bag 3072 Hamilton 3240
Wellington	Private Bag 11010, Manawatu Mail Centre Palmerston North 4442
Chatham Islands	PO Box 114, Waitangi Chathams 8942
Nelson/Marlborough	Private Bag 5 Nelson 7042
West Coast Tai Poutini	Private Bag 701 Hokitika 7842
Canterbury Aoraki	Private Bag 4715, Christchurch Mail Centre Christchurch 8140
Otago	PO Box 811 Queenstown 9348
Southland	PO Box 743 Invercargill 9840

Fourth schedule

Statutory functions and powers of the Authority.

ACT	2020-21	STATUTORY FUNCTION
Statutory functions (Conservation Act 1987)		
6B(a)	N	Advise on statements of general policy
6B(b)	N	Approve conservation management strategies and any amendments
6B(c)	N	Review and report on effectiveness of general policies
6B(d)	Y	Investigate matters of national importance
6B(e)	Y	Consider and make proposals for change of land status of national and international importance
6B(g)	N	Encourage and participate in educational and publicity activities
6B(h)	Y	Advise annually on priorities for expenditure
6B(i)	Y	Liaise with New Zealand Fish & Game Council
6B(j)	N	Exercise any other powers and functions delegated by the Minister
Statutory functions (National Parks Act 1980)		
18(a)	N	Prepare and approve statements of general policy for National Parks (NP)
18(b)	N	Approve NP management plans and any amendments
18(c)	N	Advise on priorities for expenditure for NPs
18(d)	N	Review effectiveness of general policies for NPs
18(e)	Y	Consider and make proposals for addition of lands to NPs and establishment of new NPs
18(g)	Y	Give advice on any other matter relating to any NP
4(2)(b)	Y	Determinations re: native plants and animals preserved – introduced plants and animals exterminated
5A(2)(a)	Y	The Minister shall consult the Authority on introduction of any biological control organism
12(1)	Y	The Minister shall consult the Authority on Specially Protected Areas
14(1)	Y	Recommend establishment or revocation of Wilderness Areas
15(1)	N	Recommend establishment or revocation of Amenities Areas
18A	N	The Minister shall consult the Authority on access arrangements to a National Park re: s59 of Crown Minerals Act 1991
44(1)	N	Adopt or amend statements of General Policy
Statutory powers (Conservation Act 1987)		
6C(2)(a)	Y	Establish committees
6C(2)(b)	Y	Release for public information any recommendation, report or advice
6C(2)(c)	Y	Advocate at any public forum or in any statutory planning process



NEW ZEALAND

CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TE POU ATAWHAI TAIAO O AOTEAROA

New Zealand Conservation Authority
PO Box 10 420
Wellington 6143

www.conservationauthority.org.nz