

SCIENCE & RESEARCH SERIES NO.22

**PROJECT CONSERVATION:
A SOCIOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF A COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME**

by

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Published by
Head Office,
Department of Conservation,
P.O. Box 10-420,
Wellington,

ISSN 0113-3713
ISBN 0-478-01175-X

First published 1990

CONTENTS

PREFACE	
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
RECOMMENDATIONS	4
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION: OUTLINE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH METHODS	
1.1 Origins of the Study	6
1.2 What is evaluation research?	6
1.3 Evaluation Criteria	7
1.3.1 Outcomes	7
1.3.2 Processes	8
1.3.3 Resources	8
1.3.4 Orientation	9
1.4 Research Methods	9
1.4.1 Sources of Information	9
1.4.2 The Comparative Districts	9
1.4.3 Participants in the Research	10
1.4.4 The Field Work	10
1.5 Contents of the Report	11
CHAPTER 2 – THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING PROJECT CONSERVATION	
2.1 The Origins of Project Conservation	12
2.2 Interpretation of Project Conservation	14
2.2.1 The Pilot Areas	14
West Coast Region : Trainee Focus	14
Murihiku District : Conservation Education Focus	18
Whangarei District : Bicultural Partnership	19
Coromandel District : Community-based Conservation	21
2.2.2 The Comparative Districts	22
Hauraki District : Volunteers in the Maritime Park	22
Tainui District : Volunteer Focus	24
Rakiura District : Project Conservation in a Remote Area	25
2.2.3 Summary	26
2.3 Who is involved in Project Conservation	27
2.3.1 Coordinators	27
2.3.2 Other Departmental Staff	31
2.3.3 Volunteers	33
2.3.4 Trainees	36
2.3.5 Other Community Support	37
CHAPTER 3 - VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMES	
3.1 Introduction	41
3.2 Volunteer Recruitment	41
3.2.1 Methods of recruitment	41
3.2.2 Problems associated with recruitment	43

3.3 Staff assessments of the advantages of volunteer programmes	45
3.3.1 Physical work achieved	45
3.3.2 Raising public awareness of conservation	46
3.3.3 Access to community resources	48
3.3.4 Recreational use	48
3.4 Problems associated with volunteer programmes	48
3.4.1 Resources	49
3.4.2 The issue of volunteers replacing employees	49
3.4.3 Staff training	49
3.4.4 Deficiencies in volunteers	49
3.5 Volunteer Perspectives	52
3.5.1 Motivations for doing volunteer work	52
3.5.2 Expectations of Project	53
3.5.3 Positive aspects of Project Conservation	53
3.5.4 Negative aspects of Project Conservation	54
3.5.5 Skills provided by and acquired by volunteers	55
3.5.6 Assessments of learning opportunities offered by Project Conservation	55
3.5.7 Further involvement in Project Conservation	57
3.6 Policy implications for volunteer programmes	58
3.6.1 Recruitment	58
3.6.2 The replacement issue	58
3.6.3 Staff training	58
3.6.4 Training for volunteers	58
3.6.5 Contractual agreement	59
3.6.6 Volunteer input into policy	59
CHAPTER 4 TRAINEE PROGRAMMES	
4.1 Introduction	60
4.2 Staff Perspectives	60
4.2.1 Advantages of trainee programmes	61
4.2.2 Disadvantages of trainee programmes	63
4.3 Trainee Perspectives	65
4.3.1 Motivations for joining the training course	65
4.3.2 Expectations of the course	65
4.3.3 Positive aspects of the course	65
4.3.4 Criticisms of the course	66
4.3.5 Education of trainees	67
4.4 Policy implications for Trainee Programmes	68
4.4.1 The role of trainee programmes in Project Conservation	68
4.4.2 The integration of trainees into Project Conservation	68
4.4.3 Staff training	69
4.4.4 Training for trainees	69
CHAPTER 5 - COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS.	
5.1 Introduction	70
5.2 Local Issues and Attitudes	70
5.2.1 The relationship between the Department and the local economy	70
5.2.2 The loss of community	74
5.2.3 Positive responses	75

5.3 Links with local conservation organisations	76
5.4 Links with tangata whenua	81
CHAPTER 6 - ASSESSMENTS OF PROJECT CONSERVATION	
6.1 Introduction	87
6.2 The Strengths of Project conservation	87
6.2.1 Advocacy	87
6.2.2 Work Achieved	91
6.2.3 Community Development	92
6.2.4 To encourage use of the conservation estate	93
6.3 Problems associated with Project Conservation	94
6.3.1 Problems associated with departmental structure and organisation	94
6.3.2 Problems in the administration of Project Conservation	98
6.3.3 Problems stemming from the community	100
6.4 Priorities for Project Conservation	102
6.4.1 Existing Priorities as identified by Coordinators	102
6.4.2 Future Priorities for Project Conservation in the pilot areas	103
6.4.3 Future Priorities for Project Conservation in the comparative Districts	105
6.4.4 Summary	106
CHAPTER 7 - EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT CONSERVATION	
7.1 Introduction	107
7.2 Goal I	107
7.2.1 Outcome	108
7.2.2 Processes	108
7.3 Goal II	115
7.3.1 Outcome	115
7.3.2 Processes	116
7.4 Goal III	117
7.4.1 Outcome	118
7.4.2 Processes	120
7.5 Goal IV	120
7.5.1 Outcomes	123
7.5.2 Processes	124
7.6 Further Evaluation of Processes	124
7.6.1 How has Project Conservation affected volunteers and trainees?	124
7.6.2 How has Project Conservation affected staff?	125
7.7 Resources	126
7.7.1 The availability and use made of material/infrastructure components	126
7.7.2 Staff -numbers, characteristics and expertise	127
7.7.3 Project Conservation participants - numbers, characteristics and expertise.	127
7.8 Orientation	128
7.8.1 The appropriateness of Project Conservation's goals, particularly Goal IV	128
7.8.2 Is Project Conservation a successful advocacy strategy?	129

CHAPTER 8 - CONCLUSION	
8.1 Introduction	132
8.2 External Factors	132
8.2.1 Departmental factors	132
8.2.2 Community factors	133
8.3 Internal Factors	134
8.3.1 Staff skills	134
8.3.2 Lack of a clear policy focus	135
REFERENCES	136
APPENDIX 1 - PROJECT CONSERVATION RESEARCH EVALUATION AREA	138
APPENDIX 2 - PROJECT CONSERVATION GOALS	139
APPENDIX 3 - PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH	140
APPENDIX 4 - DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF VOLUNTEERS INTERVIEWED	143

PREFACE

This report has captured people's experiences and impressions of Project Conservation in the early months of 'setting up' and 'settling in'. Since the evaluation, carried out at the end of 1988, Project Conservation's identity has become more apparent, not only within the original pilot areas, but also in other regions. For example, Canterbury Conservancy has employed a person on contract to establish Project Conservation activities.

During 1989 staff have started to come to grips with the diversity and potential of Project Conservation. Moreover, some of the weaknesses and difficulties identified in this report are being addressed.

I would like to thank all those who participated in the research; Department of Conservation staff, programme participants and members of the community. Their commitment to Project Conservation is obvious.

Bev James
Wellington
September, 1989

**PROJECT CONSERVATION:
A SOCIOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF A COMMUNITY
PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME**

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Conservation aims to encourage public involvement in conservation through voluntary work and trainee schemes. In November and December 1988 a sociological evaluation of Project conservation which had been set up in four pilot areas (West Coast Region and Murihiku, Whangarei and Coromandel Districts) was carried out. In addition, activities relating to voluntary work and trainee schemes were investigated in three comparative districts (Hauraki, Tainui and Rakiura).

Programme outcomes, processes, resources and orientation were evaluated.

1. OUTCOMES

The two major outcomes examined were: the achievement of advocacy objectives and practical conservation work, as expressed in Project Conservation's goals. These concerned:

1. The encouragement of voluntary work.
2. Supporting and strengthening links between conservation organisations and the Department.
3. The provision of new opportunities for people to experience and become more aware of the natural environment.
4. The provision of training to foster the recruitment of under-represented groups into the Department.

The evaluation found that Project Conservation has important advocacy benefits in building up public support for the Department and encouraging a broader commitment to conservation within the community.

The programme has involved a range of participants from school children to older people, and includes both international travellers and domestic holiday makers. There is nevertheless the commitment among staff to broaden the coverage of Project Conservation to encourage the participation of young adults, families and Maori.

There is particular emphasis on attracting to Project Conservation people who are neither members of conservation organisations nor outdoor recreational clubs, those who do not have much experience of conservation, or of the natural environment.

The study has revealed two distinct categories of volunteer: the committed conservation volunteer and the newcomer. They differ in terms of their social characteristics and experience of conservation. Furthermore, they have different interests and requirements of Project Conservation.

Project Conservation has not only been used as an advocacy strategy, but has also been successful in achieving practical work on the conservation estate. This work has included volunteer activities such as working holidays, one-day working bees, school activities and on-going projects by community groups caring for local natural resources. Work has also been carried out in various ACCESS and Conservation Corps courses.

While staff acknowledge that Project Conservation has enabled low priority work to be achieved, and also work that would not otherwise have been done, many staff regard the work outcomes as of secondary importance to the advocacy value of Project Conservation.

2. PROCESSES

Evaluation of processes focused on what has been done in Project Conservation and how it has been done.

The four pilot areas have developed four models of Project Conservation which differ in their respective emphases on volunteer and trainee activities, on conservation education, on developing partnership with local iwi groups, and on the nature of involvement of community groups in Project Conservation.

Such variety is a strength of Project Conservation, because it indicates that its development has been responsive to the interests, needs and conditions of local communities.

Notwithstanding its sensitivity to specific community circumstances, Project Conservation can nevertheless benefit from paying attention to improving processes, so that its goals can be more effectively achieved. In particular, there is a lack of clear policy and guidelines to provide systematic and standardised approaches where they are required.

The need for guidelines is especially pertinent to the following areas: clarification of Project Conservation's stated goals, fostering communication between staff and Project Conservation participants, staff training, conservation education and other aspects of participant training, the involvement of participants in decision making about resource management, and resolution of industrial relations difficulties regarding the perception of volunteers and trainees as 'replacements' for paid employees.

3. RESOURCES

In evaluating the resources available for and used by Project Conservation, it was found that in a climate of scarce resources and financial constraints, the programme has competed with districts' many other operational demands in order to run activities.

This has sometimes put a strain on district resources and placed restraints on activities able to be developed under Project Conservation.

However, a consistent feature of all areas, pilot and comparative, was the extent of community support for Project Conservation. This was evident in the provision of a variety of resources by local groups and institutions, including equipment, finances and expertise.

4. ORIENTATION

With regard to evaluation of Project Conservation's orientation, the report considers two issues:

- the appropriateness of Project Conservation's stated goals;
- whether Project Conservation is a successful advocacy strategy.

It was apparent that changes are required to the goals to more closely reflect the aims and aspirations of Project Conservation that have emerged in the development of the pilots.

Some staff questioned whether Project Conservation is a successful advocacy strategy. The evaluation indicates that it has the potential to improve public relations and liaison with the community. It is also clear that Project Conservation must emphasise conservation education in its activities if it is to be effective in advocacy.

This report seeks to place Project Conservation in the broad context of the corporate and community environments in which it operates, in order to identify the key issues facing the programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS¹

Goals

In order to clarify Project Conservation's goals it is recommended that:

- a) Discussion is held among staff to decide on the assumptions, meaning and relevance of the goals.
- b) Goals are defined concisely and concretely, with reference to identified priorities.
- c) Investigation into how advocacy goals may be achieved through Project Conservation is undertaken.
- d) The respective importance and relationship of advocacy and labour objectives Project Conservation is clarified.
- e) Guidelines explaining the activities required to achieve goals are developed.

Staff

It is recommended that:

- a) A training programme for staff involved in Project Conservation is developed.
- b) Information to all staff about Project Conservation is provided.
- c) Disparities in pay and working conditions of Project Conservation coordinators are investigated and are amended where necessary.

Volunteers and trainees

It is recommended that:

- a) Training of volunteers and trainees is developed, with particular emphasis on conservation education as a component of Project Conservation.
- b) Training is tailored to cater for the variation in skills and experience of individuals.
- c) An information system to identify the nature of volunteers and trainees' skills and to fit them with the work required is established.

¹ It is acknowledged that since this research was undertaken the Department of Conservation has issued "Guidelines for Conservation staff working with volunteers", and a workshop on Project Conservation has been held. Both of these address some of the recommendations outlined in this section.

- d) Concern and confusion over the perception of volunteers and trainees as 'replacements' for permanent paid workers is cleared up by establishing policy and providing information to all staff.
- e) A contractual agreement between volunteers and the Department, is established to the rights and responsibilities of each party.
- f) Procedures for encouraging the input of volunteers and trainees into decision making about management of the conservation estate are set up.
- g) The Department becomes more aware of the importance of the work atmosphere and environment in helping volunteers and trainees to understand their roles and become integrated into the organisation.
- h) The potential for extending the involvement of trainees in Project Conservation through volunteer activities is investigated.

Community

It is recommended that:

- a) Potential sources of community support for Project Conservation and the types of resources available are investigated.
- b) Sources of support obtained from the community are formally acknowledged by the Department.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION : OUTLINE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH METHODS

1.1 Origins of the Study

Project is an initiative of the Advocacy and Extension Directorate¹ of the Department of Conservation. The programme aims to encourage public involvement in conservation through voluntary work and trainee schemes (such as ACCESS). It is an opportunity for individuals to participate in practical conservation work within their own communities and by doing so obtain a greater understanding of conservation.

In mid-1988 coordinators were appointed to set up pilot Project Conservation programmes in three districts -Murihiku, Whangarei and Coromandel. They joined the Project Conservation coordinator of West Coast Region, where activities have been underway since April 1987.

So as to get an understanding of how successful the four pilot programmes have been, the Advocacy and Extension Directorate decided an evaluation should be undertaken. This evaluation focused on the four pilot areas, and three other districts without coordinators (the comparative districts), as Project Conservation is an idea any district may take up, regardless of whether it has a coordinator (see Appendix 1 for a map of the areas studied).

1.2 What is evaluation research?

The purpose of an evaluation is to assess whether a specific activity, such as Project Conservation, is doing what it is designed to do, in the best way possible. The aim of any evaluation is a practical one - to help the activity succeed. Through the research process, the weaknesses and strengths of Project Conservation are identified so that the best direction for the future can be planned.

Evaluation is about assessing the value or worth of an activity. The element of judgement is basic to evaluation, but that judgement may be made according to a variety of criteria.

This evaluation has used four criteria to investigate Project Conservation.

¹ This report was written during restructuring of the Department of Conservation. For consistency in reflecting the organisational structure at the time of the evaluation (November-December 1988) the following terms are used throughout the report: Directorate, Region, District, and Central Office.

The criteria, which are discussed in Section 3, are:

- Evaluation of outcomes; how effective is Project Conservation in achieving its goals?
- Evaluation of processes; examination of how the programme has been set up, the way in which it operates and the experiences and perceptions of staff and participants.
- Evaluation of resources; what capacity does the programme have to operate?
- Evaluation of the programme's orientation; is Project Conservation justified?

It must be emphasised that this is not an exhaustive evaluation of Project Conservation for the following reasons:

- It is based on data available from a limited selection of people over a short period of time.
- It was impossible to collect some information because it was not recorded in some areas. It was particularly difficult to compare circumstances before Project Conservation with the situation at the time of the study.

No one set of evaluation criteria can provide a definitive assessment of a programme's effectiveness or worth. This is especially so for a programme as complex as Project Conservation, which pursues a variety of goals and which has inputs from a number of groups and individuals, both within and outside of the Department of Conservation. Consequently, the report should not be read as the only 'truth' about Project Conservation. The evaluation attempts to present the many perspectives, different interests and variety of experiences of those involved in Project Conservation, and to distil from these a guide to the key issues facing the programme for the future.

1.3 Evaluation criteria

1.3.1 Outcomes

Outcomes are expected changes that have occurred because of the programme. The stated goals of a programme usually indicate outcomes. Project Conservation's goals have been used in this report to assess if outcomes have been achieved (see Appendix 2 for an outline of Project Conservation's goals).

Examination of goal achievement is limited because it fixes the evaluation to a particular point in time. The extent to which Project Conservation's goals are achieved may not be fully apparent for some years. This is especially so when qualitative outcomes are sought, such as the Project Conservation goal to improve the sensitivity of young people to conservation values. This outcome is not only difficult to measure, but may be better assessed over a longer period of time than was possible in this study.

Examination of goals alone is only one measure of the success of a programme. This is because it looks at the end point, and not at how the outcome is arrived at. Consequently, the processes involved in goal achievement must also be analysed for a broader assessment of success.

1.3.2 Processes

These criteria focus on inputs rather than outcomes; effort rather than effect. They are concerned with such questions as:

- 'What did you do?'
- 'How much did you do?'
- 'How well did you do it?'
- 'How did participants interact?'

Process criteria provide an understanding of the content of the programme and consequently enable performance to be monitored.

However, there are two problems with process criteria that should be acknowledged:

- a) Process achievements are often used to 'prove' that an outcome has been achieved. For example, a process achievement such as the collection of rubbish from a beach ('what did you do') may be used to signify the achievement of a desired outcome such as improving public sensitivity to conservation values. Collecting rubbish may raise an individual's awareness of the detrimental effects of pollution, but the connection between an action and changed attitudes cannot be assumed.
- b) Process criteria examine the work that is done; they do not ask if it is the most work to achieve desired outcomes. This criticism relates to the orientation criteria discussed below.

Processes nevertheless make up the substance of an organisation's activity. They are essential to goal achievement and need to be identified and assessed in their own right. This study has looked at processes in some detail because Project Conservation is at the formative stage. Other studies have shown that staff are particularly concerned about getting the effort right at the formative stage, rather than whether goals are immediately achieved (Scott, 1987:322).

1.3.3 Resources

These criteria look at what capacity there is to perform the work. 'Capacity' involves both the material/infrastructural components and the human factors needed to run a programme. The material/infrastructural components cover the range and use of available resources, such as facilities, equipment and finances.

The human factors include the number, characteristics and expertise of staff and participants in the programme.

Like process criteria, structural criteria focus on inputs, rather than outcomes. But they are several steps removed from the goals. They represent the wherewithal to do the work, which should result in achievement of the goals.

Of course, the quality or quantity of resource inputs should not be assumed to rigidly determine the quality or quantity of outcomes. A programme may be effective, even though it does not have access to the most up-to-date technology or an unlimited budget, for example.

But on the other hand, a programme is unlikely to succeed if resources are deficient.

1.3.4 Orientation

By examining outcomes, processes and resources, the evaluation looks inward at the programme and asks 'are things being done right'? An alternative way of evaluating a programme is to ask if it is the 'right' programme. In other words, is its emphasis or orientation the correct one?

This question opens up a new range of issues which challenge the very basis of the programme. The evaluation of Project Conservation did not set out to question the existence of the programme in this way. Yet, some of those interviewed raised questions about the existence and direction of Project Conservation.

They identified two issues which are examined in chapter 7:

- Are Project Conservation's goals the right ones?
- Is Project Conservation the best way of achieving the Department's advocacy objectives?

1.4 Research Methods

1.4.1 Sources of information

Information for the evaluation of Project Conservation was mainly gained from field work in the four pilot areas and three comparative districts. Each location was visited in the period 22 November to 9 December 1988. Information gained through field work was supplemented by data from:

- files, reports and other material pertaining to Project Conservation
- statistical and demographic information concerning the areas studied.

1.4.2 The Comparative Districts

As well as investigating the pilot areas, it was considered that other districts without coordinators should be included in the evaluation to provide some comparative information. The main aim was to see if having a coordinator makes an appreciable difference to a district's involvement in Project Conservation. The following aspects were investigated in the comparative districts:

- the nature and extent of voluntary work undertaken
- the nature and extent of trainee programmes undertaken
- staff experience and views of Project Conservation.

Three districts were chosen as comparative districts. Hauraki and Tainui were chosen on the basis of their proximity to Whangarei and Coromandel to reduce research costs, and on the expectation that they offered contrasting experiences of Project Conservation.

Rakiura, similarly, appeared to provide a different perspective on Project Conservation. Unfortunately, it was not possible to visit Rakiura, but information was obtained from the District Conservator by way of a phone interview and postal questionnaire which sought similar information to that obtained in other areas.

1.4.3 Participants in the Research

To obtain as broad a representation of experience and opinion as possible in each area, the providers (Department of Conservation staff), programme participants (volunteers and trainees), and members of the community were interviewed.

Seven categories of 'actors' in Project Conservation were identified in the pilot areas, and most categories were interviewed in each pilot. These categories are:

Project Conservation coordinator
Controlling Officer for Project Conservation
District Conservator
Other departmental staff involved in Project Conservation
Volunteers
Trainees
Other members of the community

In the comparative districts, District Conservators and other staff involved in Project Conservation activities were interviewed. Staff in Central Office who had been involved in the initial establishment of Project Conservation also provided valuable background information (see Appendix 3 for a list of participants in the study).

1.4.4 The Field Work

In social research, field work involves data collection using a range of methods which put the researcher in direct contact with people as they go about their daily business. This study used the following methods:

- In depth, structured interviews with individuals. These consisted of a set of questions covering key topics.
- Unstructured interviews with individuals. This can best be described as 'conservation with a purpose'. It was used when a formal interview was inappropriate and enabled detailed information on a specific topic to be gathered.
- Group discussions. These were conducted with volunteer and trainee groups. A structured interview schedule was used, but fuller discussion on specific points pertinent to the group was encouraged.
- Observation, particularly used at meetings attended (such as staff meetings and meetings between staff and members of the community).
- Self-administered questionnaire. Because of time constraints, questionnaires were left with some people to fill in and send back to the researcher.
- Telephone interview. Again, because of time constraints, some individuals were interviewed by telephone.

1.5 Contents of the Report

Chapter 2 provides an introduction to Project Conservation, outlining its history and development in each pilot and comparative area, and the parties involved. This raises many aspects and issues concerning Project Conservation which are more closely examined in later chapters.

The next three chapters focus on specific Project Conservation activities. Chapter 3 looks at volunteer activities from the perspectives of both staff and volunteers. Chapter 4 focuses in a similar manner on trainee programmes. Chapter 5 highlights community involvement in Project Conservation, especially that of conservation organisations and tangata whenua. Their involvement is set in the context of community views concerning conservation and the Department.

In Chapter 6 staff evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of Project Conservation are discussed. This chapter brings together issues identified in the preceding chapters concerning volunteer and trainee activities.

Chapter 7 examines the effectiveness of Project Conservation using the criteria of outcome, processes, resources and orientation, as explained in section 2.

The final chapter, chapter 8, comprises a summary of the research findings.

CHAPTER 2

THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING PROJECT CONSERVATION

2.1 The Origins of Project Conservation

From its beginnings, Project Conservation has been perceived as a way of improving the Department's contact with the community in order to foster public involvement in conservation. It is an approach which combines two main objectives:

- the achievement of practical conservation work
- conservation advocacy

In 1988, the Department sought to attain these objectives principally through two channels; voluntary conservation work and government funded training schemes, such as ACCESS.

The use of both strategies to achieve conservation work is, however, not new. The use of volunteers has a long history in the Department's antecedent institutions, the New Zealand Wildlife Service, the Department of Lands and Survey, and the Forest Service. For example, Tongariro National Park staff have run many volunteer schemes over the last twenty years. These have involved a wide range of participants, including school pupils, members of outdoor recreation clubs, overseas visitors and individual members of the public. The variety of work undertaken has included hut and track maintenance, control of lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), hut warden duties, nature interpretation for summer visitors, search and rescue work and ski patrol. Publicly-funded training schemes have also been undertaken in national and forest parks prior to the establishment of the Department of Conservation.

Project Conservation constitutes a different type of initiative to previous ones. This is because it is a conscious attempt to incorporate various aspects of public involvement in conservation work under a coherent organisational and philosophical framework.

Four pilot areas, each with a coordinator, have been set up, and there is a national coordinator to oversee the programme. By August 1988, coordinators had been appointed in Whangarei, Coromandel and Murihiku Districts, in addition to the pilot already running in the West Coast Region. Started in April 1987, the West Coast initiative had had two coordinators by November 1988. In other areas which lack coordinators, the development of Project Conservation is much less formalised, but is generally associated with education programmes.

Project Conservation has been somewhat confused by the idea of a Conservation Corps, mooted in 1986. At that time, the Establishment Unit of the Department of Conservation investigated various options concerning the establishment of a Conservation Corps, but none of the options were taken up. In 1987 Project Conservation replaced the original corps idea, and was developed as a Department of Conservation managed programme. Conservation Corps later surfaced again as an initiative of the Minister of Youth Affairs and Employment.

The Corps was aimed at providing young adults with opportunities for personal development, conservation awareness and skills training through conservation work. Several departments are involved in its operation, including the Department of Conservation.

There continues to be confusion, both among the public and within the Department, over the respective roles and objectives of Project Conservation and Conservation Corps, and the agencies responsible for them. The national coordinator of Project Conservation has provided information to regions and districts defining the differences between the programmes in an attempt to overcome the confusion. Major responsibility for developing Project Conservation has rested with the national coordinator, although she has been assisted in formulating the programme by a small steering group of Central Office staff, consisting of representatives from the Advocacy and Extension, and Recreation, Tourism and Historic Resources Directorates. The Training Unit has also offered comment on the programme.

Choice of the 1988 pilot areas was made by the national coordinator, who identified interested districts through previous contacts.

Reasons given for the selection of pilots included:

- 1) A concern to establish pilots in areas where staff appeared to be receptive to the concept of Project Conservation.
- 2) Limited funding, meaning that only a few pilots could be established.
- 3) The desire to get pilots established as quickly as possible.
- 4) The intention to set up pilots with different approaches.

Murihiku District, with its concern to liaise with the community, was deemed to be a receptive environment in which to develop Project Conservation.

Whangarei District put forward the idea of developing Project Conservation as a partnership between the District Office and tangata whenua, Ngati Wai. The national coordinator regarded this as an opportunity to encourage Maori involvement in conservation work. It was also consonant with her intention to set up pilots with different approaches, in order to assess the merits of each.

Interest of the Thames/Coromandel District Development Council in Conservation Corps led to Coromandel District being considered as a suitable pilot.

In the early stages, Hauraki District was also considered as a pilot. Taking in the greater Auckland area, Hauraki District could target the 'young urban population' in which Project Conservation aims to foster greater conservation awareness. However, since only limited funding was available, and as Hauraki was the last pilot to be considered, it was not included among the 1988 pilots.

Although the national coordinator reported that no criticism had been received from regions or districts about the closed nature of the selection process it would seem appropriate in terms of an equitable and effective allocation of resources that all districts be canvassed if further Project Conservation coordinators are to be appointed.

The concern to establish pilots in areas where staff interest is already known does not take account of the possibility that staff in Central Office may lack information on regional and district views. For example, Tainui District, which participated in the evaluation as a comparative district, was found to have staff keenly interested in Project Conservation. Furthermore, it has run, and plans to run, a number of volunteer activities which are clearly associated with the Project Conservation philosophy. Yet very little was known in Central Office about the use of volunteers in Tainui District, and nothing about its attitudes towards Project Conservation. A 1987 Central Office survey of volunteer programmes in the regions had revealed no activities in Tainui.

Decision-making based solely on Central Office knowledge is likely to restrict the equal opportunity of districts to resources. Limited funding, far from narrowing the options on which a funding decision is made, is justification for surveying the total number of options to ensure that resources are allocated most effectively. Limited time for deciding on the allocation of funds also suggests a need to consult with staff in regions and districts who are experienced in dealing with volunteer and trainee conservation workers.

2.2 Interpretation of Project Conservation

Basic to the implementation of any programme is the interpretation of its central precepts into practical activities. Although regional and district involvement in developing the philosophy and aims of Project Conservation was minimal, it has been largely left to the pilots to interpret Project Conservation and work out ways of achieving its goals.

In order to examine how Project Conservation has been interpreted, the following discussion presents a description of the characteristics and focus of Project Conservation in each pilot and comparative area.

2.2.1 The Pilot Areas

West Coast Region : Trainee Focus

A real commitment to helping Coasters get the best out of the region
and what it has to offer its young people.

(Staff member, West Coast)

West Coast Region is one of the Department's largest regions, stretching from north of Karamea to south of Haast. This results in difficulties for management of the conservation estate which constitutes over 80% of the area and includes conservation values of national importance.

The sheer size of the region affects the coordinator's ability to organise programmes both in response to the needs of the conservation estate and local communities of interest.

The coordinator's job is not only affected by the geography of the area, but also by its economy. The Department of Conservation has a central position in the local economy as it controls a substantial area of land. This very much affects local people's perceptions and expectations of the Department.

West Coast Region is heavily dependent for its livelihood on primary production in agriculture, hunting, fishing, forestry, energy and mining. However, since 1945 production in these sectors has suffered a decline, reflecting the changing nature of New Zealand's economy in which there has been a major shift from primary and manufacturing industries to service industries. In the 1970s and 1980s the corporatisation and restructuring of state activities particularly impacted on the West Coast.

Major consequences of the changing labour market in the West Coast region have been unemployment, depopulation and a loss of services. The West Coast has been a significant loser of population as young adults in particular have moved out in search of work. Consequently, the West Coast has an older age structure than do many regions.

Project Conservation on the West Coast has developed in the context of a depressed local economy where the provision of jobs is a key issue. This is reflected in the pilot's emphasis on training programmes. Since commencing the job in February 1988, up to 80% of the West Coast Coordinator's job has entailed running ACCESS courses (see Figure 1). These courses, of six months' duration, involve a variety of tasks including curriculum planning, consultation with other agencies, drawing up a budget, organisation of venues and equipment, and arranging supervisors and tutors.

The West Coast pilot has emphasised trainee programmes for three main reasons:

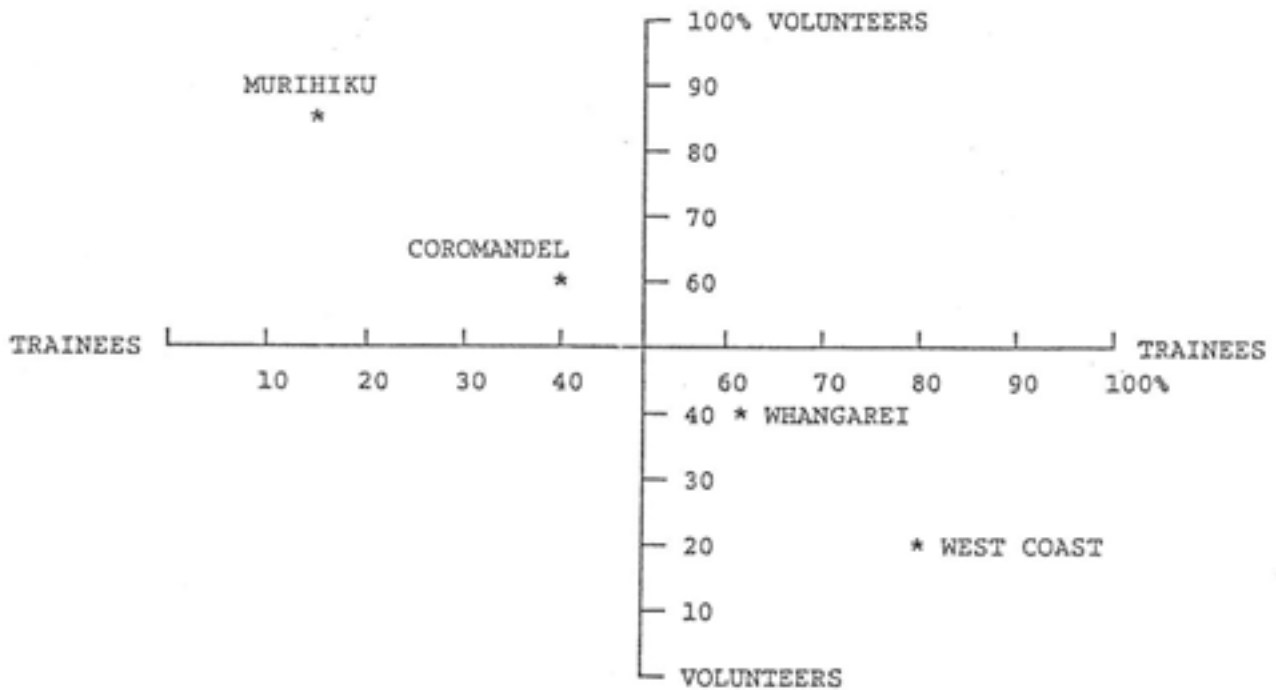
(i) The West Coast's high unemployment rate.

Staff who are developing Project Conservation regard the Department's involvement in publicly-funded training schemes such as ACCESS as essential in fostering good relations with the community. There are local expectations that the Department of Conservation, as a significant government agency in the region, should provide training opportunities, if not actual employment.

(ii) Conservation Advocacy

ACCESS is used as a way of promoting conservation values to a wider audience than solely the committed conservationist. This is especially important in an area such as the West Coast where departmental staff report widespread negative attitudes towards conservation, including an image of the Department as inhibiting the growth of the local economy. Many ACCESS trainees are unfamiliar with the work of the Department and often unsympathetic to conservation values. Yet, through involvement in the ACCESS scheme run by the Department, they are introduced to an alternative explanation of the relationship between human settlement and natural resources on the Coast:

Figure 1: Estimated time spent by coordinators on volunteer and trainee activities¹



¹ This graph compares the time coordinators spent on volunteer activities with that spent on trainee activities, such as ACCESS or Conservation Corps. The percentage of time spent on volunteer activity is represented by the vertical axis, and the percentage of time spent on trainee activities by the horizontal axis. For example, the Murihiku coordinator spends 85% of his time on volunteer activities and 15% on trainee activities.

We're trying to give the other side of the coin ... give people an understanding of the natural environment and what's important about these values ... so that they don't end up just seeing what they can get out of the place. The West Coaster has traditionally had a 'boom and bust' attitude... what we want to get across to them is there's a whole lot of values aside from what you can monetarily gain ... We don't teach in the ACCESS course productive uses. Our courses try to emphasise the ecology and flora and fauna values.

(Staff Member, West Coast Region)

(iii) Limited resources for Project Conservation.

ACCESS funding is a primary source of support for Project Conservation on the West Coast. Not only does it cover running costs for projects, but it also supplies a proportion of the coordinator's wages and fully funds the wages of the "Outdoor Skills" ACCESS training course tutor.

Although advocacy benefits may be derived from running ACCESS courses, the West Coast coordinator voiced concern at the way Project Conservation has increasingly concentrated on ACCESS. In her opinion, this has been to the detriment of developing volunteer activities, such as working holidays.

Previous to this study, working holidays had been a major focus of Project Conservation on the West Coast. In the summer of 1987/88, the region reported a very successful working holiday programme. However, working holidays could not be run on the same scale for the 1988/89 summer season, because districts could neither afford materials, nor staff to supervise.

The coordinator is also concerned that the potential for developing year-round volunteer activities is being inhibited by the dominance of ACCESS. However, at the time of the evaluation, two volunteer groups were active: the Friends of the Ross Walkway and the Ross Cottage group. Both groups, which are located in the small community of Ross about 30 km south of Hokitika, do voluntary work associated with the Ross Goldfields.

The Friends of the Ross Walkway was started in August 1988 by members of an ACCESS group who completed a survey of the Ross Goldfields and made proposals for extending the walkway. The group, who contributes to the maintenance of the walkway, is particularly concerned about mining encroachment in the area. In this case the development of ACCESS programmes has not inhibited volunteer activity, but has helped to foster it.

The Ross Cottage volunteers look after an old pioneer cottage at the entrance of the walkway. Although the cottage was closed down by the Department because of lack of available staff to run it, the group has opened it to the public every day since August 1988. Functioning as an information centre and museum, the cottage is an appropriate focus for visitors to the walkway.

Murihiku District : Conservation Education Focus

Project Conservation is an effective tool for conservation education ... the educational value of projects is the first priority, above the need for the job to be done.

(Comments made at the Murihiku District Staff Meeting)

The most significant local issue in Murihiku District is the rural recession. Since 1984 government policy has provided less assistance for the agricultural sector. Consequently, there has been a fall in farm incomes, rural land prices, and in rural employment opportunities. Like the West Coast region, Southland region has traditionally been dependent on primary industries and is now experiencing the adverse effects of economic restructuring.

Murihiku District staff are aware that some local people believe there is a conflict between conservation and regional development. They have dealt with such views through a strong conservation education approach which is reflected in the way that Project Conservation has been set up.

Project Conservation is widely regarded by staff as a component of the District's conservation education strategy. Most staff are already involved in conservation activities with schools, in addition to their normal operational duties. In order to extend conservation education opportunities, Project Conservation has developed in several directions:

- working holidays)
- activities with schools) volunteers
- one day projects)

- ACCESS) trainees
- Conservation Corps)

At the time of the evaluation, volunteer activities dominated, constituting about 85% of the coordinator's time (see Figure 1). Involvement in trainee programmes was confined to the coordinator formulating proposals with educational institutions. However, since Christmas 1988 a Conservation Corps joint project between Murihiku District and Telford Farm Training Institute has been approved.

At the time of the evaluation, Murihiku District displayed a far greater emphasis on, and a wider scope of volunteer programmes, than any of the other pilot areas. Such variety is a strength of the volunteer programmes. They have the potential to cater for a wide range of ages, interests, and abilities.

Volunteer activities involving schools appear to have been enthusiastically received by both teachers and students. Projects involving the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society members have also been successfully completed. Less successful have been some of the one day programmes, such as weed clearing, which did not attract much public interest.

Although eight volunteer projects were completed from August to November 1988, the biggest effort has gone into organising working holidays for the 1988/89 summer. The holiday project has been modelled on the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) Scheme, which combines work with the opportunity for conservation education and recreation.

Murihiku's working holiday programme differs from those previously run by the Department, in that it requires a donation from those taking part (ranging from \$10 - \$50). Some staff are concerned that this requirement may deter people from participation. However, the coordinator's January 1989 report indicated that advertising the working holidays through a BTCV publication has brought an "avalanche" of replies from Britain. Filling the holidays through advertising in New Zealand appears to have been less successful; for some projects the coordinator has recruited participants through a personal approach to the local Youth Hostel.

The Murihiku coordinator reports that he is satisfied with the large amount of time and effort allocated to volunteer activities as he considers these to be the most important aspect of Project Conservation.

More than any of the other pilots, the Murihiku approach to Project Conservation shows a conscious attempt to incorporate conservation education. For example, this is apparent in the leadership course, which has been set up to train leaders, both staff and individuals from the community, to run volunteer activities.

The course curriculum pays attention to developing interpretation skills and discussing conservation values. Conservation education is also evident in the volunteer activities, through the inclusion of introductory information, explanation of tasks and sessions on conservation topics.

Whangarei District : Bicultural Partnership

There is a mass of taonga out there that has to be watched over by everyone.

(Coordinator, Whangarei)

While the West Coast and Murihiku pilots illustrate two contrasting emphases on volunteers and trainees, Whangarei has an altogether different focus. Neither trainee nor volunteer programmes comprise the main focus of Project Conservation in this district. Instead, achieving partnership between the district office and local iwi, Ngati Wai, is the main goal. In keeping with the aim of joint resource management, the person appointed as coordinator of Project Conservation in Whangarei belongs to Ngati Wai.

In many respects the attempt to develop partnership has grown out of the specific economic and social conditions of Northland, especially its high unemployment rate and substantial Maori population.

Northland, traditionally reliant on primary industry, is now experiencing economic depression as those industries have declined. It has the country's highest unemployment rate; in December 1988 at the time of the evaluation, the unemployment rate in the Whangarei Labour Department District was 19.7% compared to the national average of 11.1% (Department of Labour statistics).

Paradoxically, while Northland's economy has declined, it is one of the country's fastest growing regions in terms of population. In the period 1976 to 1986, the population grew by almost 20% compared with less than 6% nationally (Anderson and Perry, 1988: 61).

Northland has a youthful population structure, having a higher than average percentage in the 0-14 years age group (Royal Commission on Social Policy, 1988: 97). This reflects in part the high fertility levels of the Maori population, who comprise 20-24% of the total Northland population.

Against this background, the development of trainee programmes through Project Conservation has been regarded by Whangarei District staff as a practical illustration of partnership. This is not only because young Maori are a group particularly vulnerable to unemployment, but also because of Ngati Wai interests in management of the conservation estate. Although there is a clear intention to offer Ngati Wai young people the opportunity to gain conservation skills, access to the training schemes are by no means exclusive to Ngati Wai.

At the time of the evaluation, funding had not been approved for a proposed ACCESS scheme, but since then, funding for a training course has been obtained through Conservation Corps.

While the establishment of training programmes has been emphasised in the attempt to develop partnership, a Maori volunteer component is also evident. This has emerged through the coordinator's contact with trainees participating in courses run by the Ngati Wai Trust Board. At the time of the study, the Ngati Wai tourism trainee course had just completed their first trip to Mimiwhangata Coastal Park and were planning another in early December. Their volunteer project is to monitor and clean up plastic pollution. The group has also drawn up suggestions for park management, including possible ways of incorporating tourism.

Another Ngati Wai trainee group plans to do volunteer wild animal control on one of the park's offshore islands. A third group is also interested in joining in volunteer activities at Mimiwhangata.

Apart from the involvement of some Ngati Wai young people in volunteer work, the main focus of volunteer activity has been the volunteer committee. Arising out of a public meeting involving over 30 people, the volunteer committee consists of departmental staff and representatives of a range of local organisations including conservation groups, outdoor recreation clubs, educational institutions, local government, and other community groups. The committee's role is to liaise between the Department and the community in order to develop volunteer projects. The District's education officer has been particularly involved with the Committee.

Coromandel District : Community-based Conservation

The reasons why people live here has a lot to do with conservation.
(Coordinator, Coromandel)

The Coromandel pilot has elements in common with some of the other pilots, but it has developed a distinct style of its own. Physically, Coromandel District has parallels with the West Coast Region, in that both areas have a history of extractive industry; mainly gold mining and forestry. Like the West Coast, Coromandel is also an area whose major attraction is its natural features and opportunities to 'get away from it all'.

The 1988 Heylen study of visitors to the Waikato region found that Coromandel visitors seek an experience of remoteness and isolation. Its appealing qualities are a natural, unspoiled environment and solitude. Water based activities, camping and tramping are most popular. In keeping with its tranquil, unspoiled image, the major concerns of visitors are about possible damage to the natural environment resulting from overcrowding in the holiday season, environmental damage (especially mining) and poor roading (Heylen Research Centre, 1988:8).

However, the respective communities of West Coast and Coromandel are very different. While West Coast staff a prevalent local attitude towards conservation as generally unsupportive, Coromandel staff acknowledge that a section of their community is very committed to conservation. These tend to be tertiary educated people who have made a conscious decision to settle in the area. Some are experienced in lobby group politics and, primarily driven by an anti-mining agenda, are keen to influence management decisions concerning the conservation estate.

Although such a constituency can offer valuable support for the Department's work, they also present challenges in terms of:

- A need for the Department to work out ways of dealing with community input into decision making.
- Maintaining departmental priorities in the face of other conservation interests. This must involve directing volunteer enthusiasm as it is most appropriate to the Department's requirements.
- Staff ability to deal with volunteers who are knowledgeable about conservation, who are members of potentially influential conservation organisations and have high expectations of the Department.

Given the local 'politics of conservation', it is understandable that the strongest aspect of Project Conservation to develop in Coromandel District so far, is the establishment of local groups to care for resources in their own areas. In common with Murihiku District, Project Conservation in Coromandel has originated with a volunteer emphasis. Its philosophy is to encourage local people to actively take responsibility for care of the conservation estate:

We need to make them feel as if they belong; to identify with the resource... to nurture groups and to get them to do their own thing - conservation is not the sole responsibility of, nor unique to the Department.

(District Conservator, Coromandel)

We need to educate people ... to encourage people to make wise decisions about their resources... the community provides the eyes and ears of conservation. DOC staff can't be everywhere.

(Staff Member, Coromandel)

Five "Friends of..." groups have been set up, covering all areas of the district. These are, from north to south: Moehau Group, Kuaotunu/Otama Group, Purangi/Cook's Beach Group, Kauaeranga Group and Waihi Group. Their activities have included track maintenance, nursery work, beach clean up, weed clearing, work on historic reserves and assistance with summer holiday programmes. The coordinator has noted that the groups take a lot of time to set up and need continual support:

I am trying to encourage them to develop local strategies and visions while keeping them realistic and aware of what is appropriate from DOC's point of view.

Close liaison and effective communication between District staff and the groups is essential to make the concept work. As well as the group activities, the coordinator has been developing volunteer projects in conjunction with educational and health institutions. She has worked with schools in activities such as cleaning up plastic debris from beaches, tree planting, and poetry and art competitions.

Contact with the Community Health Service of the Thames Hospital Board has resulted in the idea of using the conservation estate as a healing environment; as an opportunity for those who are stressed to experience physical and spiritual renewal. Together with community health workers, the coordinator has been looking at strategies for getting the economically and socially disadvantaged and people with disabilities, out into the parks.

At the time of the evaluation, the most apparent achievements in the Coromandel pilot were in voluntary activities. However, the coordinator also spent considerable time designing a Conservation Corps proposal, which necessitated liaison with tangata whenua. She also contributed a conservation perspective to courses run by other agencies.

2.2.2 The Comparative Districts

Hauraki District : Volunteers in the Maritime Park

We are here because of these islands.

(Conservation Officer, Hauraki)

Auckland, the nucleus of Hauraki District, is the dominant centre of population in New Zealand. In the 1980s it experienced the largest population increase of all regions, a trend which is expected to continue. Currently metropolitan Auckland comprises about 27% of the

total population, and by 2011 is projected to have 29.1%. (Demographic Trends, 1988: 151).

Auckland is also a principal manufacturing centre, which along with service sector industries such as community, social, personal, finance and business services, provides important sources of employment. Auckland's business and finance services make up one third of the total New Zealand workforce in this sector (Milne, 1988:4). The fact that Auckland is a major industrial and service centre means that potentially there are many resources to be tapped to assist in the development of Project Conservation.

Another important social characteristic that has implications for Project Conservation is the ethnic composition of the population. Metropolitan Auckland has been and continues to be a significant destination for NZ Maori and Pacific Island Polynesians. Sixty-five percent of Pacific Island Polynesians in New Zealand live in Auckland (Population Monitoring Group, 1986: 45).

Both these populations are more youthful in age structure than the non-Polynesian population and are expected to increase more rapidly over the next 15-20 years. The Department must acknowledge the growing significance of these population groups in Auckland for its advocacy and conservation education work.

Like Murihiku and Coromandel, Hauraki strongly emphasises volunteers in the way it has interpreted Project Conservation. This emphasis not only reflects prior experience with volunteer projects, but also two geographical features of the District:

- the large centre of population from which to draw volunteers. All the other areas studied, with the exception of Tainui, draw on small centres of population. Auckland not only has a number of conservation organisations, but also many service organisations and recreation clubs.
- The District looks after the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park, a significant recreational resource incorporating reserves of considerable conservation value. The District therefore has a strong coastal recreation focus to its work. Most of the District's volunteer work has occurred in the Maritime Park, particularly on the islands of Tiritiri Matangi and Motutapu.

Although considered for pilot Project Conservation status, did not obtain funding. Nevertheless, current volunteer activities form a sound basis for the development of Project Conservation in this District.

During the past five years volunteers have made a significant contribution to the restoration and protection of Tiritiri Matangi Island, including 90% of the work associated with planting, upgrading tracks and establishing rare and endangered species of birds and plants. Tiritiri Matangi also generates revenue. Volunteers pay about \$14 each to visit the island, which covers transport and some nursery costs. In addition, \$15,000 worth of souvenirs have been sold.

In October 1988, the "Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi" was set up to supply financial assistance for voluntary work. At the time of the study, less than 2 months after the group's

establishment, there were 100 members. Although their main activity is expected to be fundraising, the supporters' group may also do some physical work on the island. A District staff member acts as liaison between the group and the Department.

Another supporters' group has been in operation for a longer period, this is the "Associates of the Park". Many people who have worked on Tiritiri Matangi join the group and receive a newsletter of events happening in the Maritime Park. In this way, the newsletter is a major means of making contact with volunteers. However, two staff members commented that this group is not functioning effectively, because staff are unable to put effort into sustaining the group, owing to other work commitments.

On Motutapu Island an outdoor education camp has been renovated, mainly due to volunteer effort. Over half a million dollars was raised by supporters to carry out this project. Both Tiritiri Matangi and Motutapu are good examples of volunteers achieving work that would not otherwise have been done. The schemes also show the considerable financial contributions that members of the public have made to conservation work.

Despite the voluntary work already achieved, the potential for involving volunteers is not being realised. Many individuals write to the Hauraki District Office offering to do volunteer work. One staff member estimated there is a letter and at least one telephone enquiry per day concerning volunteer work. At present there are neither staff nor mechanisms to deal with requests and to ensure that the most appropriate use is made of the skills available:

The staff are overloaded, burnt out. We would be nervous about putting more duties on to staff.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

The location of volunteer projects in the Maritime Park also means there are high costs associated with transport, as well as costs incurred for materials. Donations made by the public go some way towards covering these costs, but cannot be expected to provide total funding.

In contrast to staff commitment to the worth of encouraging volunteer programmes, they were much less enthusiastic about trainee schemes. ACCESS was seen to involve such problems as supervision, motivation of trainees and quality of work. However, some support for Conservation Corps was evident.

Tainui District : Volunteer Focus

The greatest benefit is to get the community to work alongside.

(Conservation Officer, Tainui)

Tainui differs from several of the other districts in the study because it includes major centres of population and therefore has a large population to draw on for voluntary work. Tainui is also

different because, with the exception of mining and energy, it is much less reliant on primary industry than most of the other areas. In this respect, Tainui is more like Hauraki than any of the other districts.

Despite its urban emphasis, Tainui nevertheless looks after some unique aspects of the conservation estate including key wetland areas.

In common with several other districts, Tainui staff consider that the primary objective of Project Conservation is to promote volunteer activity. They emphasise that it is imperative to get the community involved in conservation, both to generate support for the Department and to care for the resource.

The District has undertaken several volunteer activities in 1988:

- a) A kokako survey in Pirongia Forest Park involved about 12 members of the Ornithological Society and District staff. Kokako were found, and the group intends to survey further areas of the park.
- b) "Friends of Tainui" is a scheme involving about 60 volunteers living in isolated communities. They keep an eye on reserves and coastal areas, look out for fires and watch for whale strandings. Covering areas where there are no District staff, these volunteers have an especially important watchdog role.
- c) A litter survey at Port Waikato.
- d) Tree planting by schools.

The integration of volunteer work with conservation education is developing as a feature of Tainui District's Nature Activities programme. An all year round programme, activities combine volunteer conservation work with interpretation.

While staff appear to be strongly committed to fostering volunteer activities, they show little interest in trainee programmes. Comments include: "ACCESS has no role..."; "there are various problems...."; "the work able to be done by trainees is limited", and, "we can't deal with Conservation Corps on top of everything else".

Rakiura District : Project Conservation in a Remote Area

New Zealand has become an urban based people. Conservation is normally associated with the rural areas; however, it is vitally affected by urban demands for food, resources, recreation etc. Therefore we must educate and involve our city dwellers in conservation.

(District Conservator, Rakiura)

Stewart Island, the location of Rakiura District, has an estimated population of 540 people and one of the lowest population densities in New Zealand (Department of Statistics, 1988:112).

It is an area of considerable conservation values, being a major habitat for kiwi and site of the kakapo preservation project. Recreation and tourism are significant for the local economy; around 21,000 people visit each year, many of them overseas visitors (Blanchard, 1989).

Rakiura District has a long tradition of using volunteers, especially in wildlife work. Volunteers have been involved in bird counts, pest eradication, user surveys and coastal surveys, as well as track maintenance. Each project has involved from 1-10 people and some have gone on for several years, being previously conducted under Wildlife Service and Forest Service. Currently volunteers are involved in research on kokako and dotterel.

Most of the work undertaken by volunteers has required people skilled in a range of tasks. The work has been of considerable value to the Department. The District Conservator estimates that over the years, voluntary work done on Codfish Island, for example, has been worth as much as \$1.5M.

Owing to budget constraints, Rakiura District has planned few volunteer projects for the future. However, one or two volunteers will be working on Codfish Island. The island is, in the view of the District Conservator, one of the prime natural resources in New Zealand, but the District is unable to place a staff member on the island.

The District Conservator reports that, at present, there are few plans for developing Project Conservation in Rakiura, because of a lack of available resources. Several factors increase the costs associated with both volunteer work and trainee schemes in the District:

- Transport costs, as the District is remote from population centres. Inevitably, only those who can afford to travel will be able to participate.
- Transport costs to work sites. Most work would be in remote field operations.
- No permanent accommodation for work crews. There is only a limited period of the year when tents can be used.
- Not enough staff to organise and supervise programmes.

The District Conservator's comments reveal a potential conflict for managers; this is between the development of Project Conservation, and the responsibility for ongoing operations. For a District with limited resources, the money allocated to Project Conservation may be regarded as more effectively and efficiently used in employing skilled, experienced field staff. Project Conservation's aim to encourage the participation of people from a variety of social backgrounds in conservation work sometimes does not fit with managers' requirements for tangible outputs.

2.2.3 Summary

In the pilot areas four different 'models' of Project Conservation have developed. This is due to the contribution of factors external to Project Conservation, such as local conditions of the community and the natural environment, the level of community support and availability of resources. Added to this are important internal factors affecting the nature and direction of

Project Conservation, such as the ideals, interests and characteristics of staff, volunteers and trainees, and the methods chosen to carry out programmes.

The areas differ in their respective emphases on volunteer and trainee activities. Because of the length of time in which Project Conservation has been operating in the West Coast Region, only this region has been able to develop trainee programmes. However, Whangarei in particular, and Coromandel and Murihiku to a lesser extent, appear to be committed to trainee programmes as a major component of Project Conservation and have plans for their development.

In the comparative areas little support for trainee programmes was found. Their interpretation of Project Conservation differs most strongly from that of the pilot areas on this point.

2.3 Who is involved in Project Conservation

A wide variety of people, both within and outside of the Department, are involved in Project Conservation. The following discussion describes the contributions of

- coordinators
- other departmental staff
- volunteers
- trainees
- other community members (not involved in a volunteer or trainee capacity).

2.3.1 Coordinators

Skills of coordinators

Each coordinator brings different skills and approaches to the job, although there are similarities in that they tend to have had previous experience working with volunteers and trainees, and a commitment to conservation.

The West Coast coordinator, the only one to step into an ongoing Project Conservation programme, has experience in transition education (job training). She is a member of the local branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

The Murihiku coordinator also has an educational background, and has worked with both trainees and volunteers. As well as being a member of several conservation organisations in New Zealand he has worked with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

The Coromandel coordinator has considerable experience in conservation organisations, particularly on the Coromandel Peninsula. Her experience in these local networks was an important factor in her obtaining the job.

Although the Whangarei coordinator differs from the other coordinators, in that he has not been extensively involved in conservation organisations, he has worked with volunteers and trainees. This includes directing a tourism trainee programme in Hawaii. His affiliation with local iwi has been crucial for the development of Project Conservation in Whangarei District as an exercise in partnership.

Coordinators' understandings of their role

There are strong similarities in the way that the coordinators have defined their roles. All identified three components as central to their work:

- liaison between the Department and the community
- promotion of Project Conservation in the community
- promotion of Project Conservation among staff.

Only the Whangarei coordinator defined his role as including the promotion of bicultural activities. He was also the only coordinator to explicitly identify a management component to his role.

The Coromandel and West Coast coordinators report that they have taken on roles in addition to the ones typically associated with Project Conservation. The first concerns conservation education activities in schools. While there is an important and appropriate overlap between conservation education and Project Conservation, some school activities may not fulfil Project Conservation goals. This depends on whether the achievement of practical conservation work is considered to be an essential component of all Project Conservation activity.

The West Coast coordinator has also provided informal counselling to trainees whose personal and social problems surface in the course of a project. This type of trainee need may easily be overlooked, but by definition, those selected for trainee programmes are often lacking in social, educational and personal skills. They may need referral for professional assistance and so it is important that staff working with trainees are prepared for dealing with such matters.

Effects of the job on coordinators

All coordinators reported that the effects of the job on them personally had been mostly positive. They regarded the work as a challenge, and for some it has been an important opportunity to increase their contribution to conservation:

I have done a lot as a volunteer myself and it's great that I am being paid ... it's given me the opportunity to do the job the way I think it should be done.

(Coordinator, Murihiku)

It's been very heartening to see how much practical support for conservation there is in this District ... It's been good to be able to address wider conservation issues.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

However, some frustrations were voiced. The West Coast coordinator has found the job difficult because of its scope. The brief for Project Conservation is a broad one, comprising many different activities such as voluntary work, trainee courses, conservation education activities, public relations and liaison with community groups and institutions. These activities demand from coordinators a range of administrative, management and organisational skills. For the West Coast coordinator, her job is further complicated by the size of the area she is required to service. Although having the largest area, this coordinator was also the lowest paid at the time of the evaluation.

The Whangarei coordinator also raised a couple of problems. On occasions he has felt that he is not fully included in District decisions about Project Conservation. In contrast, other coordinators state they have had quite a degree of autonomy in developing Project Conservation.

The Whangarei coordinator also outlined the problems associated with a six month job. Not only does he consider this period inadequate to develop Project Conservation, but it also provides no job security, making long term personal planning difficult.

The coordinators experience some differences in working conditions (see Table 1). While all coordinators are employed as temporary staff on wages, there are discrepancies both in hours per week worked and in wage rates.

Variation in terms of part-time or full-time work is explained by special arrangements. For example, Coromandel District decided to spread funding for the coordinator's wages over a longer period than six months, and so she has been working less than full time. The Murihiku coordinator has chosen to work part-time to fit in with family responsibilities.

Differences in pay are less easily explained. If all coordinators have been employed to do the same type of job and have similar responsibilities, then wage rates should be standardised. It should be noted that since the evaluation was conducted, the West Coast coordinator's pay rate has been improved.

Suggested changes

Coordinators identified changes which would help them to do their job more effectively. Some changes are specific to the organisation of Project Conservation, and include:

- improvement in communication among staff
- improved decision making processes.
- greater job security
- decrease in scope of Project Conservation and area of operation.

Other suggested changes related to the overall direction of the Department. These included the formulation of District management plans and speedy completion of restructuring.

Views of other staff concerning the coordinator position

The Coordinator is a most important resource for the effective development of Project Conservation. This is illustrated especially by the experience of the comparative districts, where several staff considered it would be an advantage to have a person with primary responsibility for Project Conservation. It means having someone working on the programme full time, instead of staff attempting to fit such activities around other tasks. Since Project Conservation has a wide brief, it is useful to have one staff member managing and coordinating diverse aspects, so that a common direction is achieved. Some staff identified the coordinator as an obvious asset for public relations, in handling information about Project Conservation from the public, and in providing a departmental presence among local organisations.

Table 1: Comparison of Coordinators' Working Conditions

Area	Job Characteristics ¹		
	Rate of pay per hour (\$)	Hours per week	Months in job
West Coast	12.05	40	10
Murihiku	15.00	20 ²	6
Whangarei	13.889	40	4
Coromandel	15.293	8 ³	6

1 As at December 1988.

2 Works part-time by choice

3 On 2 days per fortnight to stretch out remaining funding for coordinator's wages.

However, some staff in comparative districts were ambivalent about having a coordinator. Usually, their reservations did not relate to the philosophy of Project Conservation, but they perceived extra pressures may be put on staff to be involved in Project Conservation activities if a coordinator were appointed. Such comments highlight the connections between the successful development of the programme and the availability of resources.

2.3.2 Other Departmental Staff

The nature and extent of staff involvement

In the pilot areas a broad range of staff contribute to Project Conservation in a variety of ways. Staff directly involved include all levels from wage workers to District Conservators. As an indicator of the priority placed on Project Conservation, senior staff in all areas work closely with the coordinator. Staff involvement ranges from planning projects, to acting as supervisors and tutors.

There is also considerable staff involvement in the comparative areas. Most of Tainui District's employees participate in a variety of ways, including organising activities, supervision and interpretation. District reports about seven staff involved, mainly in supervising volunteers. In Rakiura District the District Conservator and one Conservation Officer have been involved in planning Project Conservation activities and acting as leaders for a Murihiku District working holiday.

All coordinators in the pilot areas consider that support from staff is essential in order to run Project Conservation.

Staff responses to Project Conservation

Coordinators report that, on the whole, staff have responded favourably to Project Conservation. The most positive response seems to have been in Murihiku District where Project Conservation is providing a focus for conservation education activities already being developed.

The ambivalence of some staff to Project Conservation was also noted by coordinators.

I've found that people have been pretty cooperative. Some people have been a bit worried about dealing with ACCESS trainees ... sometimes [Project Conservation] is regarded as a bit of a nuisance.

(Coordinator, West Coast)

They've responded very, very well. But some are wondering what's going on. Maybe we're not doing enough ... The workers, they're saying to me, 'what's this Project Conservation?' ... are you really getting somebody to do our jobs?'... There's a bit of training [needed] all round ... there's general education for everybody [needed].

(Coordinator, Whangarei)

One has been really enthusiastic because he comes from a wildlife background and he's worked, a lot with volunteers before so he's really committed to it ... another has been keen to see what can be generated in his area... The District Conservator has said we're right behind this programme ... I think some of the other staff have found it is really hard to understand what the point of it is and have felt a bit threatened by it ... that groups might get carried away without proper organisation or liaison with DOC.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

These comments illustrate that staff require information and education about Project conservation. This point is further emphasised by staff in two of the comparative districts:

There's been general ignorance regarding what it's all about ... there is that union business.

(Staff member, Tainui)

The strongest concern is from wage workers. They feel they're being replaced by volunteers.

(Staff member, Tainui)

It creates confusion DOC staff don't understand clearly ... generally staff support the concept, but some staff are in two minds about it. They're nervous about the use of volunteers to do work that should be done by permanent people.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

Staff in comparative areas also pointed out that some employees have been concerned about the extra work generated by Project Conservation.

On the whole staff are quite supportive but it's an additional burden on free time in the weekends.

(Staff member, Tainui)

They are generally supportive but nervous because of other pressures ... all of our staff are interested but they are so overloaded at district level with such a wide variety of work, often when they go and talk to groups and take them on a trip, they are literally doing it in their own time because there isn't enough time.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

Other staff in comparative districts raised concerns about the quality of work able to be done by volunteers. There was a feeling that money spent on Project Conservation would be wasted if a reasonable standard of work was not achieved.

In order for Project Conservation to succeed, it must have the support of staff at all levels. They must not only be adequately briefed about their roles and that of the coordinator in Project Conservation, but their concerns about such matters as extra workloads, the type of work

expected from volunteers, and volunteers replacing permanent staff, need to be adequately discussed and as far as possible resolved.

2.3.3 Volunteers

General characteristics of volunteers

There are few studies on who does voluntary work, although a national overview has recently been provided by the 1986 Census statistics. These show that participation in voluntary work depends on a variety of factors, such as age, ethnicity and sex.

Age is an important indicator of engagement in voluntary activity because it is associated with other social roles, peer group interests and health factors. Most people who do voluntary work are between 30 and 50 years of age. In contrast, the participation of young people in the 15 to 19 age group is very low, under 10% (Social Monitoring Group, 1988:80). The lack of young people's involvement in volunteer activities raises a challenge for Project Conservation, which aims to attract this group. Information on Project Conservation volunteers gained from study of the four pilots shows that school children have been well represented in volunteer activities, but it has been more difficult to attract young adults.

Some staff would also like to encourage older people's participation in Project Conservation, because they regard this group as having valuable as well as and the time to give to voluntary work. Very little is known about the participation of older people in voluntary work. In the 1986 Census most people over 60 years of age recorded no participation in voluntary work. (Social Monitoring Group, 1988:118), but the reasons for this are unknown. Perhaps the type of work available does not cater for the requirements, abilities and interests of this age group.

The pattern of Maori activity in voluntary work differs from that of non-Maori, both in the type of voluntary work undertaken, and the age of volunteers. Maori people are particularly involved in doing voluntary work for other relatives and members of their tribal group. Their involvement tends to increase as they get older and take on more community responsibilities (Social Monitoring Group, 1988:102). The strong association of Maori people's voluntary work with kin, tribe and community must be acknowledged when planning Project Conservation activities involving Maori people.

Very few of the volunteers interviewed for the evaluation identified as Maori. The Murihiku 1988/89 Summer Working Holiday programme also attracted very few; only 2 of 64 participants surveyed.

Men and women more or less equally participate in voluntary work -16% of women and 17% of men (Social Monitoring Group, 1989: 79) - but the nature and type of voluntary work they do differs. Men tend to be more involved than women in voluntary activities concerned with administration and policy, while women are over-represented in service delivery activities (Social Advisory Council, 1987: 13).

A 1987 study of volunteers working in government departments showed that the sex profile of the volunteer labourforce was similar to that of the Departments' paid labourforce (Social Advisory Council, 1987:20). For example, 79% of volunteer workers for the Social Welfare Department were women, compared to only 40% in Agriculture and Fisheries. These

percentages suggest that consciously or unconsciously volunteers have been selected on the basis of what people understand to be 'appropriate' jobs for men and women, as well as volunteers' personal characteristics and skills.

This tendency, although noted in government departments prior to the establishment of the Department of Conservation, has implications for its selection of volunteers, as the Department has a far larger percentage of male than female employees. As at the end of March 1989, 30% of the Department's staff were women. Much of the Department's field work, too, in requiring manual skills, bush craft and trades skills may be seen as traditionally more appropriate for men than for women.

However, the evaluation indicates that women are so far well represented in Project Conservation (see Appendix 4). This is supported by figures from Murihiku, where just under half the participants in the 1988/89 Summer Holiday programme were women. The even representation of women may be partly explained by the nature of Project Conservation, which is strongly community-oriented, and encouraging of family participation. It should be noted that a survey of a large number of conservation volunteers would be required to provide an accurate assessment of the percentage of women volunteers and a comparison with the sex ratio of the paid departmental labour force.

Two types of Project Conservation volunteer

The evaluation revealed two distinct categories of volunteers participating in Project Conservation differing in terms of social and personal characteristics. One category displays the following characteristics (not all individuals necessarily have all characteristics):

- a strong interest in conservation
- membership of conservation organisations
- membership of outdoor recreation involvement in voluntary conservation work
- previous involvement in other types of voluntary work.

This type of conservation volunteer may be described as a 'committed' conservation volunteer. It is not surprising that volunteers with these characteristics are attracted to Project Conservation. Estate users and members of conservation organisations are an expected source of volunteers because they already have an interest in conservation and possibly relevant experience in practical conservation work. They will be interested in Project Conservation because of their existing concerns about conservation issues.

Such volunteers may already have a relationship with the Department, as estate user or conservation group member. The addition of the role of volunteer worker to an existing role changes the nature of the individual's relationship with the Department.

Firstly, such volunteers have an interest in seeing that the voluntary work they do is useful from their perspective as an estate user or a member of a conservation organisation. Their interests as recipients of the service affect the way they wish to carry out their volunteer role in producing that service.

Secondly, these volunteers may consider they have specialist expertise and expect this to be used appropriately by the Department. Thirdly, because they are helping out the Department, such volunteers may expect the Department to consider their interests as users, or conservation group members when developing policy. In other words, they may expect to benefit in various ways from their volunteer role.

As well as the 'committed conservationist' type of volunteer, the study revealed a second group of volunteers. Characteristics associated with this group were as follows:

- little or no previous exposure to conservation issues
- not a member of a conservation organisation
- not a regular estate user nor member of outdoor recreation club
- no previous experience of volunteer conservation work
- no previous participation in other types of voluntary work.

These people can be described as 'newcomers' to voluntary conservation work. Unlike 'committed' conservation volunteers, who are personally motivated to participate in Project Conservation because of their interests in conservation, the 'newcomer' has been 'pulled' into Project Conservation, usually through the initiative of others. For example, some Project Conservation activities are aimed at involving school children who are consequently drawn in through teachers and departmental staff. Their continuing involvement may lapse without the guiding influence of adults. Similarly, Project Conservation coordinators have been instrumental in encouraging ACCESS trainees to develop volunteer projects. Another example of volunteers who are newcomers to conservation work is the West Coast Ross Cottage group. Consisting of retired residents of Ross community, the group was started by one person who was active in conservation work and community service locally.

The two categories of volunteers - committed conservationists and newcomers - differ substantially in terms of:

- exposure to conservation issues
- expectations of the Department's performance with regard to conservation matters
- skills and knowledge relevant to conservation
- perceptions of their contribution to the Department and how it can be used.

Such differences have implications for the Department's way of dealing with volunteers. The committed conservationist volunteers, who may directly benefit from volunteer work, are likely to express interest in contributing to policy development in addition to doing practical conservation work. They are likely to be highly motivated and their interest more likely to be sustained if the experience is challenging. However, the newcomers also need to feel that what they are doing is worthwhile. For example, the Mimiwhangata group have enthusiastically submitted suggestions on management of the Mimiwhangata Coastal reserve area.

Discussion of policy and management matters is helpful in getting volunteers of all types to identify with the organisation, and thus helps to ensure the success of practical conservation work. Such discussions also help volunteers to understand why the work is important.

Acknowledging the different types of volunteers involved in Project Conservation is also important in designing the conservation education components of programmes. The newcomer, knowing very little about the philosophy and practice of conservation, will require a different educational approach than the more informed and more experienced volunteer.

The strategies devised to attract and retain volunteers should also reflect the different characteristics, motivations and expectations of the committed as compared to the newcomer volunteers. Unlike the committed conservationist volunteer, the newcomer volunteer will not be reached through visible organisations of interest, such as outdoor recreation clubs and conservation groups. There is no 'ready made' point of contact. Therefore, special effort is required to raise the interest of those not usually associated with conservation activities. This may be achieved by working through local institutions and organisations.

The newcomer volunteer is particularly important for the success of Project Conservation, because attraction and retention of these individuals will show that the programme is reaching beyond the pool of 'natural' volunteers. The inclusion of the committed conservationist volunteer in Project Conservation certainly assists the achievement of Goal II (strengthening links with conservation organisations), but it is not central to the achievement of Goal III which identifies a broader audience for conservation. In order to be successful in encouraging a wide range of people to experience the values of the natural environment, the Department needs to attract the newcomer type of volunteer.

2.3.4 Trainees

The term 'trainee' refers to individuals who are members of government training schemes geared to preparing people for the labourforce. The scheme to which all trainees in this study belong is ACCESS.

ACCESS training programmes are included in Project Conservation under Goal IV. The trainee component of Project Conservation is further expanded by proposed Conservation Corps activities. However, Conservation Corps differs from the work skills oriented programmes such as ACCESS. Its aims are broader, encompassing not only the acquisition of work skills, but also personal development, community and conservation ideals.

Because no Conservation Corps scheme was underway at the time of the evaluation only ACCESS trainees were interviewed. The investigation of trainee programmes was further limited because only one pilot area, West Coast, was running a training scheme during the evaluation, although other pilot areas were planning ACCESS or Conservation Corps schemes. Consequently, the discussion of trainee activities in Chapter 4 focuses on the experience of West Coast staff and trainees.

The Project Conservation ACCESS scheme in the West Coast Region needs to be understood in the context of unemployment in the area. The West Coast REAC¹ was allocated \$4.44M in ACCESS scheme funding for the financial year 1 April 1988 to 31 March 1989. Funding is provided on the basis of regional unemployment figures, and the West Coast region has a

higher than average unemployment rate. At the time of the study the unemployment rate, obtained from Greymouth Labour Department District Office Statistics, was 13.8%. This was almost 3% higher than the national average of 11.1%.

In the West Coast REAC area, just over half the ACCESS trainees are under 25 years of age (Department of Labour Statistics). However, because of the ethnic composition of the region, fewer Maori and Pacific Island Polynesians are unemployed in the West Coast area than in the country as a whole. In the West Coast REAC area, Maori constitute 17% of ACCESS trainees, and Pakeha 76%. Five percent are described as Maori/Pakeha. The remainder belong to Pacific Island or other ethnic groups.

The six trainees who participated in the evaluation conformed to the general profile of ACCESS trainees on the West Coast. All were in their late teens to early 20's and most identified themselves as Pakeha. All were long term unemployed; that is, they had been out of work for at least six months. Some had been unemployed since leaving school. Only one had any tertiary training. The REAC statistics show that the highest educational attainment of 71% of ACCESS trainees on the West Coast is three years secondary education.

ACCESS trainees tend to be young and lacking in educational qualifications and job skills. These characteristics have implications for the Department's development of trainee programmes under Project Conservation. Many staff are already well aware that trainees require quite a different treatment than volunteers, both in terms of their supervision and training. This has implications for staff ability to effectively run training courses. Staff need to be provided with the appropriate skills and information to deal with people who, for complex reasons, may lack motivation and the personal and social skills required to work cooperatively and productively with others.

2.3.5 Other Community Support

Community involvement in Project Conservation is by no means confined to volunteers and trainees, but includes people in many local institutions and organisations who were not able to be contacted during the study. However, some members of the community have been included; these are individuals whose contribution to Project Conservation is primarily an advisory or organisational one, rather than through practical conservation work. They are also volunteers, in that they do work for Project Conservation without financial compensation. Three people who contribute to Project Conservation in this way were interviewed. They are:

- (1) A secondary school teacher who helps the Murihiku coordinator organise activities for school pupils.
- (2) A member of the Whangarei Volunteer Committee, who considers her role is to coordinate and liaise between local groups and the Department.

¹ REAC stands for Regional Employment and ACCESS Council.

- (3) A community health development worker in Thames who has assisted the Coromandel coordinator in planning projects and acts as a liaison with local health services.

In addition, a West Coast Region staff member was interviewed about his involvement in Project Conservation as a member of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. His main role has been to formulate with other departmental staff voluntary projects that Forest and Bird members can undertake on the conservation estate. It should also be noted that the volunteer leader who was interviewed in Murihiku District has contributed to Project Conservation not simply through voluntary work, but also in helping to devise projects.

These advisers from the community are important to the success of Project Conservation for the following reasons:

- their organisational skills
- their knowledge of the community
- their contact with local groups and institutions
- they can provide the Department with feedback about local views on departmental activity.

In addition to the contributions of such individuals, the evaluation revealed many sources of support from local groups and institutions, ranging from financial and advisory, to the provision of materials and equipment (see Table 2). Right from the conception to the completion of a project, the coordinator relies on a variety of community and institutional supports, without which it would be almost impossible to carry out an activity.

Sometimes members of large institutions which engage in community-oriented activities tend to think that communities lack initiative, skills or other assets which would enable them to run programmes. There is a certain amount of this thinking among departmental staff, particularly with regard to the abilities of volunteers and trainees. But other staff acknowledge that there are considerable sources of support within the community for Project Conservation. Table 2 shows that while Project Conservation has received important resources from District Offices and some support from Central Office, it is also reliant on obtaining resources from within the community.

Eleven different types of organisations have been involved in planning Project Conservation activities including educational institutions, conservation groups, private business and tangata whenua groups. Financial support has been received from organisations such as private business, polytechnics, and REAC, and also from volunteers and trainees. Supervisors have been supplied by local government, volunteers and tangata whenua. In one area, West Coast, REAC provided tutor training. Materials have been donated by conservation organisations in Murihiku District, and by local government and volunteers in Coromandel.

Table 2: Sources of Support for Project Conservation in the Four Pilot Areas by Type of Support

Source	Financial	Planning	Type of Support Supervisors	Staff Training	Materials	Accom/ Facilities	Transport	Tools/ Equipment	Administration
Own DOC District	* 4	4	4		4	1	4	4	4
DOC Central	4			2					
Other DOC District			1			1			
R.E.A.C.	1	1		1					
Conservation Organisation		4			1	1			
Community Organisation		2							
Private Business	1	1							
S.O.E.		1							
Other govt department									
Education Institutions									
- schools		2							
- polytech	1	2							
- R.E.A.P.		1							
Local Government									
Volunteers	2	1	1				1	1	1
Community (individuals)									
Tangata whenua	2	1							
ACCESS Group	1	1							

* Numbers refer to the number of pilot areas mentioning the source of support.
For example, '4' indicates that all pilot areas have received this type of support.

1. R.E.A.P. stands for Rural Education Action Programme.

Several groups have provided accommodation or other facilities, including the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, runholders and local government in Murihiku, and tangata whenua in Whangarei. Local government bodies have helped out with transport (as have private individuals), and with tools and equipment. In Whangarei, the volunteer committee and tangata whenua have assisted with administration.

Evidence of a broad base of community support was not only found in the pilot areas, but also in the comparative districts. In Hauraki District, a fundraising group has been established to support voluntary work on Tiritiri Matangi Island. The staff member concerned with this group is also closely associated with gaining business sponsorship to fund volunteer projects. As part of Project Conservation, Tainui is developing a network of volunteers spread throughout the district. Their job is to provide information on the state of reserves in their areas and to respond to emergencies.

Generating a broad base of community support is necessary to the success of Project conservation activities and an excellent way of advocating conservation. But along with encouraging community involvement, the Department must be prepared to accommodate their visions for Project Conservation. Furthermore, it must make sure that activities undertaken have adequate backing to succeed, so that members of the community feel their contributions have been worthwhile.

Further discussion on the relationship between the Department and local institutions and organisations is provided in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 3

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMES

3.1 Introduction

The volunteer dimension of Project Conservation is a basic component of its philosophy and crucial to its success. In all pilot areas and comparative districts, the development of volunteer activities are regarded as high priority.

However, respective coordinators have devoted different amounts of time to volunteer activities. *As* a measure of the emphasis placed as volunteer projects the Murihiku coordinator estimates that he has spent about 85% of his time on those activities. In contrast, the West Coast coordinator has spent about 25% of her time. The Whangarei coordinator has spent over 40% of his time on volunteer activities and, in addition, other district staff have worked on developing the volunteer component of Project Conservation : Tai Tokerau. The coordinator has spent around 60% of her time on fostering volunteer activity (see Figure 1, Chapter 2).

The first section in this chapter deals with the question of recruitment of volunteers. Following that, staff assessment of the positive and negative aspects of volunteer programmes are discussed. The final section assesses Project Conservation from the perspective of the volunteers.

3.2 Volunteer recruitment

Recruitment, in the sense of simply obtaining numbers of volunteers, is not a problem in any of the areas studied. Currently, the number of volunteers recruited appears to be more dependent on the ability of the Department to run volunteer programmes, than a lack of supply of volunteers. But if, as Project Conservation's Goal III suggests, a certain type of volunteer is sought; one that has not previously been aware of or supportive of conservation matters; then the question of recruitment becomes more complex.

Coordinators and other staff expressed concern about attracting volunteers from certain social strata such as the unemployed, Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian, and young urban people. Before this matter is discussed, the variety of methods used by staff to attract volunteers is outlined.

3.2.1 Methods of recruitment

The most popular methods of making contact with volunteers, used by all pilot areas and two of the three comparative areas, is through advertising and public meetings.

Advertising is done through newspapers and radio, and in some instances, appropriate magazines catering for outdoor recreationists and conservationists are used. In several areas, publicity material and newsletters compiled by departmental staff are distributed in the community.

While advertising is a popular way of publicising Project Conservation, it is not necessarily the most successful way of attracting volunteers. The Coromandel coordinator maintained that advertising was far less successful than personal contact, and the Murihiku coordinator reports that most people heard about his district's working holiday programme via word of mouth.

Public meetings provide a useful opportunity for personal contact. In most areas coordinators and other staff have addressed a wide range of groups, not only conservation organisations and outdoor recreation clubs, but also service clubs, organisations, women's groups, the elderly and other community organisations.

After an inaugural public meeting to explain Project Conservation to the community, Whangarei District set up a volunteer committee, consisting of representatives of local organisations and institutions. This provides a source of volunteer recruitment.

Other examples of effective personal contact are between Hauraki District staff and Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi group, and staff in Murihiku, West Coast and Coromandel who work with schools.

The effectiveness of personal contact as a means of recruitment is substantiated by many of the volunteers, who found out about Project Conservation, through direct contact with the coordinator in their area. Similarly, some volunteers were first encouraged to participate in Project Conservation by friends. These examples coincide with the findings of various studies which identify personal contact as the most successful way of recruiting volunteers (Trangmar and Smith, 1983:42).

Although many volunteers have been recruited into Project Conservation through personal contact, it should not be assumed that this is always the most appropriate method. Such factors as geographic coverage, type of volunteer activity and type of volunteer required need to be taken into account when deciding on the most appropriate method of communication. Recruitment through personal contact is obviously successful at the community level and for particular types of volunteer activity, such as on-going "Friends of ..." projects. It may also be an effective way of attracting to voluntary work those who have had no previous experience. But the use of advertising is necessary if extensive geographical coverage is required. As the Murihiku coordinator notes, advertising working holidays has brought many replies from Britain, although fewer replies locally.

One overseas volunteer who participated in the study had obtained a working holiday position by writing to the Department. As an overseas resident, this was a useful way for her to make contact with the Department.

While staff acknowledge that letters from people interested in voluntary work are an important source of recruitment, this means of communication is not yet used to its full potential. West Coast, Hauraki, Coromandel and reported holding extensive files of letters from prospective volunteers. However, these volunteers are often not used, the reasons ranging from the lack of

staff time and no efficient system to cope with the influx of letters, to problems in setting up volunteer projects, or a lack of funding to support voluntary work:

There's a letter a day and one to two telephone enquiries about voluntary work. There are problems servicing the "Friends of the because we've lost the Information Officer who handled it.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

There's no working holiday programme ... I don't think that this district can cope with an influx of outsiders to be put to work at this time, ... we have people applying for jobs, saying 'we don't want to be paid, but can you provide us with accommodation and transport'. At the moment it's been such a crisis, we've preferred not to take them on... may be one or two of them have been taken up, but a lot of things that come through Central Office have been seen to be more expense than they are worth so there isn't anything that people from the outside can slot into -because of the resource issue.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

3.2.2 Problems associated with recruitment

Broadening the constituency

Coordinators and other staff were concerned to attract a broad constituency and identified specific groups as targets.

This was in part motivated by Goal III which is especially concerned to encourage the 'younger urban' population to experience the values of the natural environment. So far, the young adult age group (13-23) has not been greatly involved in volunteer work. The exceptions would be the ACCESS trainees engaged in volunteer work in Whangarei, and secondary school programmes run in Murihiku District.

Staff in all pilot areas reported that young adults were practically invisible:

Project Conservation has only attracted the resident greenies.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

We're involved either with children, or mid thirties to retired.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

ACCESS is, [attracting young adults] but not otherwise.

(Coordinator, West Coast)

Schools have been involved ... [but] the public projects -young urbans have only been a small far been a small proportion. Working holiday bookings have so far been middle-aged, middle-class and farmers.

(Coordinator, Murihiku)¹

Staff did not necessarily think that Project Conservation should concentrate on attracting one particular age group and identified the encouragement of school children, young people and family groups as important. Some staff in Whangarei, West Coast, and Coromandel wish to attract Maori people and unemployed youth to volunteer work. The Murihiku and Coromandel coordinators identified the elderly, particularly those who are active, as a group with time to spare who could be encouraged to do voluntary conservation work. People with physical or psychiatric disabilities were also cited by the Coromandel and West Coast coordinators as potential participants in Project Conservation. Summer holiday-makers on the Coromandel Peninsula were another group identified by the Coromandel coordinator as keen to participate.

Many staff emphasised that Project Conservation should not rely on recruiting members of conservation organisations; by merely doing this it would not fulfil its promise as an advocacy tool.

There's concern that the voluntary side may lose momentum and be confined to organisations, who are doing things anyway. There needs to be a lot of consciousness-raising.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

We should cater for a wide interest, with an emphasis on getting people who haven't had a wilderness experience, the disabled, the handicapped, and the lower socio-economic group.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

We need to demonstrate the benefits that ensue from conservation. We need to open kids' eyes to alternatives, instead of DOC being the ogre and conservation a nasty word.

(Staff member, West Coast)

Already staff experience shows that by working through local institutions and networks, such as schools, ACCESS, and community organisations, a broad base of people can be informed about conservation aims and about how they can contribute to them. Through this process, a new pool of potential volunteers becomes available, as the Whangarei coordinator reports. The Mimiwhangata volunteers...

¹ Information received on the Murihiku 1988/89 summer working holidays after the field work for this report was completed showed that some young adults, usually 'youth hostellers' were recruited. The coordinator's analysis of working holiday participants revealed that 19% were 20 years or less. However, the largest age group represented was 21-30 years, comprising 30% of participants.

... have told their friends: family, associates, relations etc. (the most effective method of publicity) ... I believe that the success behind the Mimiwhangata story is that we now have thirty plus people who, prior to this exposure, were totally or partially ignorant, uninterested, anti, know it all, unwilling to learn about DOC.

Logistical Problems

As well as highlighting specific target groups for recruitment, staff also identified other problems associated with the logistics of recruitment.

Some coordinators had experienced difficulties in maintaining contact with volunteers. For example, coverage of a large geographical area was raised by the West Coast coordinator as a major problem. She commented that costs incurred in toll calls and transport, necessary for servicing her large area, made planning and undertaking activities difficult.

Also of concern, especially noted by Hauraki district, is the need to develop an organisational structure to make best use of the resources offered. It was suggested that there is a need to identify and categorise volunteers' skills so that they can be matched to appropriate jobs.

3.3 Staff assessments of the advantages of volunteer programmes

Staff in both the pilot areas and comparative districts were very positive about the contribution volunteer programmes can make to the Department. Four advantages of volunteer programmes were highlighted in discussions:

- physical work achieved,
- raising public awareness of conservation,
- facilitating access to community resources,
- encouraging recreational use of the conservation estate.

These positive aspects are similar to the overall strengths of Project Conservation identified by staff, although the emphasis differs slightly (see Chapter 6). While staff emphasised advocacy over work achieved when assessing the overall benefits of Project Conservation to the Department, they put work achieved first when discussing the value of volunteer programmes.

3.3.1 Physical work achieved

Staff reported a wide variety of work that volunteers have done, including:

- maintenance of conservation estate facilities, hut, building and track maintenance;
- running facilities, e.g. information centre;
- endangered species work, e.g. bird surveys;
- weed/pest/litter control, e.g. plastics pollution monitoring and clean up;
- nursery work and reforestation;

- emergency services, e.g. whale stranding;
- specialist services, e.g. preparation of educational materials, landscape architecture

Staff report that voluntary efforts have enabled more work to be done and jobs to be achieved in a shorter time. Low priority jobs are more likely to be done if volunteers are available. For example, permanent employees may have little time for weed or litter control, but volunteers can make an appreciable difference in the amount of such work carried out.

A territorial manager in Coromandel District explained the value of volunteer work:

One of the most important things from a territorial manager's point of view is that it brings extra hands into the fold ... if it's a case of constructing a fence or maintaining a walk track or eradicating weeds the more people you can get on the job the easier it is and the more you can actually do ... weed eradication, with the numbers of workers I've got and the number of hours they can actually spend on a project like that because of other commitments ... workers are able to boost that effort... we haven't got the resources in the field for what we're trying to look after.

Some staff identified specific tasks which they considered would not have been done, but for volunteer assistance (see Table 3).

3.3.2 Raising public awareness of conservation

By participating in volunteer programmes, individuals are not only informed of the Department's objectives, but are also made more aware of conservation.

Although slightly fewer staff mentioned advocacy as a benefit of volunteer programmes than those who mentioned 'getting work done', there was a tendency to rate advocacy benefits more highly. In particular, the advocacy gains from running volunteer programmes were seen by many staff as being of long-lasting importance to the Department.

They [volunteers] can be keen ambassadors for the Department.
(Staff member, Murihiku)

They can be advocates for conservation, which has political benefits. They will have a stronger understanding, because they've been active conservation work], they're also a labour force, but that's not the most important - education is more important.
(Staff member, Whangarei)

It's providing labour to get something done which wouldn't have happened, so that's a direct benefit, but I think the philosophical benefit, the advocacy benefit, is the one that's really going to evolve.
(Staff member, West Coast)

Table 3: Examples of work which would not have been achieved, but for volunteer assistance

West Coast:

- Development of Ross Walkway
- Black Petrel count

Murihiku

- Coastal plastics pollution monitoring
- Weed eradication from native forest

Whangarei:

- Clean up of Matapouri estuary

Coromandel

- Staffing of Kauaeranga Valley Information Centre on weekends
- Track maintenance
- Contributions to Summer Holiday Programmes, Waikawau Bay and Kauaeranga
- Tree planting
- Public meeting regarding management plan
- Promotion of track at Otama

Hauraki

- Most of the work at Tiritiri Matangi Island, including planting of 150,000 trees
- Upgrading of outdoor education camp at Motutapu Island
- Fundraising to carry out work in Hauraki Maritime Park

Tainui

- Kokako survey, Pirongia
- Friends of Tainui' (provide emergency in outlying areas)

Rakiura

- Eradication of cats, opossums
- Track work in specific areas

3.3.3 Access to community resources

Several staff commented that volunteer programmes benefit the Department by opening up opportunities to use resources and skills within the community.

This acknowledges that volunteers bring to the Department more assets than just their labour. As members of the community they provide the Department with access to many resources. For example, some staff mentioned the advantages of being able to use people with scientific expertise, or knowledge of local history and Maori culture.

In the community, people have strong skills that often aren't identified. Project Conservation encourages them to emerge.

(Staff member, Murihiku)

Other staff commented that local people make valuable suggestions regarding the management of natural and historic resources. They may fulfil the role of caretakers, providing regular information about the estate to departmental staff. One Coromandel staff member clearly articulated the view that community involvement in conservation was a major advantage to be gained from volunteer programmes:

Volunteers can provide feedback to DOC. They see it as their resource... without voluntary effort DOC will go out the ... it's not capable of maintaining resources. We've got to get community involvement...

Staff in both Whangarei and Hauraki Districts noted that volunteer programmes could result in financial advantages for the Department not just in terms of work done, but through sponsorship, donations and fundraising. Hauraki staff, in particular, reported that volunteers have acted as fundraisers, and in some cases have facilitated access to cheap materials through firms. The primary task of one volunteer organisation, "Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi" is to provide financial support for volunteer programmes.

3.3.4 Recreational use

The encouragement of recreational use of the estate was mentioned as a beneficial consequence of running volunteer programmes by a few staff. They suggested that more people may be introduced to the recreational opportunities of parks and reserves through participation in volunteer work.

3.4 Problems associated with volunteer programmes

Despite widespread staff support for volunteer programmes, substantial difficulties were identified. Staff considered that the following problems need to be addressed:

- Resources for volunteer programmes
- The issue of volunteers replacing employees
- Staff training
- Deficiencies in volunteers

3.4.1 Resources

In their overall assessment of Project Conservation, staff identified a lack of resources as a major problem. This was also the most frequently mentioned problem in relation to volunteer programmes. The availability of staff to run volunteer activities and a lack of funding for operational costs were the main points emphasised. Some staff voiced the concern that the successful use of volunteers in field work may serve as justification for future reductions in funding.

3.4.2 The issue of volunteers replacing employees

Although it is stated in departmental information that "Project Conservation will complement the permanent wage and salaried staff, and not replace their functions", staff express a variety of concerns about the impact of voluntary work on employees' job security. These are:

- Volunteers may be seen as an alternative to recruiting people into permanent positions. Volunteers carry out tasks which departmental employees would normally do, and in some instances perform the more interesting tasks, thus contributing to the deskilling and downgrading of paid workers' jobs.
- Volunteers may be used as a cost-saving measure. Conflict with unions is a possible consequence of using volunteers.

Such concerns indicate that policy on the position of volunteers in the Department needs to be clearly established, and problems in the relationship between staff and volunteers resolved.

3.4.3 Staff training

Widespread concern about the lack of staff preparation for working with volunteers was expressed. This point was made in conjunction with comments about the increased demands placed on staff by the need to train volunteers. It is clear that some staff lack the skills and experience required to successfully conduct volunteer programmes.

3.4.4 Deficiencies in volunteers

Many staff identified problems specific to the volunteer labour force which, in general, is seen to lack the skills and experience required for conservation work. While staff identified individual volunteers who stood out as having particular expertise or experience, they characterised the majority of volunteers as 'unskilled enthusiasts' whose inadequacies placed demands on staff.

There is a reluctance to be too strict [on volunteers]. But sometimes there can be a problem with discipline. Their ideas or standards can cause conflict ... Staff need to be trained to handle volunteers.
(Staff member, Hauraki)

You've go to make sure voluntary groups follow the management plan, that they don't go off and do their own thing. Like, it's no use making tracks if they can't be maintained, or if it spoils the undeveloped value of an area.
(Staff member, Coromandel)

There are organisational problems. Because people are giving time, you can't expect the degree of commitment and quality can suffer. Also, you don't have the same control over them [as over employees] and it's harder to direct them.

(Staff member, Murihiku)

They're inconsistent ... something happens and they can't make it, or they're really interested in the beginning and then they lose interest ... it's unpredictable.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

Inexperience [is a problem]. Supervisors have to spend a lot of time in instructing them in standards of maintenance and in safety standards ... You cannot rely on getting a job finished in a specified time.

(Staff member, West Coast)

These comments not only point to the inadequacies in volunteers, but also clearly show the need for staff skills in working with volunteers. Staff need the ability to teach volunteers the required and to direct them according to the Department's objectives. As several staff remarked, it must be remembered that volunteers make a significant contribution. This should not be overshadowed by a negative assessment of volunteers' activities.

People with skills feel they are being taken for granted, they are being used without being paid. They need to know they are appreciated.

(Staff member, Murihiku)

Departmental staff seem to be unable to recognise and utilise this volunteer resource.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

One staff member in West Coast region suggested that a contract between volunteers and the Department be established. It would set out the respective rights and responsibilities of each party:

You're asking people to give of their time, you're not making any obligation to them, so they don't really need to make any obligation to you. We've tried to avoid that by having a conservation volunteers agreement which quite clearly spells out what is expected of a volunteer and what they would get in return ... what sort of relationship we would expect to exist between the supervisor and the volunteer.

For a variety of reasons a contract is a useful managerial tool. It protects volunteer rights and ensures a satisfactory experience. It also helps the Department make best use of scarce resources. Table 4 sets out the major elements of a contract between an agency and volunteers.

Table 4 : Contractual obligations of agencies and volunteers

The NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (1987:7-9) sets out the major elements of a contract between volunteers and an organisation as follows:

1. Volunteers should have:

- orientation and training
- access to required facilities and equipment
- opportunities for input into policy development
- information on any privileges available
- access to grievance procedures.

2. Volunteers have obligations to the organisation with regard to:

- their commitment of time
- acceptance of guidance or decisions from staff
- reliability in carrying out duties
- keeping records as required
- acceptance of appraisal/evaluation procedures
- confidentiality of information.

3.5 Volunteer Perspectives

For the purposes of understanding the way in which volunteer programmes are being implemented, and whether they are helping to achieve the goals of Project Conservation, it is important to examine the views and experiences of volunteers as well as those of staff. Volunteers provide an alternative source of information on such matters as how Project Conservation Programme is run, on staff performance, and on the way the programme affects them. The areas of volunteer experience discussed in this section are:

- motivations for doing volunteer conservation work
- expectations of Project Conservation
- positive aspects of Project Conservation
- negative aspects of Project Conservation
- skills of volunteers
- further involvement in Project Conservation

3.5.1 Motivations for doing volunteer conservation work

Four main motivations for volunteering are apparent from the literature on volunteers. They are:

- specific interest in an issue,
- desire to do community service,
- opportunity for social contact,
- opportunity for personal growth.

These motivations are also mentioned by Project Conservation volunteers.

Several volunteers said they got involved in Project Conservation because of a specific interest in conservation issues. This is particularly so for those volunteers who belong to conservation organisations, or who have done volunteer conservation work previously (the 'committed volunteers' identified in Chapter 2).

It's an extension of other conservation activities.

(Volunteer, Coromandel)

I've got a strong interest in and commitment to the land ... it helps you get closer to the physical reality of New Zealand

(Volunteer, Coromandel)

Project Conservation draws together a lot of my concerns [about conservation]... Project Conservation is trying to make the community aware of the immediate environment.

(Volunteer, West Coast)

Many volunteers also regard Project conservation as an opportunity for community service. A Murihiku volunteer articulated this most clearly:

I'm now 60 years old and I ask myself where are my priorities ... this gives me an opportunity to spend some time on projects of worth ... I guess I see it as being part of my community involvement ... it's necessary to give some time to the care of the land.

Combined with desires to contribute to conservation work which also benefits the community, are often personal motives. Meeting people, improving one's skills and knowledge, or simply filling in time, are all reasons for involvement in voluntary work. For example, the overseas student in the West Coast region commented that she had wanted to do voluntary work, not only because of an interest in conservation issues, but also for the opportunity it provided to practise and improve her skills:

Working with a landscape architect is an opportunity to get work experience, and also to see the New Zealand landscape... I wanted to improve my skills, to learn more about the landscape, plant communities, geology.

3.5.2 Expectations of Project Conservation

The majority of volunteers, first and foremost, expected to do practical conservation work:

There is great tourist potential, but poor advertising ... we hope to get more tourists, double last year's figure.

(Ross Cottage Group, West Coast)

Create interest and support for Ross Walkways.

(Volunteer, West Coast)

To get conservation on a solid footing.

(Volunteer, Coromandel)

To identify projects of worth so that they can be brought to fruition.

(Volunteer, Murihiku)

Volunteers were asked if their expectations of the programme had been realised. Most reported it was too early to assess if expectations were to be fulfilled, but nevertheless, most people were positive about their experiences so far. Comments on what they had liked about the programmes (see section 3 below) also indicate that expectations have, in part, been realised, and criticisms (section 4 below) reveal areas where expectations have not been realised.

3.5.3 Positive aspects of Project Conservation Most volunteers favourably commented on the work they did, seeing it as a worthwhile achievement. Several also commented on the personal benefits derived from involvement in Project Conservation, especially the opportunities to enjoy the natural environment, to meet people, and to increase their knowledge.

I'm able to get out and see real situations ... in the university, the projects are not real. They just exist on paper. It's an opportunity to see new and interesting things.

(Volunteer, West Coast)

It gets you out of the house, we're meeting people from all over the world. I'm learning about the history of Ross. It's an interest.

(Volunteer group member, West Coast)

3.5.4 Negative aspects of Project Conservation

Few volunteers have criticisms about the programmes they were involved in, and two individuals specifically stated there was nothing they disliked. Most of the criticisms are relatively minor. For example, one Whangarei volunteer found the physical exertion difficult to cope with. Another volunteer would like to see more opportunity for physical work provided, and one suggested that greater promotion of Project Conservation is required in the community.

The most critical comments arose from some members of the two Coromandel groups. They had expected to achieve conservation work in their local areas, but were concerned that problems in communication with departmental staff were impeding progress. In particular, they expressed frustration with what they regarded as bureaucratic 'red tape'. They wanted clearer guidance as to how they could assist the Department, and cited an example where there had been confusion over the need for and possible location of a bush track. These volunteers also reiterated their interest in contributing to decision making about the management of resources. One Coromandel volunteer's comments illustrate the confusion felt by several:

We haven't had the projects to do. We've started to suggest them and had a lot of good ideas, but so far haven't been able to get anything off the ground ... Flexibility in institutions [is required] ... mixed messages are hard to deal with ...there's bad communication within the Department ... a lot of things we've suggested are within the management plan so I don't know why they haven't been accepted.

Although the interests of Coromandel volunteers in contributing to policy have been emphasised, it is not confined to them. The Ross Cottage Group has made suggestions about how the land surrounding the cottage at the entrance to the Ross Walkway could be developed as a 'pioneer' village. The Ross Walkway Group also provides ideas on the management of the walkway. In Whangarei District, the Mimiwhangata group has contributed suggestions to the Mimiwhangata Coastal Park management plan. These examples show that the desire and ability of volunteers to contribute to policy applies to both the 'committed conservationist' and 'newcomer' volunteers.

Many studies of volunteers show that a major source of their dissatisfaction stems from a lack of 'role clarity'. This occurs when there is a lack of clear understanding of the role of volunteers in the organisation, of what they are required to do, and what they can expect from the organisation (NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations, 1987: 11).

The role of volunteers can be made clear in Project Conservation through giving them information on what the programme aims to do, what is expected of their contribution and by providing them with adequate direction and instruction to carry out tasks.

3.5.5 Skills provided by and acquired by volunteers

So as to get some indication of the success of programmes in teaching specific skills and in raising awareness of conservation values, the volunteers were asked questions concerning the skills they had brought to Project Conservation, and what they had learned from Project conservation. The skills and experiences staff consider their programmes provide for volunteers are listed in Table 5.

Volunteers are an important source of specialist skills and knowledge. The 19 volunteers who participated in the study collectively contributed the following areas to Project Conservation:

- forestry management
- landscape design
- knowledge of bird species
- knowledge of marine mammals
- geological expertise
- educational skills
- counselling
- community health expertise
- knowledge of the local area (history, geography, natural resources)
- links with local organisations
- organisational skills
- social/interpersonal skills

One third of the volunteers considered that their knowledge of conservation issues was a skill they brought to Project Conservation.

3.5.6 Assessments of learning opportunities offered by Project Conservation Given the range and level of skills and knowledge identified among volunteers, which was in some cases considerable, it is not surprising that several volunteers reported having learned few new skills and not substantially increasing their awareness of conservation issues. However, it is important to distinguish between the two categories of Project Conservation volunteer identified in this report; the 'committed conservationist' and the 'newcomer'.

Members of the Whangarei Mimiwhangata group, and some of the West Coast volunteers who are 'newcomer' volunteers reported an increased knowledge and understanding of conservation. They had learned about the historical and natural resources of their local areas, and about conservation ethics. In particular, the West Coast volunteers said they had become more aware of local industrial history, the mining issue, and the values of the native bush and wetland areas. The Mimiwhangata group considered that through Project Conservation they had become aware of the problems of plastics pollution, local endangered species (brown teal) and potential impacts of tourism in their area.

Table 5: Skills and experiences provided for volunteers:

Experience	Area			
	West Coast	Murihiku	Whangarei	Coromandel
1. Skills development				
- use of tools	X	X		
- bush safety	X	X		
- survey techniques		X		
- plant identification		X		
2. Knowledge/information				
- specific conservation issues		X	X	X
- evening talks		X		
- informal discussion	X			
- briefing session		X		
3. Other			X	
- recreation	X	X		
- free tickets to summer holiday programmes	X			
- experience of special transport (e.g. raft)	X			
- social contact		X		X

The Murihiku coordinator's assessment of the 1988/89 Summer Working Holiday programme noted that almost all those surveyed (64) considered that they had increased their knowledge and understanding of conservation, including knowledge of nature and history, of practical skills and of the role of the Department. Many of the participants in the working holiday programme may be defined as 'newcomers'; 61% had never done conservation voluntary work before and 45% did not belong to any conservation or outdoor recreational group.

The committed conservationist volunteer has a stock of conservation knowledge and experience which is not held by the 'newcomer' volunteer. He or she is less likely to regard Project Conservation as offering new opportunities for learning. However, those volunteers more experienced in conservation matters commented that Project Conservation enabled them to improve skills and to do practical conservation work, which they valued.

These findings indicate that Project Conservation needs to cater for volunteers with widely differing levels of skill, experience and awareness. Some volunteers are experienced in both practical and theoretical aspects of conservation; others are familiar with conservation issues but may lack experience of practical conservation work; a third group are 'newcomers' in all respects. A group of volunteers with a mix of skills, experience and awareness poses a challenge for Project Conservation organisers. They need to be able to identify volunteers' different levels of understanding and expertise in order to allocate to them suitable tasks and to provide appropriate information and support. This is important to both ensure the successful achievement of the task and a satisfactory experience for the volunteer. A mix of volunteers may also be used to advantage by organisers to vary the type of programme offered, thus attracting further volunteers. Skilled and experienced volunteers may also be used as leaders, to assist staff in supervision.

As one Coromandel staff member commented, the identification of tasks that volunteers both want to do, and are able to do, is crucial to the success of any project.

... it's better if you select a task they want to do ... and can see an end result... what comes back strongly is that tree planting is very, very positive, something they can see an immediate result at the end of the day. ... a variety of work the Purangi/Cook Beach group. The idea of our field day is that we show them various reserves, various tasks that can be done by voluntary groups and let them select the jobs you've got to find options for everyone involved. I think there's the opportunity in Project Conservation to do that.

3.5.7 Further involvement in Project Conservation

Volunteers were asked if they would like to be involved in other Project Conservation activities. All were keen but three constraints were identified. The most common one mentioned was lack of time. Many people who take on volunteer work also participate in paid work and/or have family and household responsibilities. Membership of other voluntary organisations is also likely to affect the amount of time individuals can devote to Project Conservation.

Less commonly mentioned, but a constraint to some individuals is the physical limitations of health and age. Also raised was the question of money, which one person considered would possibly inhibit her future involvement.

3.6 Policy implications for volunteer programmes

Evaluation of volunteer programmes has raised a number of issues which may be addressed through the development of policy guidelines. The issues and the policy implications are summarised as follows.

3.6.1 Recruitment

There appears to be an adequate supply of individuals interested in voluntary conservation work. But there are constraints on using this supply which relate to the supports available for volunteer programmes. Taking on volunteers may be affected by a lack of resources to mount a programme, and by the lack of an efficient information system which can help in identifying available volunteer skills.

The other important issue concerning recruitment is the need to extend the volunteer base beyond the conservation group member and estate user, to individuals who are unfamiliar with conservation matters.

3.6.2 The replacement issue

There is still much concern and confusion about the extent to which the use of volunteers may undermine the job security of current employees and future employment opportunities in the Department. These concerns are not only expressed with regard to volunteers, but also with regard to trainees. The issue is basic to individuals' understanding of what Project Conservation is about, both within and outside of the Department. Much clearer guidelines are required so that the negative connotations of exploiting free (volunteer) or cheap (trainee) labour are avoided.

3.6.3 Staff training

The need for staff training has been consistently raised by staff, not only in discussion specifically pertaining to volunteer projects but also in relation to trainee programmes and in general comments about the problems associated with Project Conservation.

Staff training is needed for three reasons:

- to ensure that volunteers have a valuable experience
- to more effectively achieve advocacy and conservation management objectives
- to give staff the skills to help them better deal with work demands.

3.6.4 Training for volunteers

Volunteers differ widely in their skills, experience, abilities and awareness of conservation values. Programmes, including tasks and educational components need to be tailored to cater for such variation.

3.6.5 Contractual agreement

One area, West Coast, has a contractual agreement between the volunteer and the Department. The implementation of a standard agreement to be used by all regions, should be investigated.

3.6.6 Volunteer input into policy

The expectations of many volunteers interviewed, both 'committed conservationists' and 'newcomers', is that they would like to contribute more to conservation than simply labour. They are keen to contribute ideas and suggestions relating to conservation management. The level of this type of input and how it is dealt with by the Department needs to be discussed.

CHAPTER 4

TRAINEE PROGRAMMES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the development of trainee programmes in Project Conservation, primarily ACCESS schemes. The emphasis given to trainee programmes differs within the pilot areas, and between the pilot areas and the comparative districts.

Most emphasis has been given to trainee schemes by the West Coast region, where the coordinator spends about 80% of her time on activities associated with trainee programmes.¹ In contrast, the Murihiku District coordinator spends the least time on trainee-related work, approximately 15% of his time. The Whangarei and Coromandel District coordinators have found their time more or less evenly divided between trainee and volunteer activities (see Figure 1).

The strongest support for trainee schemes was expressed in the pilot areas, especially in West Coast region and Whangarei District where trainee programmes are integral to their concept of Project Conservation and reflect a commitment to community needs. Interest was also shown by Coromandel District and Murihiku District which were planning Conservation Corps projects at the time of the study.

Far less interest in setting up trainee courses was shown by staff in the comparative districts, many of whom regard Project Conservation exclusively as a volunteer programme. They reported little involvement with ACCESS programmes, except perhaps through another training provider. Negative attitudes were expressed towards both ACCESS and Conservation Corps. None of the comparative districts intended to develop trainee programmes, although considerable commitment to developing volunteer activities was evident.

The following discussion looks firstly at staff perspectives on trainee schemes. The second section focuses on the perceptions and experiences of a group of West Coast trainees involved in Project Conservation.

4.2 Staff Perspectives

In assessing the advantages and disadvantages of trainee schemes, staff identified the same issues that are pertinent to the success of volunteer programmes, and to Project Conservation as a whole.

¹ In mid 1989, West Coast staff reported that the emphasis had shifted away from ACCESS, to the development of new volunteer activities.

4.2.1 Advantages of trainee programmes

Staff identified the following as advantages of running trainee courses:

- raising public awareness of conservation
- physical work achieved
- opportunities provided for trainees

Raising public awareness of conservation

According to many staff, the major advantage of running trainee programmes is the opportunity they provide for advocacy of conservation. This was noted in all pilot and comparative areas:

It introduces the idea of conservation to people who haven't given much thought to it. It's good PR.

(Coordinator, West Coast)

The main help must be from spreading our base of knowledge, rather than work done.

(District Conservator, Rakiura)

You get wider interest from other people involved with trainees - it's good PR.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

Educating the trainees ... involving the community... providing publicity ...

(Coordinator, Murihiku)

It provides people with an awareness.

(Conservation Officer, Tainui)

We've got to get the people who haven't done conservation work before. Maybe ACCESS schemes are a better return than volunteers who are already doing this type of work.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

We can promote sensitivity to the environment through ACCESS. They rarely have a chance to experience the natural environment.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

These comments indicate that staff consider ACCESS schemes to be a useful way of educating sections of the community which may not otherwise experience conservation activities. Staff also consider that the Department gains publicity advantages by providing a community service through support of ACCESS programmes. This is particularly apposite in areas of higher than average unemployment, such as Whangarei and the West Coast.

Examples of increased public awareness of conservation through trainee programmes are provided in West Coast, Whangarei and Coromandel. In all three areas, members of ACCESS courses have initiated voluntary activities. Some of the West Coast's Ross volunteer programmes (as described in Chapter 2) arose out of enthusiasm for conservation generated among ACCESS trainees on a Department of Conservation Course.

In Coromandel and Whangarei districts, the Project Conservation coordinators' contact with ACCESS courses run by other agencies resulted in trainees becoming involved in Department of Conservation volunteer programmes.

Physical work achieved

In discussing the advocacy advantages of running trainee courses, several staff rate this more highly than the work achieved by trainees. Nevertheless, work achieved was considered to be the second most important benefit of trainee programmes:

They are very valuable. They can help to manage the physical resource.
It helps to increase the maintenance standards in parks.
(Staff member, Coromandel)

It's getting things done that wouldn't get done, either because
they're not high priority or there's not enough people.
(Staff member, West Coast)

Opportunities provided for trainees

Also mentioned as an advantage of running trainee programmes was the opportunities provided for participants to develop personal, social and employment skills.

There are benefits to trainees ... they learn life skills ...
some have gone on to employment, though not in DOC.
(Staff member, West Coast)

Project Conservation ... should be used to train conservation managers ...
skills they can use in their own community.
(Staff member, Whangarei)

The West Coast trainee schemes offer a mix of conservation field work skills with conservation education and other experiences relating to outdoor recreation and personal development. ACCESS and Conservation Corps proposals in the other pilot areas indicate a similar emphasis.

With regard to conservation education, the following was offered in the various programmes:

- The role of Project Conservation
- The role of the Department of Conservation
- Information on species
- Information on ecosystems
- Maori perspectives on conservation

Other experiences offered in trainee schemes include:

- Outdoor skills such as bush skills, camping and wilderness experience
- Recreation
- Personal and social skills development in areas such as budgeting, first aid, legal rights and cooperative group work.

Because they provide educational opportunities trainee schemes may appear to be directly beneficial to the participants, rather than to the Department. However, staff considered that inclusion of instruction on social, personal and employment-related skills in the courses had positive benefits for the Department. These were: the development of a pool of people with conservation field work skills needed by the Department, and the good relations with the community gained from providing the unemployed with an occupation and therefore contributing to orderly community life.

4.2.2 Disadvantages of trainee programmes

Staff identified three main difficulties with trainee programmes:

- a lack of resources to run programmes
- the problem of guaranteeing employment for trainees
- the perception of trainees as a source of cheap labour.

Lack of resources

The resource question was the same one raised in reference to volunteer programmes. It concerned the availability of staff to run programmes, staff expertise in dealing with trainees and material resources to fund projects.

A lack of staff resources was the main reason put forward by staff in comparative districts for identifying the development of trainee programmes as a low priority:

We could make use of it, if we had staff to manage it.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

We can't deal with Conservation Corps on top of everything else.

(Staff member, Tainui)

No plans - due to limitation of accommodation and staffing.

(District Conservator, Rakiura)

The need for staff expertise in supervision was considered by staff to be more of an issue in relation to trainees than to volunteers. Many staff perceived that trainees were more difficult to work with than volunteers. Staff thought that trainees tended to lack motivation and interest, which resulted in them requiring more instruction and closer supervision than volunteers. Furthermore, trainees may have special needs due to accommodation problems, lack of money, or lack of social skills, which demand extra skills in dealing with them.

The West Coast Coordinator found that counselling trainees became an integral part of running trainee courses. She noted that "the trainees ... have no self esteem ...they feel disadvantaged". Other staff also observed:

They are less enthusiastic than volunteers ... they're not used to the backcountry and not so interested in the work. You're dealing with 'raw material'.

(Staff member, West Coast)

They come with a lot of problems -you need to be a father figure.

(Staff member, Central Office)

Because some trainees may lack the enthusiasm for conservation generally associated with volunteers, and may lack skills or bring with them personal problems, some staff would prefer not to work with trainees. Certainly, many staff are concerned that they do not have the proper training to competently run trainee courses.

The problem of guaranteeing employment for trainees

Several staff expressed reservations that individuals' expectations of employment may be unfairly raised through trainee programmes, whereas in reality there was little possibility of them going on to a permanent job.

Training schemes seem to be regarded as a panacea. But just because you're trained in it doesn't mean you'll be able to get a job.

(Staff member, Tainui)

They go from schemes back on to the dole ... There's no incentive for them. This possibly affects their input into the scheme.

(Staff member, West Coast)

The perception of trainees as a source of cheap labour

Some staff were concerned that trainee schemes should not be treated by the Department as simply sources of labour. They reiterated the point that the advocacy and conservation education opportunities to be gained from running trainee programmes were primary:

There is a danger that Project Conservation will become bogged down with 'make work' schemes ... There's got to be something in those schemes for trainees and the community - not just as a way of the Department getting work done.

(Staff member, West Coast)

The way training schemes are implemented will be important. If it's just cutting tracks, that's no good. It must be a variety of tasks, and they should learn why they're doing it.

(Staff member, Tainui)

There was also some concern that trainees may replace departmental employees, but this was not as significant an issue as in reference to volunteers. Perhaps this is because volunteer programmes so far make up the majority of Project Conservation activities.

4.3 Trainee perspectives

The following discussion presents the experiences and views of six members of only one West Coast ACCESS trainee course, the 'Outdoor Skills' group. Their views and experiences cannot be taken as representative of all trainees involved in Department of Conservation programmes. However, their comments raise policy issues which are relevant to the conduct of trainee programmes in all regions.

4.3.1 Motivations for joining the training course

All six trainees interviewed commented that they had joined the course for financial reasons, i.e. so they could receive regular wages. However, while this practical motivation was paramount, several gave additional reasons. Apart from one who reported that he had joined because it was the first course he had been accepted for, others showed an interest in the content of the course. They said that they thought the course sounded interesting. They wanted to achieve personal goals, such as working outdoors and getting fit.

4.3.2 Expectations of the course

Most of the trainees expected to get some sort of personal development from the course. Most popular was the desire to get fit. Three hoped for "a job at the end" of the course. One trainee, unemployed for a considerable period, said that he looked on the course as a way of reducing stress through regular activity.

All considered that the course had been what they expected, in terms of the opportunities for personal development and for learning practical skills. They were less sure that they would gain employment afterwards.

4.3.3 Positive aspects of the course

Equally praised were the opportunities for skills development, and the involvement in regular work activity.

With regard to skills development, several trainees commented favourably on their expeditions into the bush. Also mentioned as useful was the first aid course.

It was apparent from the trainee's comments that to be doing regular work was a very important benefit of the course:

- ... it's regular, it's like a proper job, the discipline.
- ... the work, physical labour, is good.
- ... you have a commitment to the job, to yourself.
- ... it's the lack of boredom.

Two trainees also liked being involved in the course because it provided opportunities for meeting people.

These positive comments about the trainee programme suggest some of the reasons why having a job is so fundamental to an individual's identity and self esteem. Employment provides a person with social contact, with a regular purposeful activity, and not least, with an income. For many individuals, a trainee programme is a substitute for work, in that it provides many of the advantages and satisfactions associated with paid employment.

4.3.4 Criticisms of the course

The criticisms that trainees made about the course are not so important individually, but for the picture they collectively reveal about the lack of integration of this group of trainees into Project Conservation. Integration is a process whereby individuals become a willing part of an organisation, accepting its goals and contributing towards them. Individual characteristics and motivations affect integration, but so, too, does the way a programme is organised. The Department must actively work to secure the commitment of Project Conservation participants; it does not naturally flow from recruitment.

The lack of trainees' integration into Project Conservation is clearly shown in their criticisms concerning day to day interaction with staff and the attitudes of staff. Almost all the trainees were critical of aspects of communication with staff. While they considered that relations with their immediate supervisors and tutors were good, they also felt that there was a negative view amongst other staff towards trainees:

- we get condescended to
- ... the impression is that the unemployed are thick.

Further evidence of a lack of integration was shown by trainees' inadequate understanding of organisational and philosophical aspects of the Department and of their role as conservation workers. Comments by trainees revealed a lack of knowledge and understanding about Project Conservation. The trainees said they would have liked to know more about the Department and its work and they were unfamiliar with how the local office operated.

Some trainees questioned the relevance of particular assignments that were set by tutors, saying they could not see what they had to do with conservation or with the Department's work. These comments reveal that it is not enough to provide information; it has to be explained in terms of the broader context of the Department's objectives and of Project Conservation's specific aims.

Trainees' feelings of separation from the organisation were further reinforced by their view that they were simply being used as cheap labour.

We're working in the high country. DOC can't afford wages for the summer crew ... when you're out there working, and you know you're doing it for a pittance ... you start to lose your self respect. You know you're being used ... we could be employed. If DOC could be shown to be creating employment, it would have a better image.

In general, the trainees said they were not keen to be involved in future ACCESS programmes run by the Department. This reflected dissatisfaction not only with the wages, which is beyond departmental control, but also with the orientation and the content of the course.¹

Such comments indicate a need for staff to directly address the problem of integrating participants, whether they are trainees or volunteers. Before participants are able to develop a commitment to conservation ideals, they need to feel 'part of the team'. This can be fostered by giving participants a clear understanding of their role, including what is expected of them, how they fit into the organisation, and the significance of their work. They also need a supportive work atmosphere so they are able to do their jobs well.

If participants feel they belong to the organisation and are in accord with its goals, their contributions are more likely to be worthwhile.

4.3.5 Education of trainees

Taking into account the trainees' criticisms concerning information provided by the course, an impression may be gained that few educational aspects are offered by the trainee programme. This is not correct, as the various educational opportunities provided by trainee programmes outlined in section 4.2.1 shows. Most of the trainees considered that they had learned a variety of skills during the course including bush skills, spraying and first aid. Indeed, they perceived the Department's role in running a trainee course was precisely to teach practical manual skills such as the use of a chain saw and other machinery and fire fighting.

Education in conservation issues and values was much less appreciated by the trainees than the opportunity to learn practical skills useful in gaining employment. In these respects, the attitudes and motivations of the 'Outdoor Skills' trainees contrasted strongly with the earlier group of ACCESS trainees in Ross. They had become interested in conservation issues and started voluntary activities promoting tourism development of the Ross Goldfields Walkway. When the 'Outdoor Skills' group was asked how the course had raised their awareness of conservation matters, their comments indicated little effect:

... not much

... don't know what conservationists are.

¹ However, these comments do not reflect subsequent behaviour. Some of the trainees maintained contact with the Department after the course had finished. The West Coast coordinator reported that three of the trainees applied for places in a Conservation Corps programme and two others worked as volunteers on a conservation project for two weeks.

While they could cite local endangered species, they were disinterested in, if not antagonistic towards a pro-conservation stance. They strongly expressed a local view which is grounded in several generations' experience of and reliance on resource extraction:

- ... we can't get to any natural resources
- ... conservation work is not economically viable
- ... most West Coasters appreciate the scenic value of the area, but they've got to work it out with their livelihoods
- ... you can only see a few metres of bush - who cares if there's pines behind it
- ... if DOC could be shown to be creating employment, it would have a better image.

Such comments are understandable responses from individuals whose immediate concerns about their own livelihood are much more pressing to them than the seemingly abstract issue of conservation. However, many staff consider the major advantage of running trainee programmes to be the opportunity for promoting a greater understanding of conservation values. It is clear that trainee programmes provide a special challenge to the advocacy skills of staff, because of the social disadvantage experienced by trainees and their typical lack of motivation or interest.

4.4 Policy Implications for Trainee Programmes

The experiences and views of staff and trainee concerning trainee programmes raise some policy considerations. These may be summarised as follows.

4.4.1 The role of trainee programmes in Project Conservation.

Discussion with staff revealed that many were ambivalent about the role of trainee programmes in Project Conservation. They raised the question whether such programmes should form part of Project Conservation, and if so, to what extent they should be emphasised in comparison to other activities. Some staff, particularly in the comparative districts, consider that Project Conservation should not include trainee courses. However, staff also identify a variety of benefits in running trainee courses for both the trainees and the Department.

At a Project Conservation Workshop held in July 1989 it was decided that Project Conservation would in the future focus solely on the development of voluntary activities. However, it was envisaged that Project Conservation coordinators would also be involved in programmes such as Conservation Corps and ACCESS.

4.4.2 The integration of trainees into Project Conservation

Criticisms that trainees made of Project Conservation centred around matters of communication with staff, and revealed trainees' poor understanding of their role. The problem of 'role clarity' that was discussed in reference to volunteers' experience of Project Conservation is also pertinent to trainees. It appears that staff need to devise ways of informing trainees of their role and including them as part of the team.

4.4.3 Staff training Staff involved in Project are called on to work with a variety of individuals and must therefore be versatile in their approach. It is especially apparent that there are often distinct social and psychological differences between volunteers and trainees with regard to motivations, attitudes, interests, skills levels and social position. Staff should be aware of these differences in designing and running activities. Some trainees appear to hold negative views about conservation, or are just disinterested. This may discourage staff working with trainees, and certainly puts extra strain on them. Staff training needs to reflect such demands that are placed on staff and assist them to feel confident and competent in their work with trainees.

4.4.4 Training for trainees

The two issues to consider with regard to training opportunities for trainees are:

- training for practical conservation skills
- conservation education.

The former opportunities seem to be well provided in the course discussed in this chapter. However the course appears to have been less successful in providing conservation education and in improving awareness of conservation.

The conservation education component of trainee courses needs special attention. Staff considered that the most significant benefit of running trainee programmes is the opportunity they provide for educating the community about conservation and promoting the work of the Department. Further attention should be given to devising ways of including advocacy and educational activities as central components of trainee courses.

CHAPTER 5

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

5.1 Introduction

Project Conservation's connections with the community are multi-faceted. They include links not only through institutions such as schools and local authorities, but also through clubs and associations. This chapter focuses on two specific interest groups which have contributions to make to and interests in Project Conservation. They are organisations and tangata whenua.

Before discussing the relations between the Department and these groups, local issues and attitudes will be examined, as these influence the relationship that develops between the parties, and thus provide a context in which to understand inter-group relations.

5.2 Issues and Attitudes

All areas, pilot and comparative, reported a diversity of attitudes towards the Department, ranging from ignorance of its work, to antagonism, to strong support. In the diversity, however, there were obvious patterns.

Negative views of the Department were frequently associated with concerns about the local economy and with the loss of community services.

Positive public responses to the Department were related to support for specific maintenance and protection work that was occurring on the conservation estate in their own communities.

5.2.1 The relationship between the Department and the local economy.

In all areas staff identified certain sections of the community that support economic development as having negative attitudes towards the Department. Antagonism towards the Department was particularly obvious in the areas with a history of extractive industry, harvesting of natural resources, or agriculture:

There are negative attitudes from people involved in the extractive industries, such as sphagnum moss and mining ... The large majority involved in extractive industries feel DOC is threatening their livelihood.

(Staff member, West Coast)

With marine farms, DOC is seen to stand in the way of local initiatives, but the development poses great ecological risks.

(Staff member, Murihiku)

Farmers are suspicious, they're worried about resources being locked up.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

The only area with a considerable metropolitan population, Hauraki, also reported that the Department was viewed by some as preventing economic development. This was to do with inner city business development which may threaten historic sites, and with development in marine areas.

These views reflect the overriding concern in all areas with a possible conflict between economic development and conservation (see Table 6). They also highlight the major 'non-conservation' issue in most areas, the economy (see Table 7).

Many economic concerns were identified, including unemployment (the most frequently mentioned), the rural recession (especially noted by Murihiku, Whangarei and Tainui), encouragement of local industry (particularly in West Coast and Whangarei) and tribal development (Whangarei and Coromandel).

In most areas, the Department is regarded by residents as having a major impact on the local economy, both as a potential employer and as a controller of economic development through its custodianship of natural resources. In areas heavily dependent on primary industries such as forestry, fishing, farming, hunting, mining and energy production, local perceptions of the Department as inhibiting economic opportunities appear to be particularly strong:

Central government is seen to be standing in the way of local development... DOC is seen as a part of central government ... saying 'no' while everybody is going through hard times ... conservation objectives are seen as coming into conflict with others' livelihoods.

(Staff member, Murihiku)

DOC is the last significant government agency in the region, so tends to focus all hatred [of the government] on DOC.

(Staff member, West Coast)

What opportunities are there for school leavers? People see the DOC estate as a possible provider ... DOC is a major land holder. This is a resource which can be used for tourism.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

TABLE 6. MAJOR CONSERVATION ISSUES BY AREA

ISSUE	AREA						
	West Coast	Murihiku	Whangarei	Coro-mandel	Hauraki	Tainui	Rakiura
1. Conflict between economic development and conservation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Protection of endangered species/habitat		X	X	X	X	X	X
3. Cuts in DOC staff and funding	X	X	X	X	X		
4. Marine reserves/ coastal issues	X	X			X	X	X
5. Maori land claims, resource issues	X	X	X			X	
6. Pollution			X	X	X		
7. Tourism			X	X			
8. Hut fees		X			X		
9. maintenance of recreational facilities				X	X		
10. Creation of Punakaiki National Park	X						
11. Noxious plant and animal control				X			

TABLE 7: OTHER MAJOR ISSUES BY AREA

ISSUE	AREA						
	West Coast	Murihiku	Whangarei	Coro-mandel	Hauraki	Tainui	Rakiura
1. Economy			X				
-Unemployment	X		X	X	X		
-Rural recession		X	X				
-Development of local industry		X	X			X	
-Tribal development	X		X	X	X		X
-Govt asset sales			X				
2. Social services	X	X	X	X			
3. Local govt reform		X	X	X	X		
4. Law and order		X	X	X		X	

Many tangata whenua groups have specific economic interests concerning access to and use of natural resources, but historically they have had difficulty in pursuing their objectives with government agencies. Staff in Whangarei and Tainui observed that Maori are suspicious of the Department as an 'agent of the Crown'.¹

The Maori view is that they were ripped off by Lands and Survey and Forestry. Just because the hat has changed to DOC, it doesn't mean their stance has changed.

(Coordinator, Whangarei)

You can't get Maori involved just by setting up Project conservation. Local Maori have a long history of abuse by government and are suspicious of moves by government.

(Staff member, Tainui)

Such suspicion will not be allayed unless the Department acknowledged the basis of these concerns and makes efforts to overcome past difficulties.

The negative view of the Department as 'locking up resources' has been exacerbated by the Department's own financial situation which has made cuts in staffing numbers inevitable. In regions facing high levels of unemployment such as Whangarei and West Coast, this action may be seen by the public, rightly or wrongly, as further evidence of the Department holding back development, by narrowing opportunities on the local job market.

5.2.2 The loss of community services

The Department's relationship with local communities is not only affected by its role as protector of resources, and as a major local employer in some areas. As a government agency, the Department is also affected by the local impacts of decisions made by other government agencies to decrease or do away with services. The loss of social such as the Post Office, banking, transport and hospital services were raised as significant local issues in Murihiku, Coromandel, Whangarei and West Coast (see Table 7).

Adverse reactions to the loss of community services may influence the way that the Department is locally perceived, even though such changes are totally unrelated to its policies and beyond its sphere of influence.

¹ See also discussion of Maori distrust about the Crown's management of natural and physical resources in Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, 1988: 22-23.

5.2.3 Positive responses

Notwithstanding the negative views of the Department, it is also supported for its work with endangered and for habitat protection, pollution control, maintenance of recreational facilities and noxious plant and animal eradication:

Recreational responsibilities, tourism are major issues in the region
we have 220 of tracks and can hardly look after 20
(Staff member, Coromandel)

People are concerned about pollution from boats, over-use of the islands, insensitive development of the coast ... There is tremendous concern about preserving old buildings.
(Staff member, Hauraki)

How can DOC be doing work saving endangered species? ... They try as much as possible to do what they can with limited resources.
(Volunteer Committee member, Whangarei)

[People] are very aware in this district ... and are willing to contribute toward achieving conservation goals and protection of the environment.
(Staff member, Coromandel)

Support for the Department's work is most obvious when it is seen to assist local initiatives, such as the West Coast's ACCESS and volunteer projects in Ross. One of the Ross Cottage volunteers explained how the restoration of the Ross Walkway has been instrumental in changing local opinion about conservation:

There was a very good response to the petition to save the walkway ...
There is realisation that gold is short term ... conservation has longer term benefits... Conservation used to be a 'bad word', it was seen as loss of jobs... but now conservation is seen as possibly creating jobs, such as through the promotion of the walkway ... we hope that DOC will employ local people.

A Coromandel staff member, in saying that "Project Conservation nurtures togetherness" pointed to the importance of establishing a strong community base of support for the Department. At the level of personal contact between staff and community residents, the public's negative impressions of a 'faceless bureaucracy' may be broken down. Several staff pointed out that public views of the Department differed, depending on whether a district office or the central office based in Wellington was being referred to. There was a tendency for members of the community to support the work of local staff, but at the same time a negative view of central government was expressed:

At the local level, people are sympathetic towards the District. But they're scathing towards Central Office and the government attitude towards conservation.

(Staff member, Tainui)

Local staff are accepted, but DOC is viewed as a bureaucracy.
(Staff member, Whangarei)

There are two levels at the ground level [the public sees] staff as
Hard working, doing the best they can ... at the higher level, people are
sceptical - it's just another government department.
(Staff member, Hauraki)

Some staff, and also individuals outside of the Department, consider that the best way of overcoming negative perceptions is to emphasise the Department's potential to assist with community development:

Because of the amount of land it has, DOC's responsibility to the community is very high ... I'd like to see more emphasis on employing people.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

DOC has a major educational role in terms of community development ...
Project Conservation can help to build a sense of pride and identity.

(Community Health Worker, Coromandel)

In some areas where ACCESS is being focused on, people are interested.
DOC is seen as healing ... Once they understand that DOC wants to help,
they are all for it.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

5.3 Links with local conservation organisations

Table 8 indicates the variety of organisations with which Project Conservation has connections. Contact is not confined to conservation organisations, but also includes a range of outdoor clubs and other groups. This reflects a general feeling among staff that while the support of conservation organisations is valued, the Department must not restrict its community contacts to those organisations. Conservation advocacy requires attention to the uninformed and the uncommitted, as well as to supporters. Project Conservation's Goal which seeks to support and strengthen links with conservation organisations, was rated low by staff in comparison to the goals concerning volunteers and the provision of opportunities for people to appreciate the natural environment (Goals I and III). While some staff were strongly in favour of strengthening ties with conservation organisations through Project Conservation, many regarded this task as one to be pursued more generally by the Department in its advocacy work. Most did not see Project Conservation volunteers being recruited solely from conservation organisations, although of course they would play a part. Several staff commented that the attraction of conservation group members to Project Conservation was not a major priority:

[Conservation organisations are] not so important. Tapping interested individuals is more important.

(Coordinator, Murihiku)

TABLE 8: ORGANISATIONS CONTACTED BY AREA

ISSUE	AREA						
	West Coast	Murih-iku	Whanga-rei	Coro-mandel	Hauraki	Tainui	Rakiura
Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tramping/Alpine Clubs	X	X		X		X	
Maruia Society		X	X		X	X	
Other local conservation organisation		X		X		X	
Acclimatisation Society		X				X	
Ecology Action		X					
Deerstalkers		X					
Ornithology Society			X				
World Wildlife Fund					X		
Botanical Society						X	
YMCA		X					

It was also pointed out that organisations, such as the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, had their own activities which may provide an alternative to involvement in Project Conservation.

Coordinators identified organisations, other than conservation groups, that they wish to involve in Project Conservation. These include outdoor/tramping clubs, service clubs, women's organisations and the IHC.

Notwithstanding staff interest in fostering links with a wide range of groups, it is generally acknowledged that conservation organisations have a special relationship with the Department. Over the years they have been strong and sometimes effective lobby groups speaking out on government performance on conservation matters. Having been critical of many policies of the Department of Conservation's antecedents, they tend to have high expectations of an agency which was specifically established to protect and advocate for natural and historic resources.

Comments from staff demonstrate that conservation organisations continue to challenge the Department:

It's embarrassing talking to conservation organisations about Project Conservation and being unable to deliver. They've got the enthusiasm... They are concerned about DOC's future -that it's not fulfilling its responsibilities as well as it could be. They're concerned we're not responding to development pressures.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

It is to be expected that members of conservation organisations will be interested in Project Conservation, because of its focus on community involvement in conservation. However, although Project Conservation presents an opportunity for conservation organisations and the Department to work together, the areas have varied in the emphasis placed on fostering relations with conservation organisations.

Interest has been encouraged in some areas through explicit links between Project Conservation staff and conservation organisations. The Coromandel, West Coast and Murihiku coordinators all belong to conservation groups, and in Whangarei other staff members have maintained close contact with those organisations. The coordinators provide a point of contact for conservation organisations which may not have been so explicit before:

It has helped DOC by forging closer liaison now I work there.

(Coordinator, Murihiku)

I'm a resource person for people who want information about DOC.
That liaison wasn't there before.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

In all pilot areas, links existed with conservation organisations prior to the appointment of coordinators, but in some cases, the nature of these links has altered. West Coast staff reported there had been links between conservation organisations and other government departments prior to the formation of the Department of Conservation, but these had tended to be antagonistic. The formalisation and improvement of links between the Department and the one conservation organisation active locally, the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, is noted as a consequence of Project Conservation on the West Coast:

There was not a lot of contact previously. But I feel in the last month there's been more of a spirit of cooperation.

(Coordinator, West Coast)

However, it was also apparent from staff comments that the local Forest and Bird group had few active members and that it would take time to develop joint projects.

Like the West Coast staff, the Coromandel coordinator reported that links with conservation organisations had improved. Relations had existed with the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society before the establishment of Project Conservation, but now since the pilot scheme, district office has had contact with a broader range of local conservation organisations.

[Links have] certainly improved and strengthened ... There were no relationships with conservation groups [before] ... There has always been people willing to 'give a hand' occasionally but nothing organised and no ongoing projects.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

Whangarei staff reported that, before the pilot scheme, the district office had formed close links with some conservation organisations through staff who were members. So far, it is considered that the pilot scheme has not had a major effect on the relationship, but will continue to maintain useful links:

[The links are] mainly issues-based. We hope through Project Conservation to harness separate energies into one worthwhile force.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

Staff in the comparative areas also reported an active relationship with conservation organisations. Several staff are members of such organisations and have regular contact; weekly, and in one case, daily.

On the whole, staff in comparative districts were enthusiastic about encouraging links with conservation organisations and emphasised the advocacy benefits.

It's absolutely vital [to foster links] if we are going to survive. We need public support for the Department.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

It adds to the Department's credibility to have direct links ... it's a counter-bureaucratic measure - we're not just a faceless Department.

(Staff member, Tainui)

It's absolutely imperative. We need them for both financial and psychological support.

(Staff member, Tainui)

The Rakiura District Conservator noted that with his scale of operations, links were very necessary:

We are local neighbours ... our local base is only 480 people.

(District Conservator, Rakiura)

In general, staff in comparative areas reported good relations with conservation organisations. Tainui in particular has a regular meeting with the local branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society:

We have formal contact. Once a month there's an evening meeting open to all. It might be a slide evening, or with a guest speaker. Over supper a lot of discussion occurs... About six staff would turn up. We get about 30 to these meetings ... We don't want to further publicise it because we haven't got the space and no money to hire a hall.

(Staff member, Tainui)

The experiences of comparative districts show that it is not essential to have a Project Conservation coordinator to foster relations with conservation organisations. In these areas the task appears to be integrated into general district activity.

Although links with conservation organisations are a typical part of Project Conservation's activities, it is important that the programme is not perceived as a guarantee of strong and beneficial relations with conservation organisations. Some Coromandel staff were concerned that departmental links with conservation organisations would not be improved solely by Project conservation. To achieve this the development of a clear direction for the Department is also needed:

They have to link up with a Department that knows what it's doing and where it's going. There's a lot of criticism [of DOC] within conservation groups, but also support ... They want to have influence as well as putting in effort.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

Links with conservation organisations can only go so far because of the lack of staff training.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

The need to work out the respective roles of the Department and conservation organisations was also apparent in the comments of one member of a conservation organisation:

It's early days. We are still working out the role. There are not yet clearly defined areas of responsibility Forest and Bird would like to be close to the heart of DOC's management of the estate -it would seek to have its knowledge, experience and skills drawn on more than perhaps it does. It could be consulted on development and issues - mining, grazing, sphagnum, those kinds of things. Rather than having to respond in an adversarial sense... it would prefer to be involved at an earlier stage ... to have a more positive input, into such issues... There's been a problem of agreeing on what are appropriate tasks, but we're gradually meeting in the middle. Forest and Bird doesn't want to be seen just planting up amenity areas, they are more keen to be seen rehabilitating sand dunes -areas of higher conservation values.

(Forest and Bird member, West Coast)

These concerns echo the issue raised by several volunteers about the need for clearer guidance as to their role in Project Conservation.

Members of conservation organisations come to Project Conservation with their own agenda, and will understand the nature of their involvement on this basis. They may not be content to let the Department define priorities, but attempt to influence the management of natural resources in their area. Although the aims of the Department and conservation organisations may appear similar, in that both are concerned with the protection of natural areas, their positions within the political structure are obviously very different. In carrying out government policy the Department must deal with conservation lobby groups as one of many interest groups, and this will affect the way in which good relations between the Department and conservation organisations may be achieved.

5.4 Links with tangata whenua

Although links with tangata whenua are not explicitly sought through Project Conservation as are links with conservation organisations, they are encouraged by two factors:

- Goal III is aimed at increasing public interest in the values of the natural environment and providing new opportunities for people to experience the conservation estate. Maori people as a whole, both young and old, are an obvious target group for Goal III, because they are under-represented as visitors to the conservation estate (Booth, 1989:12).

- The impetus for developing links with tangata whenua is also provided by the Conservation Act which directs the Department to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in its activities. Furthermore, in the future the Department will be increasingly required to work with iwi authorities who will be active in policy development and resource management. Government agencies will be required to consult with iwi over policies of common concern (Partnership Response, 1988).

As noted previously, it cannot be assumed that Maori feel sympathetic to or trusting of the Department's intentions towards the management of natural and historic resources. There are also important differences between some of the Department's policies and Maori interests. In some respects traditional Maori cultural uses of flora and fauna may conflict with the Department's statutory responsibilities to protect species and habitat. In developing Project Conservation activities with Maori groups, their broader concerns about estate management and resource use will be raised. The ways in which these issues are dealt with will affect Maori responses towards Project Conservation.

Project Conservation may be seen by some staff as an appropriate vehicle through which the Department can develop a close relationship with local Maori communities. All Project Conservation coordinators are keen to work with tangata whenua, but so far there have been few activities involving Maori groups. One example is the Coromandel coordinator's involvement with the Thames Hospital Board in taking a group of young Maori ACCESS trainees to Moehau and forest park land at Waikawau Bay.

Only Whangarei District has attempted to develop Project Conservation as a bicultural process which aims at achieving partnership between the Crown and tangata whenua in the management and care of natural and historic resources. There, Maori input into Project Conservation has occurred in a variety of ways, ranging from the planning of activities and the provision of land or facilities, to participation in volunteer and trainee programmes:

Ngati wai are already heavily into voluntary effort - they offer their marae and hospitality.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

However, despite the examples of cooperation that are developing between the Department and Maori groups through Project Conservation, the programme has been set up within the constraints of a Pakeha cultural and organisational framework which affects the lines along which partnership may develop.

The monocultural basis of Project Conservation is illustrated by the concept of voluntary work. Maori and Pakeha have quite different understandings and experiences of voluntary work.

Although Maori are involved in many of the same types of voluntary work as are Pakeha, they also have distinct responsibilities and practices of voluntary work related to their own culture. These entail voluntary work for members of the extended family and marae, which is closely bound up with kinship obligations.

A survey conducted by the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988: 564,565) indicated that 71% of Maori people give unpaid assistance to others outside of their immediate households, compared to 64% of Pakeha. Furthermore, Maori are much more likely than Pakeha to do unpaid work for relatives - 82% as compared to 53%. This type of voluntary work is particularly undertaken by middle-aged and elderly Maori who fulfil the important kaumatua (elder) roles in tribal life (Social Monitoring Group, 1989: 102). For many Maori people, voluntary work means helping others known to oneself in familiar tribal and community contexts such as the whanau, marae, tribal committee, kohanga reo and Maori Women's Welfare League.

In contrast to the typical kin-based Maori experience of voluntary work, Project Conservation is based on and guided by the objectives and priorities of an institution of the state, which are usually set with very little reference to outside groups.

This has implications for the appeal of voluntary work in Project Conservation for Maori people. There is neither the obvious connection with kin and community interests, nor a familiar organisational context, nor familiar faces. In order for Project Conservation to attract Maori people, it must consider developing a style of voluntary work which is more suited to the Maori experience. Such a style may seek contact with existing Maori voluntary networks and include whanau or community members. Projects may be set up in areas which contain natural or historic resources of particular significance to tangata whenua.

A planned volunteer project in Whangarei involving the protection of brown teal habitat indicates how a community-based approach may be successful. This project is being jointly organised by the Department and the Maori community at Whananaki, where there are brown teal roosting sites.

Developing community-based programmes involving groups that already work together is not only applicable to Maori volunteers. It also makes sense for many Pakeha people whose motivation for doing voluntary work in Project Conservation is primarily one of community service (see Chapter 3). Project Conservation certainly displays a community orientation in its philosophy, and has the potential to develop this more obviously in practice.

The high participation of Maori in voluntary work in their own communities also has implications for the time individuals may be able to devote to other voluntary work. Some staff are aware of this. Just as Pakeha volunteers suffer 'burn out' from too many demands on their time, so too do Maori:

They're not interested in [Project Conservation] voluntary work.
They're too busy with their own business such as land claims and forming a trust board.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

Bicultural ways of operating need to be explored when developing volunteer activities which involve Maori people, and this approach is also important for trainee programmes. Such programmes are an obvious way in which Maori people, particularly young Maori, can be incorporated into Project Conservation. Some staff regard this involvement as a crucial aspect of the Department's community development role in areas of high unemployment.

[trainee schemes] give young Maori people a sense of worth ...

(Staff member, Whangarei)

[Maori] want jobs for their people, and want work done on their land.
They are supportive of the idea [of Project Conservation].

(Coordinator, Murihiku)

However, it should not be assumed that by providing trainee opportunities, Project Conservation is a 'saviour' for young Maori. In other words, Project Conservation should not develop a patronising relationship with them. Maori groups are already experienced training providers in many areas. For example, the Ngati Wai Trust Board in Whangarei District runs a number of ACCESS programmes and does not have to rely on the Department to offer courses. Indeed, Ngati Wai trainees are contributing to Project Conservation by participating in voluntary work.

While partnership in Project Conservation may be an exciting and worthwhile concept, it nevertheless poses difficulties. Like the conservation organisations, tangata whenua come into Project Conservation with particular expectations of the Department. They wish to work with the Department on an equal basis, and expect their knowledge and expertise to be appreciated and used.

In Whangarei District the exploration of partnership with Ngati Wai has raised issues concerning each party's understanding of partnership and the power relations between the two.

So far, the main problem has been one of communication between the two parties. While district staff have made efforts to liaise with the Ngati Wai Trust Board, and have employed a coordinator with Ngati Wai affiliations specifically to enhance communications, there are occasions when communication is faulty. For example, Ngati Wai wish to be consulted on matters affecting the conservation estate at an early stage. (There are over 15 reserve areas in the Ngati Wai region.)

The need for good communication was illustrated at a meeting between staff and Ngati Wai members at Whakapoumahara marae, Whananaki. There, the main issue raised by local people was the lack of information they were receiving about the Department's activities. They had been surprised to see district staff erecting toilets at the local beach camping ground. They

considered that they should have been informed of this matter, and also about a proposed name change for the beach, and other matters relating to the use of the camp over summer.

Of particular concern was notification of the vacancy which had arisen for a camp manager. As local people saw it, the Department was interested in partnership if it meant obtaining Ngati Wai's voluntary assistance with work on the conservation estate, but were less enthusiastic when Ngati Wai expressed interest in management or in possible employment.

While the example of the toilets may seem trivial, it is indicative of a lack of trust between tangata whenua and a state institution. However, trust can be built up by attention to the seemingly unimportant, day-to-day matters. These are inevitably the areas where staff come into direct contact with the community, and consequently impressions of the Department are quickly formed. The coordinator acknowledges that such matters must be put right if the partnership is to have solid foundations:

You can't blame the guys who work for DOC. They get a job assignment -'Go put toilets at Whananaki' ... At Whananaki, Ngati Wai say 'You've come to our back door, we don't need you to tell us everything, but we wouldn't have minded if we were told you're coming through and we might have been able to help'. Consequently, we've got a meeting with Whananaki set up tomorrow and we're on the back foot... It's not that they [District staff] don't want it to work, but in our haste sometimes, everyday things, little things ... if this sort of reaction's going to happen every time we go and put up a toilet, it's frustrating!

Similarly, the matter of the camp ground manager may be resolved through discussions:

If you want a manager at the camp ground, they have a name to put forward. OK, he may not be selected ... [but] if they are involved and consulted they will help manage ... they are wanting to know if this partnership is just another tokenism.

(Coordinator, Whangarei)

The question of tokenism was raised by several Ngati Wai members. One suggested that the Department viewed Ngati Wai as a junior partner; that is, as the dependent party in the relationship with less power and influence. Another considered that the Department has "neither the means nor the money to implement partnership". District staff are also concerned about the adequacy of resources for implementing projects. They do not want to generate commitment from local people for activities which may not go ahead through lack of resources.

It is clear that Ngati Wai wish to be regarded as an equal partner in estate management. They do not want to be perceived simply as a source of free, or cheap labour. It will take time to construct a viable partnership, but already there are encouraging developments: voluntary work at Mimiwhangata and at Whananaki and the Conservation Corps project.

In working out the details of partnership between the Department and tangata whenua, it is necessary to look at the Department's own preparation for partnership. In this respect staff education is important. It is one area where the Whangarei staff involved in developing partnership acknowledge more effort is required.

There's a lot to overcome, even in DOC itself. People are suspicious of partnership, some are not aware, not interested ... we have been remiss about getting information about Project Conservation out to staff, particularly over the partnership idea.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

CHAPTER 6

STAFF ASSESSMENTS OF PROJECT CONSERVATION

6.1 Introduction

As part of the evaluation, staff were asked to give their opinions about Project Conservation. Twenty eight staff were interviewed; 18 in the pilot areas and 10 in the comparative districts respectively. Their views are complemented by the understanding others have of Project Conservation, including volunteers, trainees and other members of the community. In some cases their assessments coincide with those of staff, in others they raise aspects of Project Conservation which need to be addressed by the Department if Project Conservation is to be successful.

By providing an overview of Project Conservation as a whole, this chapter elaborates on many of the issues raised in previous chapters concerning volunteers, trainees and relations with the community.

The staff assessment of Project Conservation focuses on the following issues:

- What are considered to be the strengths of Project Conservation?
- What are viewed as the problems?
- What should be the priorities for Project Conservation?

6.2 The Strengths of Project Conservation

Discussion with staff identified the following as strengths of Project Conservation:

- its use as an advocacy strategy
- achievement of practical conservation work
- a means of fostering community development
- encouragement of use of the conservation estate.

6.2.1 Advocacy

According to staff Project Conservation is a good advocacy strategy. This was mentioned more frequently, and emphasised more strongly than any other advantage.

Individuals outside of the Department involved in Project Conservation tend to agree with staff. One member of the Whangarei Volunteer Committee stated that the strength of Project Conservation is its ability to "bring the community together on issues of conservation". A Coromandel community health worker considered Project Conservation's role was: ... to educate, raise awareness, facilitate people's access to the environment".

Staff generally agreed that Project Conservation presented opportunities to:

- generate public support for the Department,
- increase public awareness of conservation issues, and
- communicate with the community.

Each of these are discussed in more detail below.

Generating public support for DOC

Project Conservation constitutes a distinct type of contact with the public. It is not confined to contact with regular estate users or visitors, nor does it involve staff with the public only on the estate. Instead it takes staff into the community to work with a diverse range of people including adults and children in the education system, business people, ACCESS trainees, local authority representatives and tangata whenua.

In combining work objectives with educational objectives, Project Conservation provides a positive milieu where public understanding about the Department's role and functions can be fostered. Project Conservation's value in generating public support is emphasised by many staff:

[The most successful aspect is] trying to tell the people within this district how we function and what are our responsibilities. I see that as being a considerable amount of our public relations. An effort to communicate our intentions to the people out there, but also to try to make them feel they belong. If they feel as though they belong then they do identify with the resource and they identify with the effort.

(District Conservator, Coromandel)

Without widespread social support or understanding of DOC's conservation objectives, conservation efforts will never realise full success.

(Staff member, Murihiku)

As people become more aware, they become sympathetic to the aims of DOC.

(District Conservator, Tainui)

[Project Conservation] is the only proactive thing in the district. It's certainly raising our support out there in the community and raising public consciousness about conservation.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

The West Coast Coordinator reported that the Department's image has definitely improved in one community, Ross, which hosted a Project Conservation ACCESS course. Since its completion, course participants have done voluntary work on the Ross Walkway and look after the Ross Cottage at the entrance of the walkway. This type of community contact is particularly advantageous for the Department in an area such as the West Coast, where negative attitudes towards conservation are widespread.

Increasing public awareness of conservation issues

Project Conservation is a useful channel for educating the public on specific conservation issues. Programmes have provided information on: plastics pollution, endangered species, environmental impacts of mining, industrial history, and the relationship between tourism and conservation.

Murihiku staff regard Project Conservation as part of their overall conservation education programme, and emphasise that education is central to all Project Conservation activities:

Project Conservation I see as one component of conservation education. It's achieving a management function, but it's also changing people's perceptions, which is what conservation education is all about.

(District Conservator, Murihiku)

There's quite a useful overlap between my conservation education initiatives and Project Conservation. Conservation Week and the plastics pollution was one example of that. Fergus [the Project Conservation Coordinator] has been able to run concurrent Project Conservation activities... I see it [Project Conservation] as a valuable adjunct to the work I am doing in conservation education. It's by first hand experience, by becoming personally involved, that you build up an awareness.

(Education Officer, Murihiku)

Coromandel staff are also concerned to educate the public that the resource is theirs and they have a responsibility to care for it. The Coromandel District Conservator commented:

Education is certainly a strong thrust on our part ... we're trying to create a structure where education is important ... we need an education officer.

In one of the comparative districts, Tainui, staff have developed a summer programme which combines education with voluntary work:

We run a year round interpretation programme. We've taken that and developed an element of voluntary work into nearly all of those activities. People are coming out with us, they are actually doing some conservation work, so that there's that sense of having achieved something, and as well as that we're going to provide interpretation so they don't just go out there and plant trees, but they find out about the area they're planting trees in, and what the aims of it all are, and what the ecology of that area is, how it used to be, how we hope it will be. So it becomes a holistic experience.

(Conservation Officer, Tainui)

Communicating with the community

Effective advocacy requires not only attention to what is advocated, but also attention to how the message is conveyed. Project Conservation provides a channel for liaising with key groups

and institutions locally. Staff identify the main ones as:

(i) Conservation organisations.

These groups have a keen interest in conservation issues and act as lobby groups. It is therefore important that the Department has sustained contact with them. However, only one staff member in the pilot areas considered a major strength of Project Conservation was to foster relations with conservation organisations. In contrast, this relationship was mentioned as important for Project Conservation by several staff in the comparative districts and reflects a major aspect of staff contact with the community in those areas:

Very important for coordinating with the conservation groups ... we can use Project Conservation initiatives to ensure better relationships with those groups so that we're harnessing their interest and their work towards the same objectives, rather than competing ... DOC is the coordinator of that effort in assessing priorities.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

I think we're under a lot of stress because of our financial situation and reduction in staff. We're unable to fulfil our current roles and I think we need greater support from conservation organisations ... we need them on board as allies and friends rather than adversaries ... one of the really important things about Project Conservation is that getting back together and creating stronger bonds with the clubs.

(Staff member, Tainui)

(ii) Tangata whenua

were identified as a key local group by three staff in Whangarei (district). In this area, Project Conservation is developing within the framework of partnership with Ngati Wai. Progress in working towards partnership was identified as a success of Project Conservation to date:

To me, the most successful aspect is to have people from the Department and the tangata whenua talking to each other with some dignity.

(Coordinator, Whangarei)

Arriving at an understanding that the Department of Conservation and Ngati Wai Trust will move towards partnership on a 50-50 basis on management and control.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

The coordinators in the other pilot areas reported that they had contact with Maori individuals and organisations, but this was mainly in reference to Conservation Corps and not currently a major component of Project Conservation.

(iii) Educational institutions

from the primary to the tertiary levels have been sympathetic to Project Conservation. It has consequently increased the opportunities for staff to work with educational institutions.

Murihiku staff considered that a major success of Project Conservation in their area has been greater contact with schools. The coordinator has targeted schools for one-day voluntary activities, such as beach clean ups, and fencing a penguin colony.

A secondary school biology teacher, who has been involved in promoting Project Conservation to her classes commented:

It's important for the girls to see conservation going on in reality, rather than in text books.

This teacher intended to continue her classes' involvement with the Department by inviting district staff to speak at the school in 1989.

The Coromandel and West Coast coordinators reported that as part of their duties they were substantially involved in conservation education activities with schools, including Conservation Week and school visits. They have interpreted their jobs to include a strong educational role.

West Coast staff emphasised that in their area, where there is a widespread negative attitude towards conservation, working with schools is an effective way of promoting a conservationist understanding of the natural environment:

The present working generation of the West Coast is never going to change its attitudes. We're just wasting our time to think that our advocacy and public relations here is going to change the attitudes of fourth generation Coasters who have always been brought up with extraction and where conservation is a dirty word ... we're concentrating on the schools and the younger group.

(Staff member, West Coast)

6.2.2 Work Achieved

Of secondary importance to the advocacy benefits of Project Conservation, is the work achieved by volunteers and trainees. A Tainui staff member sums up a widespread view:

It's not so much getting the work done but the greatest benefit [of Project Conservation] is getting the community alongside.

Nevertheless, the advantages of getting extra work done are acknowledged by many district staff who operate in a working environment where field resources are restricted.

The opportunity to do practical conservation work was regarded as a strength of Project Conservation by volunteers in West Coast and Murihiku. They derived from it both personal benefits, and a feeling of contributing to the protection of the estate:

Involving people of all ages in conservation activities of all kinds. That brings an awareness of the practicalities of conservation as opposed to the theory. If people are actually planting trees rather than talking about it.

(Volunteer Leader, Murihiku)

This comment reveals the special character of Project Conservation mentioned by several staff; that is, the combination of intellectual and physical work. As the Murihiku Education Officer observed,

People need to become personally involved to become aware of conservation. It's knowledge plus empathy.

The Coromandel Coordinator made the point that people want to learn about immediate environment as well as undertake work. She described one activity:

When we picked up plastic in the estuary we had Alan Saunders there and he could tell us about the different types of weeds and birds ... that gives a richer experience. The whole advocacy role that DOC must regard very seriously should be part of Project Conservation.

Labour undertaken by volunteers and trainees can become a very effective means of advocacy if it is combined with conservation education. For the newcomer to conservation work it means combining two different kinds of learning experience, the practical and the intellectual, so that they are able to acquire new skills and information. Committed conservationist volunteers can also benefit by applying existing knowledge or skills in new ways through practical activities.

The advantage of extra labour provided by Project Conservation is tempered somewhat by the disadvantages identified by staff. These range from concerns that volunteers and trainees will be seen as replacements for permanent staff, to questions over the ability of volunteers and trainees to adequately do conservation work. These disadvantages are discussed in section 6.3.

6.2.3 Community Development

Some staff consider that Project Conservation enables the Department to be more responsive to community objectives:

I see it as a means of trying to coordinate voluntary activities, to allow people to be involved in conservation. It's opposite to the bureaucratic line. What conservation things do communities want to do?
To assist where possible.

(Staff member, Tainui)

By becoming responsive to community objectives, Project Conservation is perceived as a tool of community development. Community development is a way of responding to and dealing with change. It is based on the assumption that people have the right and the capacity to make decisions about their own community. Ideally it seeks to shift decision making and control

from the few to the many, and from outside the community to within the community (Shirley, 1982: 21).

Project Conservation may foster opportunities for community development in several ways, for example, by helping people to acquire new skills, by offering new ways of together and by providing access to decision making processes. Such opportunities are especially pertinent to communities experiencing the impacts of economic restructuring, and an associated loss of jobs and community services. These were major local concerns identified in most areas studied, and affected the way that the Department and its activities were viewed by members of the public (see Chapter 5).

The potential for community development through Project Conservation is regarded as particularly important by the volunteers and others outside of the Department:

It means that we have some sense of input into the Department and as local people we're in the best position to monitor what goes on and the impact of it.

(Friends of Moehau, Coromandel)

The Coromandel community health worker suggested that the Department looked after a resource of benefit to the community's mental and physical health:

DOC has a major education role in terms of pride and community development... Project Conservation has provided people with the opportunity to connect their goals and aspirations with the DOC land ... I would like to strengthen the healing emphasis ... I want this to become available to a wide range of people, not to become the domain of the elite.

People in the West Coast region also commented on the potential of Project Conservation to contribute to community development. The volunteer caretakers of the Ross Cottage consider Project Conservation to be instrumental in promoting tourism in their small community:

Harihari is trying to promote their township and they've looked at what we've been doing here. They've invited us down to Harihari to talk about ideas we've come up with and how we formed Friends of the Walkway.

Comments referring to the community development advantages of Project Conservation specifically identified benefits to the community, rather than any direct benefits to the Department. However, there is an important advocacy Benefit for the Department to be gained from fostering community development in ecologically sensitive ways.

6.2.4 To encourage use of the conservation estate

Some staff considered that a strength of Project Conservation is that it can provide a broader range of people with opportunities to experience the conservation estate which is typically used by only a small section of the public. In this respect, a Hauraki staff member identified a

need for Project Conservation to involve school groups and retired people.

Coromandel and Tainui staff members pointed out that through Project Conservation, the public may be encouraged to treat the environment with more respect, so that sensitive use of the estate could be promoted through Project Conservation. A Coromandel staff member suggested that one of the most successful aspects of Project Conservation is to encourage "sharing of a responsibility [between Department and public] to look after the estate."

6.3 Problems Associated with Project Conservation

Most of the problems that staff identified with Project Conservation stem not from the concept itself, which is widely regarded as being of value. Instead, problems are associated with the structure and organisation of the Department and, to a lesser extent, with the administration of Project Conservation itself, and with the characteristics of the communities in which Project Conservation operates.

6.3.1 Problems associated with departmental structure and organisation

The main problems raised were:

- the concern that volunteers and trainees may replace paid workers
- a lack of resources for Project Conservation
- stress on staff.

Replacement of staff

This was an issue raised by staff, volunteers and trainees.

Nine staff members considered that concerns over volunteers and trainees replacing permanent staff could be a major threat to the success of Project Conservation. The use of volunteers and trainees for conservation work was also identified at a Murihiku District staff meeting as a potential source of tension between the Department and the Workers' Union. They had talked to the local union branch about Project Conservation and obtained their support for the programmes.

In Coromandel District a meeting was called between the Kauaeranga volunteer group, district wage workers and other staff. The aim of the meeting was to improve communication between the volunteers and departmental employees, and to sort out the ways that volunteers could best assist, without being seen to replace workers.

At this meeting the workers raised several concerns about volunteers. They were not only concerned about volunteer labour being used instead of employing workers, but they also feared a decline in job satisfaction if volunteers did the more interesting, routine tasks. After some discussion, the volunteers and workers decided that they would work together in teams so that volunteers would experience a range of tasks. While this may certainly improve working relations between volunteers and waged workers, it does not resolve the replacement issue. Indeed, by making volunteer and worker tasks interchangeable, the distinctions between the work responsibilities of each group is blurred.

To summarise, the industrial relations difficulties staff identified with the use of volunteer and trainee labour are as follows:

- Staff reported some scepticism in the community about the motives of Project Conservation. People perceive the Department to be relying on free, or cheap labour, precisely at a time when jobs have been lost from district offices in areas already facing unemployment.
- There are problems in gaining support from the Workers' Union who consider that the use of volunteers and trainees undermines job opportunities for wage workers.
- Relations between salaried staff and wage workers may be upset.
- There was some concern that success in using volunteers and trainees may result in future cuts in staff and funding, as the Department may be viewed as 'making do' on fewer resources.

Although Project Conservation's goals clearly state that "Project Conservation will complement the permanent wage and salaried staff, and not replace their functions", this is inadequate as a guideline for managing relations between staff and volunteers or trainees and between the Department and relevant unions. The statement provides no clear criteria as to:

- what is the level of permanent wage and salaried staff;
- what is 'complementary work'
- the functions of permanent wage staff and how these may differ from the functions of volunteers

Several staff questioned the usefulness of this statement in a situation where there are few employees to carry out work. Inevitably, volunteers or trainees will do work that wage workers could have done, if they were available. To this extent, volunteers and trainees fill a void created by a previous reduction in the labour force, even if they do not physically replace staff. Investigation of jobs carried out by volunteers and trainees shows that, while some can be defined as new, many, such as track maintenance and weed control, are necessary, ongoing tasks that wageworkers do.

Lack of resources

Inadequate resources for Project Conservation was seen by staff as a major problem. The lack of staff resources was of particular concern. In all areas the availability of staff to supervise and organise Project Conservation activities emerged as an issue.

It is not just a matter of insufficient numbers, but also a matter of having few trained staff to work effectively with volunteers and trainees (see section 6.3.2).

[Project Conservation] involves quite a commitment from the Department's point of view in terms of resources, mainly people resources... there are skills which supervisors have to acquire. Unfortunately, the skills within the Department, because we've been losing staff, a lot of those skills are disappearing at a time when they would be beneficial to Project Conservation.

(Staff member, Tainui)

Staff in both the pilot and comparative areas found that there were insufficient funds for materials and basic operational costs involved in running programmes. A staff member in one of the comparative districts, who has extensive experience in running volunteer activities, stated that he set the priority of a job according to the availability of materials. A job requiring no materials would have high priority, but a job needing materials which cannot be obtained cheaply or through donations would be unlikely to go ahead.

The physical characteristics of the area for which a programme is planned also affects costs. This emerged as a problem in the West Coast Region, where the coordinator has an extensive area of responsibility. She has experienced difficulties in trying to service a number of dispersed communities without adequate transport. The region, 530 km from north to south, is about 3 times the length of the three other pilot areas. The West Coast Region covers 400,6000 hectares, while Murihiku District covers 14,880 ha, Whangarei District 4,730 ha and Coromandel District 2,670 ha.

One Hauraki staff member noted that most of the opportunities for voluntary work in that district existed on islands in the Hauraki Maritime Park. This incurs higher costs, because of factors like transport.

Costs are not only involved in setting up and undertaking tasks, but may be borne long after a programme has been completed. For example, some staff were concerned that maintenance commitments on new tracks developed under Project Conservation could not be met in the future.

A general lack of resources for operational activities raises a potential conflict for some staff between the allocation of resources for Project Conservation or for district operations. A few suggested that money provided for Project Conservation could be spent more efficiently and effectively on field operations. They were concerned that projects using inexperienced and workers would waste funds.

Others spoke of the danger they saw in Project Conservation draining off resources from other areas of district work. One suggested that an adequate operations budget for Project Conservation was required to prevent this occurring.

Financial constraints have implications for the type of activities Project Conservation may be able to undertake and consequently the extent to which it can contribute to the district's work objectives. They also have implications for the satisfaction volunteers and trainees derive from participation in Project Conservation, particularly if they are keen to embark on a programme which involves resources which may not be available.

Staff strongly emphasised that adequate resourcing of Project Conservation is essential to 'keep faith' with programme participants. Expectations are built up within the community once a project is mooted. A Whangarei staff member commented:

We need some more realistic money directed to projects ...enough money to prove we're serious about partnership. It's all very well words and good ideas but in the end you've got to see some action.

One Coromandel staff member identified the problem of establishing and maintaining credibility with the community as fundamentally associated with the question of resources:

The most important role for Project Conservation is its links with the public... If DOC believes Project Conservation has a value, then they've got to give us the resources to mount a fair and reasonable approach to it.

While staff are critical of the lack of resources, they have also actively sought alternative sources of support in the community. As Table 2 (Chapter 2) shows, a range of possible sources of support are available.

Community input into Project Conservation is extensive. Coordinators have obtained support from a wide range of groups including business, voluntary associations, local government, tangata whenua and educational institutions. They have received resources such as transport, tools and equipment, accommodation, materials, financial help and supervisors. Here is one example:

[The jail] was donated to DOC ... the Ross community shifted it on to the site. That was a whole community effort. The fire brigade, the business people, the limeworks supplied all the trucks and machinery.

(Ross Cottage group, West Coast)

Stress on staff

Project Conservation places stress on staff in several ways. Undoubtedly it increases workloads. Not only does time have to be spent supervising volunteers or trainees, but extra time is also required to plan projects and organise the many supporting aspects, such as supervisors, tutors, transport, equipment and, in some cases, accommodation for programme participants.

Many of these tasks occur outside of normal working hours, yet staff are not paid. Furthermore, such responsibilities impinge on time that may be otherwise spent with the family or at leisure. In one case, a Hauraki staff member mentioned that an employee's wife also contributed time to organising volunteer projects.

Stress is also experienced by staff who find themselves in a supervisory situation for which they have not been trained (see section 6.3.2).

Summary

In discussing the problems associated with Project Conservation, staff frequently referred to the organisational environment in which Project Conservation is attempting to establish itself. In all areas, staff reported that departmental restructuring has affected the resources available to do work and consequently made daily operation at district level difficult.

While staff are strong in their commitment to Project Conservation, they acknowledge that attempts to do justice to the new initiative exacerbate an already stressful situation:

[Project Conservation] came out of a very difficult time. Politically I think it has been weakened by emerging at a time of redundancy and restructuring so that it's been tainted by those processes in many people's minds. I think that's been one of the problems for staff as well. It was a very bad time to suddenly say "going to have a big volunteer component". It's made people rather cynical about the objectives of it. It means we have to work harder to clarify those issues - the union issues... the weakness of Project Conservation is actually the weakness of DOC. They're inseparable in the sense that, money is essential to make things work and you can only ask so much of volunteers.

(Coordinator, Coromandel)

I can't see how Project Conservation can improve its base without a pretty sound Department. We've got to know where we are before we ask people [volunteers] to come in ... Look how far we have got as a Department. Eighteen months down the track and we are a shambles. How do you expect Project Conservation to be any better? You can't enthuse staff if you've got a machine that is stuttering along on two pistons...when you're working in that sort of environment I can't see how you can pick up something like Project Conservation. It is one of the romantic things - it's trying to capture a little bit of magic with the public.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

6.3.2 Problems in the administration of Project Conservation

The two main issues identified by staff were:

- staff training
- information about Project Conservation

Staff Training

The need for staff training was raised by staff and by volunteers and trainees.

Concern over inadequate staff preparation for working with volunteers and trainees was by no means evenly emphasised throughout the seven areas. It was raised in two pilot areas, and in two comparative districts. Coromandel was the area by far the most concerned with staff training. It was discussed by all five staff interviewed, some of the volunteers and a person outside of the Department involved in Project Conservation:

It would have helped to have training about how to deal with volunteers, who they are and what are their expectations, and to surface the reservations of staff to the idea [Project Conservation] - this was needed before it got underway.

(District Conservator, Coromandel)

There's one disadvantage as I see it and that's supervision. There's got to be a lot more attention given to training supervisors ... some are particularly skilled in the conservation area, others are not so skilled.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

Apart from the general concerns expressed about providing staff with the necessary organisational and personnel skills to successfully run volunteer and trainee programmes, it is also apparent that all staff need to be adequately briefed about Project Conservation so that they can provide information for volunteers and trainees.

Volunteers in Coromandel and West Coast, and trainees in the latter area said that more information could have been given to them, not only about Project Conservation, but also on the Department's roles and functions. They would have also appreciated more information about how the district operated on a day-to-day basis, and what their relationship to the Department was. Lack of role clarity was evident among both volunteers and trainees.

Furthermore, there are indications that a comprehensive understanding of conservation is not being articulated as part of Project Conservation programmes. Project Conservation must clearly state conservation values and develop ways in which they can be effectively communicated to participants. Staff directly dealing with volunteers and trainees play a crucial role in conveying understanding of conservation values and practices. They therefore must be appropriately prepared for such work.

Attention to staff training is needed to build an effective team of staff and Project Conservation participants. Murihiku District staff have devoted some effort to training supervisors and leaders. The coordinator has run a leadership workshop to train district staff and people from the community to run working holiday projects. The course drew in those who already had the requisite practical skills, and emphasised group leadership and interpretation skills.

Staff training must to encompass a wide range of skills including project planning and administration, personnel management, dissemination of information, conservation education and community liaison. Furthermore, training should not only be considered for staff working directly in Project Conservation. Other staff need to become familiar with the aims of Project Conservation to ensure their support for the programme.

Information about Project Conservation

A lack of information about Project Conservation was a problem particularly identified by staff in the comparative districts:

There's been general ignorance regarding what it's all about ...I would say that most of the staff are not very familiar with it.

(Staff member, Tainui)

Staff in the comparative districts have tended to find out about Project Conservation through other staff in their own district or in the pilot districts, rather than directly from Central Office.

As well as a lack of information about Project Conservation being identified as a problem by some staff, several noted that there has been confusion over the relationship between Project Conservation and Conservation Corps:

It's hard to get a clear message over... What is Project Conservation?
We've got Conservation Corps which has completely confused everything...
that looks pretty negative.

(Staff member, Whangarei)

At the moment the information we are getting from Central Office is fairly wishy washy - I can understand that because it's only being piloted - but, particularly with Conservation Corps we get people phoning in and they have got information from elsewhere ... Although it's good to allow flexibility it seems to need a little more structure to get it off the ground.

(Staff member, Tainui)

Staff reported that both departmental staff and members of the community were confused over what is the Department's role in the two schemes, and the differences in the goals of each. Inadequacy of information about Project Conservation is an indicator of a lack of overall clear policy and guidelines for the programme.

6.3.3 Problems stemming from the community

Discussion so far has focused on problems affecting Project Conservation that arise from the departmental environment in which it operates and specific administrative or policy matters. These were the main issues raised by staff. In contrast, they identified very few problems stemming from the community. The main one mentioned was a lack of skilled volunteers and trainees:

The problem with volunteers and ACCESS groups is inexperience. Supervisors spend a lot of time instructing people on what is required. Even though it's basic labour work there's still requirements in standards of track and hut maintenance and safety standards ... we're finding it more time consuming with the ACCESS group ... it's good for them, they're learning a lot about themselves and a lot about the backcountry... but we cannot rely on getting a project finished in a specified time. So there's a greater burden placed on the supervisors.

(Staff member, West Coast)

...the most difficult thing in the world to try and manage is a band of people with a lot of good feeling but who are pretty inept at doing things in a disciplined sort of a way. ... you're looking at 20 people and you don't know what their levels of skill are... Its important to the morale of the staff [because] when they find difficulties, they can decide that this Project Conservation is unsuccessful.

(Staff member, Coromandel)

The assumption that volunteers and trainees are unskilled raises four points which require examination:

- What are staff expectations with regard to the level of skills and experience among volunteers and trainees?
- What skills do volunteers and trainees have?
- What type of training should Project Conservation provide for volunteers and trainees?
- What are volunteers' and trainees' expectations of training?

Staff expectations concerning skills and experience of volunteers and trainees.

Some staff indicated that they expected Project Conservation participants to lack appropriate skills. Yet other staff acknowledged them as an untapped pool, especially volunteers who may have both practical experience and professional expertise. Some staff suggested that staff attitudes need to be changed. They are not the only conservation experts, and need to become more aware of and use the expertise offered by volunteers.

In the community there are people with very strong skills that quite often we don't identify. It's by an initiative like Project Conservation that they are encouraged to emerge. Skills like the 70 year old who has helped with the yellow-head survey. And through Adopt-a-DOC we are identifying skills in schools. One leader has built up a knowledge of outdoor education ... historic knowledge that we really appreciate having the access to ... it's often through having a structure like Project Conservation it gives you an avenue of first hand contact.

(Education Officer, Murihiku)

I think a lot of DOC staff undervalue the knowledge, the interest of the community in wanting to work with them and understand our management problems.

(Staff member, Hauraki)

Other staff suggested that staff may place too high an expectation on Project Conservation participants to perform. If Project Conservation seeks to encourage the 'newcomer' to conservation who does not have much experience of the conservation estate, then such volunteers cannot be expected to possess appropriate skills. On the contrary, they will require

specific tuition.

Concern that volunteers and trainees are unskilled reflects ambivalence over whether Project Conservation is primarily a programme to get work done, or to promote advocacy. If its main objective is to get work done, then the low level of participants becomes a problem. If advocacy is the principal objective, then participants' lack of skills is not such a contentious aspect. Rather, the work done becomes a focus for advocacy activities aimed at improving the individual's conservation awareness and expertise.

Skills held by volunteers and trainees.

Volunteer assessments of their skills gave a very different picture from the one presented by some departmental staff (see Chapter 3). Identification of the skills and experience of both volunteers and trainees is important for the success of Project Conservation so that these skills can be used more effectively.

Training for volunteers and trainees

The type of training that Project Conservation should provide for participants was not discussed in depth by any staff member. However, coordinators are attempting to integrate training into their programmes. In many cases participants receive explanation of work tasks and 'on the job' training in specific techniques. Murihiku also includes formal educational sessions, while Coromandel and Whangarei mentioned conducting sessions on issues such as weed control, plastics pollution and species habitat. Staff consider that they have an obligation to provide Project Conservation participants with an informative and enjoyable experience, as well as with the opportunity to do work. Obviously, volunteers and trainees will differ in their training requirements and within these two categories there must be flexibility to cater for individual ability and level of awareness about conservation. Ideally, training for volunteers and trainees should provide a combination of formal preparation for the task, on-the-job instruction, and opportunities for conservation education.

Volunteers' and trainees' expectations of training.

Volunteers and trainees had few training expectations. Some did, however, expect to be able to use the skills they brought to Project Conservation and to contribute to policy as well as through manual work.

6.4 Priorities for Project Conservation

6.4.1 Existing Priorities as identified by Coordinators.

Each pilot area has developed in ways to reflect a mix of factors including:

- the socio-economic characteristics and needs of local communities
- the features of the natural environment
- skills and interests of staff
- skills and interests of volunteers, trainees and other members of the community who have contributed to Project Conservation.

Within that framework, the priorities of the coordinators have differed. For the West Coast coordinator, trainee emerged as a major priority, an emphasis that has been greater than originally intended. However, school projects have also been an important activity in the region, and a summer holiday programme was successfully run in the 1987/88 season.

The Murihiku coordinator sees his priorities as having been, in order of importance: the working holiday programme, the development of Conservation Corps proposals, and the one-day volunteer projects. He considers that Goal III (to provide new opportunities for people to experience the values of the natural environment) has been the most important goal. To reflect that he emphasises that the practical conservation work achieved by Project Conservation participants is not as important as the social benefits derived from their becoming more aware of conservation values.

For the Whangarei coordinator, the most important task has been to establish rapport between Ngati Wai and the Department. The goal of partnership has become as important as any of Project Conservation's stated goals.

The Coromandel coordinator's priorities are community oriented. They have been to increase community awareness of conservation and to provide the community with a chance for input into the Department's resource management. Liaising with staff about Project Conservation has also been a high priority.

6.4.2 Future priorities for Project Conservation in the pilot areas.

When staff and community members (volunteers, trainees and others) were asked what the future priorities of Project Conservation should be in their areas, they not only confirmed some present directions and priorities as outlined by the coordinators, but suggested new priorities. The priorities are:

- Community liaison
- Conservation education
- Broadening the constituency of Project Conservation
- Adequate resources
- Trainee programmes

Community liaison

In all four pilot areas staff and community members identified 'community liaison' as a high priority. Several ways of achieving better liaison were suggested, including from the West Coast region, an emphasis on both trainee programmes and volunteer projects:

[The priorities should be] More community projects, less concern about working with interest groups ... more ACCESS, restart, EBT involvement to get closer links with local community interests. Priority areas for development include: "Friends of" organisations, especially Friends of Paparoa National Park; Natives on Farms (planting programmes to reintroduce kahikatea, rata, rimu, kowhai on riverflats).

(Staff member, West Coast)

For some Whangarei staff, a top priority is to develop liaison with the Maori community. However, one local expressed community liaison more broadly:

[The priorities should be] supporting the local community, looking after the resources and helping coordinate the people to look after those resources.

Similar ideas were echoed by a Coromandel staff member, who considered that future priorities for Project Conservation locally should be:

to get people to look after something that's close to them.

Conservation education

Conservation education was also regarded as an important priority in all areas. In Murihiku District conservation education is integral to Project Conservation. In the West Coast Region, one staff member suggested that specific aspects of conservation education should be included such as, education about local history, and the protection of plants and animals.

Whereas staff in Murihiku and West Coast mentioned conservation education as a priority, it was most clearly identified by members of the community in Coromandel and Whangarei:

Project Conservation should be raising public awareness and pride.
Shifting from the slash-burn-grab mentality, to respect for the land.
(Community member, Coromandel)

Broadening the Constituency

Another clear priority is to attract a wider range of people to Project Conservation, particularly those unfamiliar with conservation.

In order to achieve this, both staff and community members considered that Project Conservation should target programmes to school children, young people and family groups. Implicit in this aim is a strong conservation education intention.

Adequate resources

In Whanaarei and Coromandel, some staff were concerned about the availability of resources for Project conservation, particularly staffing. Linked to this, the effective organisation in order to make the best use of resources, was regarded as a priority.

We need to set up a network so that Project Conservation starts to run itself. We need key people.
(Staff member, Whangarei)

We need to have a look at staffing, to find suitable staff. We need an adequate level of funding to keep it going.
(Staff member, Coromandel)

Trainee Programmes

Finally, staff in two areas, West Coast and Coromandel, identified the development of trainee schemes as a priority.

6.4.3 Future Priorities for Project Conservation in the comparative Districts

In the three comparative districts adequate resources were considered to be top priority. The development of volunteer programmes was also emphasised. Less important appeared to be community liaison, conservation education and broadening the constituency.

Adequate resources

The most significant resource issue raised by staff was the need for suitably trained staff. Their comments reiterate the concern expressed in pilot areas for adequate staff training, particularly in supervision and in community liaison.

However, staff in the comparative districts and pilot areas differed in their views on resources in other respects. It appeared to be of lower priority in the development of Project Conservation in the pilot areas. This may indicate that the acquisition of a coordinator improves the availability of resources to Project Conservation in two major ways.

Firstly, the coordinator brings specific skills to Project Conservation, and thus partly resolves the problem of insufficient or untrained staff. Secondly, coordinators have been effective in soliciting a wide range of resources from the community which have been instrumental in supporting Project Conservation.

Volunteer Programmes

The comparative districts' emphasis on volunteer programmes as a priority strongly contrasts with the priorities of pilot areas. No one in the pilot areas explicitly mentioned volunteer programmes as a future priority. However, several priorities mentioned in the pilot areas, such as conservation education, community liaison and broadening the constituency, are obviously achieved through volunteer programmes.

Staff in Tainui District especially emphasised the development of volunteer programmes as a priority. They mentioned several aspects:

- establishment of a voluntary network to provide emergency
- quality control of voluntary work
- provision of a satisfying experience for volunteers.

Two Hauraki staff also focused on improving the organisation of voluntary work. Both suggested that there is a need to identify and categorise volunteers' skills, so that they can be appropriately matched to jobs.

Broadening the Constituency

In common with staff in pilot areas, those in the comparative districts also regard Project Conservation as a broad-based programme which should not merely draw on members of conservation organisations.

Community liaison and conservation education

Some staff in the comparative districts mentioned community liaison and conservation education as priorities, but over the three districts, these appeared to be less important than other issues identified. This contrasts with the assessment of priorities by staff in the pilot areas, where community liaison and conservation education were highest on the list of priorities.

6.4.4 Summary

If the priorities expressed by staff are realised, a picture of Project Conservation in the future would be as follows:

- Catering to specific local conditions and needs, for example, the West Coast's training emphasis and Tainui's plans for a volunteer emergency services network.
- A significant emphasis on community liaison in the current pilot areas.
- Increasing attention to the relationship between conservation education and Project Conservation, particularly in the pilot areas.
- The provision of sound staff training
- A continuing concern to widen the appeal of Project Conservation to those with little previous knowledge of the conservation estate and conservation issues.

CHAPTER 7

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT CONSERVATION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings discussed in previous chapters to provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of Project Conservation.

Broadly defined, 'effectiveness' is concerned with how well Project Conservation has done what it set out to do. Previous discussion in Chapter 1 emphasised that an evaluation of effectiveness is not just concerned with the achievement of stated goals, i.e. success in achieving outcomes. Effectiveness may also be assessed by looking at how well a programme functions. In such an exercise, the processes involved in achieving outcomes are investigated.

This report also looks at effectiveness in terms of resource criteria, which focus on whether Project Conservation has the required resources and is able to use them to achieve goals.

Finally, Project Conservation's effectiveness is assessed by looking at its orientation. Are Project Conservation's goals appropriate, and is it the best way of achieving those goals?

The following discussion applies the criteria of outcomes and processes to each goal (see Appendix 2 for an outline of the goals). Aspects of evaluation which are not specific to any one goal, such as the evaluation of processes, resources and orientation are then discussed.

7.2 Goal I:

To engage voluntary effort from the community to assist in the conservation of New Zealand's natural and historic environment.

This goal was widely supported by staff. Of all goals, staff rated it as second only to Goal III (concerning the provision of new opportunities) in importance and relevance to the Department. When staff were asked to rate the importance and relevance of Goal I in terms of their own areas, it was also rated highly. In two Districts Goal I was considered equal in importance to Goal III.

The two most common reasons for considering Goal I to be important were: to encourage support for the Department, and to achieve work. The latter benefit was especially emphasised when staff discussed the relevance of Goal I for their own areas. This may reflect the limited resources available for district operations.

7.2.1 Outcome

Goal I identifies a practical outcome which can be assessed. This is:

- has the use of volunteers to assist in conservation work been achieved?

No areas reported problems in recruiting volunteers. In fact, the experience of both pilot and comparative areas indicates an untapped supply of volunteers for many activities such as working holidays, school activities, one day projects, and 'Friends of...' groups.

For example, the West Coast regional office holds a file of over 300 people who are interested in working holidays. However, staff estimate that only about 10% of those offering their services are able to be placed, because of insufficient staff and funding to run volunteer programmes.

Staff in Whangarei, Coromandel, and districts also reported that the volume of requests for holiday work could not be handled.

It appears that the problems staff encountered in the use of volunteers did not relate to the supply of willing individuals. Rather, they related to the limits imposed on the Department's ability to use volunteers by resource constraints.

Information gained from the study shows that Project Conservation is certainly successful in obtaining volunteers. However, the pool of potential volunteers has not been generated solely through Project Conservation's efforts. Public interest in voluntary conservation work is a consequence of a variety of factors, including the growth of the environmental movement as a political force in the last 25-30 years.

The appointment of a coordinator provides just one focus for public interest in conservation. So, too, do initiatives in the comparative districts, such as Hauraki District's liaison officer and newsletter for groups interested in the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park, and Tainui District's Nature Activities Programme. Conservation organisations such as the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society also provide opportunities for those interested in volunteer work.

7.2.2 Processes

Three process issues are discussed:

- What voluntary work has been done?
- How much work has been done?
- The quality of the work done.

What voluntary work has been done?

Volunteers have achieved some tasks that staff consider would not otherwise have been done (see Table 3, Chapter 3). They have also assisted with routine or low priority work, thus ensuring earlier completion. An outline of the types of work achieved in 1988 is provided in Table 9. Table 10 shows Project Conservation activities in 1989, including a variety of voluntary programmes.

Pilot areas differ in the types of volunteer projects they have fostered. At the time of the evaluation Murihiku had an extensive range of activities undertaken or planned, including working holiday programmes, one-day projects and school projects. Out of all the Project Conservation activities, the working holiday programme has been the coordinator's top priority. These programmes are not only spread throughout Murihiku district, but one is also located in Rakiura district. The work ranges from beach pollution monitoring and clean-up, to noxious weed and *Pinus contorta* removal, to bird surveys, track construction, bush restoration and historic resource maintenance. The projects take place not only on the conservation estate, but also on Forest and Bird Society reserves, local authority reserves, pastoral lease and private land.

So far, Coromandel district has concentrated on fostering the development of five 'Friends of...' groups. West Coast Region has also encouraged this type of activity, as well as holidays and one-day projects.

Whangarei is the only pilot to set up a volunteer committee, whose role is to plan projects. Their first project, a clean-up of Matapouri estuary, showed the potential of Project Conservation to achieve practical work and promote conservation. The clean-up got coverage on Television One's 'Top Half programme.

Investigation of voluntary work in the comparative districts also revealed a variety of activities. Wildlife projects dominated voluntary work in Rakiura District, where some have been going on for several years. Currently volunteers are helping with research on kokako and dotterel.

Table 9: PROJECT CONSERVATION PROGRAMMES - PILOT AREAS**Activities undertaken Jan-Dec 1988****1. WEST COAST**

Description	Date	Who	Where
1. Black Petrel Count (2 projects)	May-June	Volunteers	DOC estate Punakaiki
2. Establishment of "Friends of the Ross Walkway"	August (on-going)	Volunteers	Ross, DOC estate and non-DOC land
3. Care of Ross Cottage	August (on-going)	Volunteers	Ross, DOC estate and non-DOC land
4. ACCESS "Outdoor Skills" course	Sep-March 1989	Trainees	DOC estate
5. ACCESS course "Basic Drafting and Graphics Skills"	Dec-May 1989	Trainees	DOC office
6. ACCESS course "Clerical/ Retail Skills"	Dec-May 1989	Trainees	DOC regional and district offices
7. ACCESS course - nursery work	Dec-May 1989	Trainees	DOC estate - Totara and nurseries

2. MURIHIKU

Description	Date	Who	Where
1. Bush reserve clearing one day project	August	Volunteers	DOC estate
2. Oreti Beach plastics cleanup (3 day projects)	August September	Volunteers Schools	DOC estate
3. Erosion control planting - one day project	October	Volunteers	Catchment Board land
4. Tiwai Beach plastics cleanup	October	School	DOC estate
5. Penguin Colony reserve fencing project	October	Volunteers	Forest & Bird Reserve
6. Leadership workshop	October	Volunteers	DOC Staff
7. Weed clearing - one day project	November	Schools	Invercargill City Council Reserve
8. Holiday Programmes	Nov '88- March '89	Volunteers public	DOC estate, reserves, Forest & Bird reserves, private land

3. WHANGAREI

Description	Date	Who	Where
1. Establishment of volunteer Committee		Volunteers	
2. Mimiwhangata Group (Tourism trainees) - plastics cleanup	November (ongoing)	Volunteers	DOC estate
3. Matapouri estuary - cleanup one day project	December	Volunteers	DOC estate
4. Mimiwhangata Group (Net making trainees) - pest eradication	December (ongoing)	Volunteers	DOC estate

4. COROMANDEL

Description	Date	Who	Where
1. Establishment of community groups - Friends of Moehau, Kuaotunu/Otama Group, Purangi/Cooks Beach Group, Waihi Beach Group, Kauaeranga Group		Volunteers	DOC estate
2. Port Jackson Tree Planting	July	Volunteers	Public reserve
3. Otama Track construction		Trainees	DOC estate
4. Waikawau Bay - cleanup of estuary	August	Volunteers	DOC estate
5. Kauaeranga Open Day	September	Volunteers	DOC estate
6. Kauaeranga - nursery work, track maintenance	on going	Volunteers	DOC estate
7. Public meeting about management plan. Kuaotunu-Otama Group and DOC	September	Volunteers	DOC estate
8. Otama Track opening and promotion	October	Volunteers	DOC estate
9. Ngahu Toetoe ACCESS Group Visit to Waikawau Bay	November	Trainees	DOC estate
10. Purangi/Cooks Beach - cleanup of archaeological site	December	Volunteers	DOC estate
Waihi Beach Group - meeting to develop programmes	December	Volunteers	

Table 10: PROJECT CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES 1989 – PILOT AREAS**1. WEST COAST**

Description	Date	Who	Where
Working Holidays (2)	January	Volunteers	St James Walkway, DOC estate; Mohikihui Track, DOC estate
2. ACCESS Courses (7)		Trainees	Westport, Reefton, Punakaiki, Hokitika, Franz Joseph, Fox Glacier
3. Marine pollution survey	April	Volunteers (psychiatric patients)	Coastal area

2. MURIKIKU

Description	Date	Who	Where
1. Working holidays	Nov '88-March '89	Volunteers	DOC estate, private lands, public reserves, Forest & Bird reserves
2. Conservation Corps	Feb-Dec	Trainees	DOC estate, public reserves, Forest & Bird reserves, Maori land
3. One day projects (1)	August	School groups Volunteers	Public Reserves, Forest & Bird reserves, Beaches
4. Stonewalling Workshop	March	Volunteers DOC staff	Private lands and DOC estate

3. WHANGREI

Description	Date	Who	Where
1. Plastics pollution survey and clean-up	January	Volunteers	Mimiwhangata DOC estate
2. Mice control	February	Volunteers	Rimariiki Is
3. Matapouri estuary clean-up	May	Volunteers	Matapouri
4. Marae landscaping	May	Volunteers	Pipiwai
5. Beach clean-up	June	Volunteers	Oakura Bay
6. Marae landscaping	July	Volunteers	Matapouri
7. Tree planting	July	Volunteers	Mimiwhangata DOC estate
8. Pa revegetation and Planting on reserve		Volunteers	Ruapekapeka reserve
9. Conservation Corps	April-Aug	Trainees	DOC estate, reserves

4. COROMANDEL

Description	Date	Who	Where
1. Volunteer input into Kauaeranga and Waikawau Bay summer programmes	Dec/Jan 1988/89	Volunteers	DOC estate
2. Kauaeranga Information Centre Roster	Dec-Feb 1988/89	Volunteers	DOC estate
3. Kauaeranga Group - making audio visual tape on tangata whenua history		Volunteers	DOC estate
4. Conservation Corps	1989	Trainees	DOC estate
5. Coromandel Area School - clearing around kauri trees	Early	School	
6. Tree planting	Winter	Volunteers	
7. Conservation Week - tree planting, nursery clean up, Kauaeranga Valley	July	Volunteers, school children	DOC estate

In Tainui District, members of the Ornithological Society have been surveying kokako. Other volunteers have been involved in litter surveys, tree planting and 'watchdog' activities.

Hauraki District has a very active volunteer contingent which has successfully undertaken planting and track and building maintenance and islands in the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park. Other volunteers fundraise to support work in The Park.

How much work has been done?

In all pilot areas it appears that more voluntary work has been done since the appointment of a coordinator. The Murihiku district coordinator reported that the amount of voluntary work done in his area has increased substantially since the development of the pilot. Previously approximately ten days of voluntary work involving only a few people were completed per year.

In contrast, eight volunteer projects involving over 200 people were completed from August to December 1988. Eighteen summer working holiday programmes were planned for December 1988-March 1989. (Thirteen were run.) Over all, 93 people participated in the working holidays, and achieved 353 person working days¹.

West Coast staff also reported that little volunteer work had been done prior to the establishment of Project Conservation in their area. Over the eighteen months in which Project Conservation has been operating, a variety of volunteer projects have been completed. The 1987/88 summer working holidays programme involved 36 volunteers who participated in a variety of track maintenance projects. Two overseas volunteers worked for several weeks on nursery work and hut and track maintenance. The opportunity for practical experience has attracted several students from both overseas and locally to volunteer work. Other volunteers have been involved in the Ross area, approximately 30 through the Friends of the Walkways group, and five who look after the Ross Cottage on a daily basis.

In Whangarei, staff reported that very little voluntary work had been done previously in the district. One or two conservation organisations had been involved in planting and bird care activities, but this was unconnected to the Department. Although volunteer activities were just getting underway in Whangarei district at the time of the evaluation, the two examples involved quite a number of people. In December the eleven members of the Mimiwhangata group collected three large bags of rubbish from 2.5 km of beach. In the same month, about 50 people participated in a clean-up of the Matapouri estuary. A considerable amount of rubbish, including abandoned cars and iron was removed.

The five 'Friends of...' groups in Coromandel district were involved in several projects in 1988. These included tree planting, track construction and maintenance, beach clean-up and historic site work. With groups ranging in size from nine upwards, they have the potential to contribute substantially to the Department.

¹ Information obtained from Murihiku Coordinator's Evaluation Report, May 1989.

The voluntary work achievements in the comparative districts should also be recognised. During the past five years, thousands of person working days have resulted in a range of work being done in Hauraki District on Tiritiri Matangi Island, including planting 150,000 trees. On Motutapu Island, about 200 people have done voluntary work to renovate the outdoor education camp.

Figures from Tainui District also indicates the potential of voluntary work. For example, a litter survey resulted in 34 people collecting 30 bags of rubbish.

The quality of work done

Staff perceptions of the quality of volunteer work differ. Some consider that the standard of volunteers' work is variable. However, staff also acknowledge that some volunteers bring needed specialist expertise to the Department.

Problems in obtaining leaders and supervisors who are competent in working with volunteers may adversely affect the quality of voluntary work. This may also be affected by the type of work offered. Too much emphasis on routine or boring tasks may dampen volunteers' interest and lower their outputs.

7.3 Goal II

To support and strengthen links between conservation organisations and the Department.

Generally, staff consider that Goal II is not as important as Goals I (volunteers) and III (new opportunities) and, consequently, should not be the major focus of Project Conservation's effort.

Several staff considered Goal II to be too narrow in its scope. They suggested that the Department should 'support and strengthen' links with a variety of groups throughout the community, not just with conservation organisations.

7.3.1 Outcome

The outcome examined is:

- supporting and strengthening links between conservation organisations and the Department.

Project Conservation supports links between the Department and conservation organisations through liaison and involvement in particular projects. These include working with the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society members on a penguin colony reserve in Murihiku District, and planning activities with the same organisation in West Coast Region.

However, the degree to which links have been strengthened is more difficult to assess. Indications of ties can be obtained by looking at the following aspects:

- staff opinion
- affiliations of coordinators
- increase in number of organisations contacted.

Most staff in West Coast considered that relations with conservation organisations had improved with the development of Project Conservation, becoming more formalised and cooperative. A member of one conservation organisation also reported improved relations.

In Murihiku district staff generally agreed that links had strengthened, as did staff in Coromandel. One Coromandel staff member commented that there has been increased mutual understanding.

It was only in Whangarei that staff considered no substantial change in the relationship between the Department and conservation organisations had occurred. Prior to the setting up of the pilot, staff members had been in contact with conservation organisations and were continuing to maintain contact. However, one obvious change has occurred through Project Conservation. This is the establishment of the volunteer committee which has formalised contact with conservation organisations.

The employment of a coordinator who is a member of a conservation organisation is another indicator of the 'strengthening' of ties. Coordinators in West Coast, Murihiku and Coromandel all have affiliations to conservation organisations. However, while the employment of a coordinator who is a member of a conservation organisation may increase contact, it does not give an indication of the quality of contact.

Overall, contacts with conservation organisations appear to have increased in Coromandel and Murihiku. In Coromandel links with conservation organisations have become more extensive, through the involvement of groups in voluntary work. The West Coast coordinator is already in contact with the few conservation organisations in that area. Whangarei also has contact with the range of local conservation groups.

To summarise, conservation organisations are one of the key groups consulted in planning Project Conservation activities in all areas. Project Conservation has helped to support and strengthen links between conservation organisations and the Department. But such links were apparent in the pilot areas previously and are well maintained in the comparative areas where there is no formal Project Conservation structure.

7.3.2 Processes

- What has been done to support and strengthen links between conservation organisations and the Department?
- How well are links maintained?

What has been done to support and strengthen links?

Coordinators in all areas have used a variety of methods to maintain and strengthen links with conservation organisations. These include personal contact as members, holding meetings with groups, setting up joint committees and compiling newsletters informing people of Project Conservation activities. It should be noted that these techniques are also used in the comparative districts.

How well are links maintained?

Overall, it appears that links between the Department and conservation organisations are maintained in a satisfactory manner. Nevertheless, three problems were identified:

- the need for staff training in working with conservation organisations
- how to accommodate the interest of conservation organisations in contributing to the development of departmental policy and resource management through Project Conservation
- identifying the type of input conservation organisations wish to make to Project Conservation

7.4 Goal III:

To provide new opportunities for people, especially the younger urban population, to experience the values of the natural environment and to become more sensitive to these values.

While the general principles of Goal III are widely supported among staff, it is difficult to identify what has been achieved in relation to this goal. This is because the goal is neither precisely nor concretely defined. It has been interpreted in various ways which, in turn, affects the type of action taken to achieve the goal.

Three key phrases are not clearly defined. They are:

- (a) 'New opportunities'. This may refer to opportunities the Department provides which it has not provided before, or to opportunities that are new to the individual. The former interpretation is used in this analysis.
- (b) 'The younger urban population'. 'Young' was interpreted in various ways among staff to include primary school pupils and also adults in their mid to late 20s. However, the original intention in setting up Project Conservation was to identify this group as secondary school pupils to 23 years, the maximum age for Conservation Corps.

'Urban' was assumed by some staff to refer to provincial towns, the main centres of population within their area. Others took it to mean metropolitan centres of population, such as Auckland or Christchurch. The census defines any concentration of population over 1,500 as urban, so the former understanding is more appropriate. However, the importance of 'urban' in this goal is not so much whether a person lives in an urban area, but whether their residential status prevents them from experiencing the natural environment.

Some staff asked why Goal III should single out the 'younger urban population' for attention. This seemed to assume that they were more in need of opportunities for outdoor experience or conservation education than other groups. Comments were made that the business and farming sectors required conservation education, and some staff identified the active elderly as a group which may appreciate the opportunity to do conservation work.

- (c) 'The values of the natural environment'. This was the most difficult concept for staff to interpret. Yet identification and explanation of those values is central to all Project Conservation's goals. No one was able to provide a clear definition of the values of the natural environment. Instead, staff identified strategies required to protect the values. These strategies involved both the intellectual and the experiential.

Knowledge of the following was considered necessary to protect conservation values:

- endangered species
- habitat
- pollution and environmental degradation
- resource management
- sustainability for future generations.

It was also believed that if people have close contact with the natural environment, they would seek to protect its values. Consequently, experience of the natural environment was regarded as a significant strategy in protecting the values of that environment. The types of experience staff identified as important to protect conservation values were:

- experience of isolated, 'unspoiled' wilderness
- feeling 'part of nature'
- 'spiritual' feeling for the land.

7.4.1 Outcomes

The extent to which the following outcomes have been achieved is discussed below:

- to provide new opportunities for the younger urban population to experience the values of the natural environment
- to improve the sensitivity of individuals, and especially the younger urban population to values of the natural environment.

The provision of new opportunities for the urban population

Only three staff considered that Project Conservation fails to provide any new opportunities. They considered that there is already ample opportunity for individuals to experience the natural environment through the facilities offered for recreational activities on the conservation estate.

Other staff considered that Project Conservation not only enhances existing opportunities by making people more aware of what the conservation estate offers, but also provides new

experiences through volunteer and trainee programmes.

In West Coast region, neither volunteer programmes nor ACCESS schemes had been offered prior to the establishment of Project Conservation. Murihiku District provides new opportunities through working holidays, school projects and one-day projects. The latter in particular are directed towards urban dwellers. Even the requirement of donations from working holiday participants in Murihiku does not appear to have inhibited interest in working holidays which were well subscribed. For Whangarei and Coromandel, too, Project Conservation has resulted in new opportunities for practical conservation work.

The new types of experience that Project Conservation offers can be summarised as:

- the combination of practical conservation work with educational opportunities
- the opportunity for local people to initiate conservation projects of importance to their area
- involvement for the individual in socially useful work
- the opportunity to work with professional conservation staff and benefit from their knowledge and expertise
- the opportunity to experience relatively inaccessible areas with supervision and support
- opportunities for those who are not members of conservation organisations to engage in practical conservation work.

To improve the sensitivity of individuals

To change aspects of subjective experience, such as attitudes and values, is not a simple undertaking. It is also difficult to assess the extent of such changes because they relate to intangibles not easily measured. In an attempt to assess changes in attitudes and values, the evaluation has relied on staff assessments of changes in the attitudes and values of Project Conservation participants. However, where possible, participants were also asked to assess the effects of the programme on them.

Some participants have become more aware of and sensitive to the values of the natural environment through involvement in Project Conservation. This is especially so for the 'newcomer' volunteers, several of whom reported increased understanding and awareness. A vivid example is provided by the Mimiwhangata group (Whangarei District).

Improved sensitivity to conservation values was also apparent among the West Coast volunteers, and among pupils participating in the Murihiku school programmes.

The Murihiku coordinator, in his evaluation of the 1988/89 working holiday programme, reported that 95% of the 64 participants who completed an evaluation questionnaire said that they had increased their knowledge and understanding of conservation. The majority of the Murihiku working holiday participants can be categorised as newcomer volunteers, having neither done conservation volunteer work before, nor belonged to a conservation or outdoor organisation.

While the Murihiku working holiday programme shows Project Conservation's potential for promoting awareness it should be noted that one third of those who filled out the questionnaire were overseas visitors. As such, the Department is unlikely to experience any long-term advocacy benefits in local communities if many programme participants come from outside of the area.

Nevertheless, these examples establish the potential of Project Conservation for improving people's knowledge and awareness of conservation.

While Project Conservation can be commended on its efforts to improve sensitivity to natural values, there was one instance where the advocacy benefit of the programme were far less apparent. In contrast to the volunteers discussed above, the West Coast Outdoor Skills trainee group showed that their attitudes towards conservation had not substantially altered. Their comments reflected the local community's historical reliance on extractive industry, and the particular social and psychological characteristics of group members.

7.4.2 Processes

- What has been done to achieve conservation education?

The four pilot areas vary in the extent to which they include conservation education in Project Conservation. Murihiku District appears to have most consciously incorporated a conservation education ethos and formal educational components into Project Conservation.

All areas emphasised that volunteer projects provide the chance for people to do practical conservation work. This is indeed important, but the practical work should not become a substitute for education activities. Several staff noted that the strength of Project Conservation lies in the combination of practical work with conservation education.

7.5 Goal IV:

To provide training in basic conservation tasks in order to foster recruitment of groups presently under-represented in the Department of Conservation.

Goal IV was rated the least relevant of all goals by many staff. Only one person regarded it as a relevant goal for the Department, the reason being that it enabled the Department to offer new activities to the public.

Goal IV gained more support from staff when they considered its importance to their own areas. Support was most forthcoming from Whangarei, where the community development potential of training, in enhancing individuals' social and work skills was acknowledged. The West Coast coordinator, heavily involved in trainee schemes, did not so much emphasise community development, but instead saw Goal IV as a useful conservation advocacy strategy because of the opportunity for including educational aspects in trainee programmes.

More staff criticised Goal IV than supported it. This was particularly so in the comparative districts, where Goal IV was rated the least relevant of all the goals. Some staff regarded Goal IV as a quite inappropriate activity for the Department. Others, not necessarily against the concept of trainee schemes, questioned whether the resources were available to support such activities, and whether trainees' expectations of jobs were being unfairly raised.

Like goal III, goal IV was interpreted by staff in various ways. When staff were asked to define the term 'basic conservation tasks', a broad range of activities were identified, including: facility maintenance, species protection, nursery/horticultural skills, fire control, liaison with the public and environmental interpretation (for a full list, see Table 11). These tasks require not only competence in manual activities and in some cases trade skills, but also conservation knowledge and interpersonal skills.

Staff also had a variety of opinions on which groups were under-represented in the Department. Many did not identify any particular social category, and some qualified their remarks by asserting that the Department provides equal employment opportunities for all. However, nine staff considered that Maori were under-represented, especially at senior levels, and five staff identified women as under-represented, both at senior levels and in field positions. In one person's opinion, the group under-represented in the Department was 'field workers'.

Given the wide spread of views on the nature of employment opportunities in the Department and the groups believed to be under-represented, it is essential that if any affirmative action strategy is mooted it makes clear what groups it is aimed at and the reasons why it is required.

Table 11: 'Basic Conservation Tasks' identified by staff

Awareness of Maori Values

Bushcraft

Environmental interpretation

Facility Maintenance

Fencing

Fire control

First Aid

Liaison between DOC and public

Noxious plant/animal control

Nursery/horticultural skills

Resource Management

Species protection

Survey work

Understanding of relevant law/statutes

Use and care of tools

7.5.1 Outcomes

The expected outcomes pertaining to Goal IV are:

- To provide training in basic conservation tasks.
- To foster recruitment of groups presently under-represented in the Department.

To provide training in basic conservation tasks

From the information staff gave on the content of both volunteer and trainee courses it appears that the opportunities are provided for acquiring many of the tasks listed in Table 11. At the time of the evaluation, West Coast offered training opportunities mainly through ACCESS schemes. In contrast, the other pilots were only providing training opportunities through volunteer activities, as no trainee schemes had been started.

To foster recruitment of under-represented groups

Project Conservation is not fostering the recruitment of under-represented groups into the Department. Only one of the pilot areas, Whangarei, even suggested that trainee programmes may be used as a strategy for improving the recruitment of under-represented groups into the organisation, in this case Maori. None of the other pilots considered using Project Conservation in this way. Indeed, there was a widespread view, both in the pilot areas and the comparative districts, that there is little benefit in using Project Conservation for recruitment while the Department offers few employment opportunities.

One staff member suggested that if the Department was serious in promoting the recruitment of groups presently under-represented in the Department, such as Maori, then there were more effective ways of doing it than through trainee schemes such as ACCESS. He suggested that Maori people, for example, be encouraged by the Department to undertake tertiary education and come into the Department with specialist skills. This is a pertinent point, as Maori are under-represented in the Department, particularly in senior management and in salaried positions.¹

To recruit a minority group only into the lower levels of an organisation, as is likely through the type of training offered by ACCESS courses, will simply perpetuate existing inequalities, rather than help to overcome them.

¹ The 1988 Public Service Census showed that 4.5% of the Department of Conservation identified as Maori compared to about 12% in the general population and 7% in the Public Service as a whole (Burns, 1988.)

7.5.2 Process .

- What is the quality of training provided for volunteers and trainees?

The evaluation was unable to assess the quality of training in basic conservation tasks through direct observation of volunteer and trainee programmes in action. Three of the four pilot areas had no trainee programmes operating at the time of evaluation, so only an indication of proposed skills to be taught could be obtained. However, some general points can be made about the quality of training provided for participants.

In order to achieve good quality training for Project Conservation participants, attention must be paid to the preparation of staff to run programmes and teach skills. This requires training for staff in such matters as the best ways to explain the objectives of the task, to impart skills, and to inform participants on conservation aspects.

Murihiku District appears to have most carefully considered the training of supervisors for programmes, through the leadership training workshop, which twelve people attended, half of whom were district staff.

Murihiku also stands out as having staff that are well informed and supportive of Project Conservation. This is in contrast to both Whangarei and Coromandel, where comments were made about the need to improve general staff understanding of Project Conservation.

In a situation where staff are uninformed about Project Conservation and do not receive adequate training, it is difficult to see how good quality training for programme participants will eventuate.

7.6 Further Evaluation of Processes

The following criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of Project Conservation are not specifically related to goal achievement. They provide a more general indication of Project Conservation's success through examining the effects of the programme on those involved in it - volunteers, trainees and staff.

7.6.1 How has Project Conservation affected volunteers and trainees?

This is a measure of the performance of staff in Project Conservation.

On the whole, the volunteers and trainees who participated in the evaluation commented favourably on their experience of Project Conservation. However, some problems concerning the relationship between staff and participants were apparent. These are specifically matters of communication and concern:

- limited opportunities for Project Conservation participants to contribute to policy and planning
- lack of information for participants on the Department, its roles and functions
- the condescending manner in which some trainees felt they were treated by some staff
- a lack of volunteers' and trainees' understanding of their roles

- staff under-estimation and under-utilisation of volunteers' skills and knowledge.

Interpersonal relations has emerged as a key area to address in the development of Project Conservation. These can be improved by good organisational practices, particularly the fostering of effective communication among all parties involved in a programme.

Good communication between staff and programme participants is crucial. Participants need to know what they are doing and why. They also need to be assured that they can contribute in a variety of ways to the programme; that their suggestions will be taken into account, as well as their labour accepted.

A good Project Conservation programme must make sense to both staff and participants. This will only be achieved through effective communication.

7.6.2 How has Project Conservation affected staff?

This measure assesses the effect of Project Conservation on staff wellbeing and identifies factors affecting staff performance.

Project Conservation coordinators have responded positively to the programme. However, several difficulties were identified by them:

- the scope of Project Conservation, in terms of the variety of activities involved in the programme
- lack of job security for coordinators/differences in wage rates among coordinators
- logistical problems in servicing the West Coast region, in comparison to the other pilot districts

The responses of other staff to Project Conservation have been mixed. Some, who have been closely involved in planning Project Conservation activities, are enthusiastic. Others have been more cautious in their support, because of what they regard as the problems associated with Project Conservation concerning:

- possible replacement of employees with volunteer and trainees
- increased demands on staff as new skills and expertise are required to deal with volunteers and trainees
- a lack of information about Project Conservation, its relationship to district operations and to Conservation Corps
- extra workload as a result of time spent on Project Conservation activities, often out of normal working hours
- possible decline in job satisfaction among employees because of aspects of work being taken over by volunteers or trainees.

The support of staff is essential to the success of Project Conservation and can only be achieved through fully informing them about and preparing them for Project Conservation. Research on volunteer programmes shows that lack of staff acceptance and support is a major

reason for their demise (Wilson, 1976: 60,152). The problems that staff have identified need to be addressed, not only in order to improve staff ability to ensure the success of this new initiative, but also to preserve staff morale and working conditions. Staff need to be fully involved in preliminary discussions about programmes so they can air reservations and contribute ideas. This is especially crucial so that volunteers or trainees are not perceived as a threat.

7.7 Resources

This section examines the effectiveness of Project Conservation in terms of whether the Department has the resources, or the 'capacity' to run the programme successfully. The key resource factors examined are:

- the availability and use made of materials/infrastructural components
- staff - numbers, characteristics and expertise
- Project Conservation participants - numbers, characteristics and expertise

7.7.1 The availability and use made of materials/infrastructural components

Although Project Conservation has been funded from Central Office, this has covered only the costs of coordinators' wages. All materials and infrastructural support for the coordinators and running of projects must come from district offices.

Consequently, in a climate of scarce resources and financial constraints, Project Conservation has competed with the district's many other operational requirements in order to run activities. This has sometimes resulted in a strain being placed on district resources, and in restraints being placed on the development of some Project Conservation activities.

It has also meant that new strategies of resource acquisition have had to be developed. In some instances, volunteers have not only provided labour, but have also been asked to make donations towards the cost of running programmes. In all areas, pilot and comparative, staff have looked towards community groups and institutions to provide resources to support conservation work. The community has responded favourably and often contributed considerable amounts.

There is scope for further systematic identification of local assets and expertise which could assist Project Conservation. However, the extent of community input should be acknowledged by the Department and not regarded as a substitute for departmental support.

In talking about resources, the question of whether the use of volunteer and trainee labour saves the Department money usually arises. Some staff considered that Project Conservation participants may be used as a cost-cutting measure, and acknowledged both advantages and disadvantages. In a time of resource constraints, strategies for making funds go further, such as the use of volunteer workers, publicly-funded trainee schemes and community support, is not only attractive but sometimes necessary to achieve objectives.

But disadvantages were also clearly identified. These included: the possible substitution of trainees and volunteers for paid employees, the jeopardisation of relations with unions, extra

stress on staff through running programmes, and emphasis on Project Conservation solely as a labour scheme.

Many staff considered that the costs associated with running programmes would outweigh any monetary benefits gained from the use of volunteers or trainees. Data available from the Murihiku coordinator's assessment of the 1988/89 Summer Working Holiday programme tends to support this. However, while the programme did not cover its costs, the District received a fairly good return on its expenditure. For every \$1 spent on resources to run the activities, such as staff remuneration, travel costs, supplies and equipment, the Department received back \$0.84 in the way of donations and value of labour. As the coordinator emphasised, this calculation included only directly assessable monetary costs and benefits and gave no measure of the important public relations value of running the working holiday programme.

7.7.2 Staff -numbers, characteristics and expertise.

A wide range of staff from senior staff to wage workers contribute to Project Conservation in all pilot areas. This is echoed in the comparative districts where considerable staff involvement is reported. The willingness of staff to run programmes has not been a problem, although at times staff may have not been available to run programmes because of other work commitments. The main difficulty has been the lack of staff skills to deal with the various managerial, educational and personnel requirements that are involved in running Project Conservation programmes. Inadequate preparation and training of staff has been a recurring theme, raised by coordinators, other staff, and programme participants.

7.7.3 Project Conservation participants -numbers, characteristics and expertise.

There is no lack of public interest in voluntary conservation work. On the contrary, there is a considerable untapped pool of volunteers among some sections of the public. Working holidays in particular appear to be very popular, attracting many international as well as domestic enquiries.

Even though staff report some difficulty in attracting certain groups such as Maori, Pacific Island Polynesian, youth, unemployed, and working class, the overall response to voluntary work has been good. Similarly, there have been no difficulties in filling ACCESS programmes.

Staff concern over the input of participants has focused not on their availability, but on their ability to do the job. The majority of volunteers were regarded as 'unskilled enthusiasts' by staff. Trainees were also regarded as unskilled, but as much less motivated than volunteers.

Clearly, volunteer and trainee programmes cannot be designed solely as programmes of work, but must include sufficient training for participants so that they can become more skilled and their enthusiasm is appropriately channelled.

7.8 Orientation

Although the evaluation did not seek to question whether Project Conservation is an appropriate activity for the Department, this question was implied in a number of issues raised by staff concerning:

- the ability of volunteers and trainees to undertake work of a reasonable standard
- the threat that volunteer and trainee labour may constitute for paid employees
- the possibility that funds allocated for Project Conservation could be more effectively used in operations
- the possibility that Project Conservation may be reaching only those sympathetic to conservation.

The two main 'orientation' issues that come out of the study are:

- The appropriateness of Project Conservation's goals, particularly goal IV
- (concerning training and recruitment)
- Whether Project Conservation is a successful advocacy strategy.

7.8.1 The appropriateness of Project Conservation's goals, particularly Goal IV.

Overall, the evaluation revealed that staff in both the pilot and comparative areas are not satisfied with the stated goals of Project Conservation. They expressed concern both over the relevance of specific goals (notably Goal IV) and over the interpretation of some goals.

Many staff regarded goal IV (concerning training and recruitment) as the least relevant to Project Conservation for reasons. Firstly, some question the inclusion of trainee programmes in Project Conservation. They would like to see Project Conservation confined to volunteer activities because of the lack of staff to trainee programmes and what they perceive as problems in dealing with trainees. They also consider that it is not the Department's business to be a work programme provider.

The second criticism concerns the ability of Project Conservation to foster, in any realistic sense, the employment opportunities of under-represented groups such as Maori and women. To achieve such goals would require a programme based on a sound understanding of the underlying barriers to employment equity. Project Conservation has not been developed with this orientation and cannot be expected to achieve equity objectives.

Although staff had most problems with goal IV, the other goals were by no means acceptable without reservation. The goals of involving volunteers in conservation work, fostering links with conservation organisations and providing new opportunities for people to appreciate the natural environment, were generally supported in principle by staff. But there was some confusion with regard to their meaning and the strategies by which those goals could be practically met.

It was also apparent that the present goals do not cover all philosophies and activities staff

wish to associate with Project Conservation. In developing programmes in the four pilot areas, staff have included other goals on an ad hoc basis as part of Project Conservation.

This is especially so in the case of Murihiku and Whangarei districts. From Murihiku, the goal of conservation education has become a central goal to Project Conservation. Whangarei district is using Project Conservation to achieve the objective of partnership with local iwi.

The existence of ad hoc goals reveals the need for a thorough investigation and reconsideration of Project Conservation and the relevance, clarity and orientation of its stated goals.

The following actions are required:

- Decisions on whether the existing goals should be retained or modified, in acknowledgement of the changing orientation of some Project Conservation pilots.
- Concrete and precise statement of goals to minimise existing misunderstandings, and to make them more easily measurable for ongoing programme monitoring.
- A clear explanation of the goals' key concepts and underlying assumptions.
- Guidelines on how particular activities can be developed to achieve specified goals.

7.8.2 Is Project Conservation a successful advocacy strategy?

Some staff questioned whether Project Conservation is an effective advocacy strategy for the Department, implying that there may be better ways of fostering liaison with the community and promoting public awareness of conservation.

The evaluation cannot make a definitive statement on this because it is beyond the scope of the study. However, the evaluation has identified the following attributes of the programme:

- It has helped to build up community support for the Department.
- It has enabled staff to develop closer relations with local people, which is essential in order to do the job more effectively on a day-to-day basis.
- It has helped in developing liaison and consultation with conservation organisations, estate users and tangata whenua who seek input into conservation policy and management.

A number of initiatives undertaken in the pilot areas reflect these strengths:

- the establishment of a volunteer committee to liaise with the community, draw on community expertise, and plan volunteer activities [Whangarei];
- the establishment of local groups which undertake to care for their local resources -the "Friends of..." concept. This assumes that conservation activity is not a 'one off event, but grows out of a close and continuing association with a particular area which encourages responsibility for that resource. [West Coast, Coromandel];
- the explicit connection of conservation education activities with Project Conservation. [Murihiku, Coromandel];

- the involvement of tangata whenua in both planning and practical work [Whangarei];
- provision of a variety of volunteer activities differing in content, duration, and degree of difficulty. Such variety is necessary to attract a wide range of volunteers. [Murihiku];
- initiatives from participants in trainee programmes which have resulted in volunteer activities. The potential for 'cross over' between the training and volunteer aspects of Project Conservation needs further investigation. [West Coast, Whangarei, Coromandel].

To question Project Conservation's strength as an advocacy strategy indicates that a fundamental issue has not been resolved in the establishment of Project Conservation. What is Project Conservation about? Is it about raising individual's consciousness of conservation? Or is it about obtaining free/cheap labour?

Staff understandings of the purpose of Project Conservation vary. Some see Project Conservation as primarily an opportunity to obtain extra labour and are concerned that this labour will not be sufficiently skilled. Others emphasise that the advocacy benefits derived from programmes are more important than any work achieved. Even among this group however, there is a tendency to judge the success of Project Conservation in terms of jobs done. Certainly, it is easier to measure the distance of track cleared or number of bags of rubbish collected than the extent of change in a person's attitude, but the advocacy objectives of Project Conservation need to be much more clearly articulated.

Confusion over the purpose of Project Conservation is not simply due to the different perspectives that staff hold on the relative benefits of advocacy and labour. Staff expectations of Project Conservation have been shaped in the context in which the programme operates. In an environment of budget constraints, stress on staff, insufficient training for staff and lack of an overall educational and advocacy strategy for Project Conservation, volunteers and trainees are likely to be treated as cheap labour, rather than as potential advocates.

Resolution of the question 'What is Project Conservation about -advocacy or labour?' does not require a choice between providing either an educational experience or a physical work experience. To treat the matter in this way is to focus on activities, rather than on the programme's overall philosophy.

Evidence from the study suggests that Project Conservation is more likely to achieve success if its guiding philosophy is one of advocacy. Project Conservation should not be conceptualised simply as a scheme to provide labour. To do so would raise issues concerning the ethics of using unpaid labour, and consequently jeopardise relations with the community, employees and unions.

Project Conservation should reflect the unique conservation advocacy role of the Department. This does not necessarily mean removing the practical work component from Project Conservation. On the contrary, the opportunity to do practical conservation work is what

attracts many volunteers programme. Furthermore, the work distinguishes Project Conservation from other conservation education activities, such as summer holiday nature interpretation programmes and Conservation Week.

Many staff believe that conservation education and advocacy benefits are more effectively achieved if individuals have the opportunity to combine intellectual activities with the 'hands on' experience of conservation work. This is backed up by the findings of research on training volunteers which identifies a mix of practical and theoretical instruction as a useful general principle (Wilson, 1976:151).

Advocacy objectives can be achieved through both volunteer and trainee programmes. However, work must be carried out within a conservation education context, rather than being regarded as an end in itself.

Certainly, the work achieved from Project Conservation benefits the Department, and it has been interpreted by some both within the Department and in the community as a means of cost cutting. But if the emphasis of Project Conservation is to obtain free or cheap labour, then its success will inevitably be impeded. To emphasise labour benefits above the advocacy potential of Project Conservation will not only threaten efforts to build a sense of teamwork between staff and programme participants, but will also lead the community to regard Project Conservation as another government attempt to shrug off social and economic responsibilities.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

It is appropriate that Project Conservation was evaluated at the end of 1988, as it enabled the progress of the three pilots which had commenced in 1988 to be reviewed and the first assessment of the West Coast Region's Project Conservation activities, which had been in operation for 18 months, to be undertaken.

The four pilot areas have interpreted Project Conservation in distinct ways which reflect such factors as the skills and experience of staff involved, local community conditions and availability of resources for the programme. They differ in their emphasis on volunteer activities compared to trainee courses, and in their focus on specific sections of the local population such as school groups, iwi, conservation organisations or community groups. This variety is a strength, in that it has enabled each pilot to be responsive to local conditions and is therefore helping to establish a broad base of community support for Project Conservation.

Such variety may however dilute the effective use of staff and resources, and lead to some inconsistencies in the orientation of programmes and treatment of participants across regions. Accordingly, there is a need to establish some general principles and guidelines.

Although there are differences among the pilot areas and comparative districts, nevertheless the ingredients required for the success of Project common to all. In each case, the success and effectiveness of Project Conservation is influenced by a combination of factors -those which are external to the programme, and those which are internal to the programme itself. These factors need to be understood before policy guidelines can be developed.

8.2 External Factors

8.2.1 Departmental factors

Some of the significant external factors relate to the organisation and functioning of the Department. The two main factors are:

- the restructuring process
- financial conditions

The restructuring process

In the months preceding the study, staff had experienced much disruption and uncertainty concerning the allocation of staffing and other resources, as well as their own employment prospects. These matters have affected staff morale, made daily operation at district level with diminishing staff numbers difficult and future planning for Project Conservation activities uncertain.

Financial conditions

The financial constraints faced by the Department have not affected regular field operations in districts, but have influenced the ability of Conservation to develop. Resources are needed to run programmes, and to maintain contact and good relations with the local community.

In some cases Project Conservation has exacerbated existing demands made on staff and other resources. Setting up Project Conservation activities has often meant an extra burden on staff in terms of time for organising and an additional call on operational budgets which are already extended.

8.2.2 Community factors

Project Conservation is one of the Department's major community-oriented programmes. It differs from many of the public awareness activities, such as Conservation Week and Summer Holidays Programmes, which engage the public only for a limited duration. In contrast Project Conservation seeks to build up relations with the community in an ongoing manner.

In doing so, it is especially important for staff to understand the types of links already existing between the Department and other local groups or institutions, and how the nature of those relationships may help or hinder the development of Project Conservation.

At the local level, Project Conservation commences operating in an environment where relationships already exist between the Department and a variety of local groups and institutions. Major ones are: other government agencies, local authorities, private business, educational institutions, tangata whenua and conservation organisations.

The characteristics of these existing relationships are outlined below.

Other government agencies

Other government agencies may exert an influence on the direction of Project Conservation in two main ways. Firstly, they may provide resources, for example through Labour Department trainee programmes such as ACCESS. Secondly, their actions in determining the nature and extent of public services locally have a 'spill over' effect on the local image of the Department of Conservation. Its motivations and actions may be judged by community members, rightly or wrongly, on the basis of actions of other government agencies. This is apparent in some local attitudes to the Department as reported by staff.

Local authorities and private business

The relationship between the Department and local government, or local businesses has contradictory elements. Both may come into conflict with the Department over industrial development. But they are also potentially significant resource providers for Project Conservation. Local authorities have been involved in Project Conservation through planning activities and the donation of materials. Private business is also a useful source of sponsorship.

The Department's relationship with local government and private business may be enhanced through Project Conservation. This programme provides a means for the Department to work with major local economic interests and other local residents on activities which are seen to have value to the community.

Project Conservation may help to overcome the negative image of the Department as a constraint on the development of the local economy. It may also help the Department to promote conservation to major local economic interests.

Educational institutions

Educational institutions already play an important role in Project Conservation. They have been a significant focus for recruiting volunteers and raising awareness of conservation. They have also provided resources in the way of planning activities and facilities.

Tangata whenua

The relationship with tangata whenua is a complex one that has the potential to be enhanced by project Conservation. A community-oriented programme which seeks to involve local people in the care of local resources may help to break down the long held suspicion of many Maori about the agents of the Crown who control natural resources. Many groups are keen for partnership in resource management, and Project Conservation may offer the contact and expertise for this to develop.

Local iwi in Whangarei District have already contributed to Project Conservation through both volunteer and trainee activities. The Whangarei/Taitokerau initiative provides a possible model for other areas interested in partnership with local iwi.

Conservation organisations

Conservation organisations are an obvious source of support for Project Conservation. They have not only been an important source of volunteer effort, but have also helped in planning activities and have provided materials.

Because of its high community profile, Project Conservation acts as an explicit point of contact for conservation organisations. Therefore, the success of Project Conservation in working with conservation organisations will be important for the Department's overall relationship with such groups.

8.3 Internal Factors

The major internal factors affecting the success of Project Conservation are:

- staff skills
- lack of a clear policy focus.

8.3.1 Staff Skills

The evaluation has identified appropriate staff training as one of the key aspects determining the success of Project Conservation. Staff involved in Project Conservation at all levels need training to more effectively communicate with and manage volunteers and trainees.

The advantages of having well trained staff should result in a more comprehensive educational experience being offered to programme participants, including orientation to the Department and Project Conservation, understanding of conservation principles and values, and tutoring in specific skills.

8.3.2 Lack of a clear policy focus

Problems arising from a lack of clear policy concerning the way in which Project Conservation should develop became evident at many points in the study. Major policy matters which need addressing include:

- provision of training for staff
- development of conservation education within Project Conservation
- clarification of goals and establishment of guidelines for their achievement
- the opportunity for Project Conservation participants to be involved in decision making about resource management
- resolution of difficulties relating to the perception of volunteers and trainees as 'replacements' for paid employees.

A striking impression gained through the study is that, the success of Project Conservation can be attributed more to the energy and commitment of staff than to any established policy or procedures. A priority task is to develop these policies and procedures, in order to build on the valuable work that has already been achieved in the pilot areas and comparative districts.

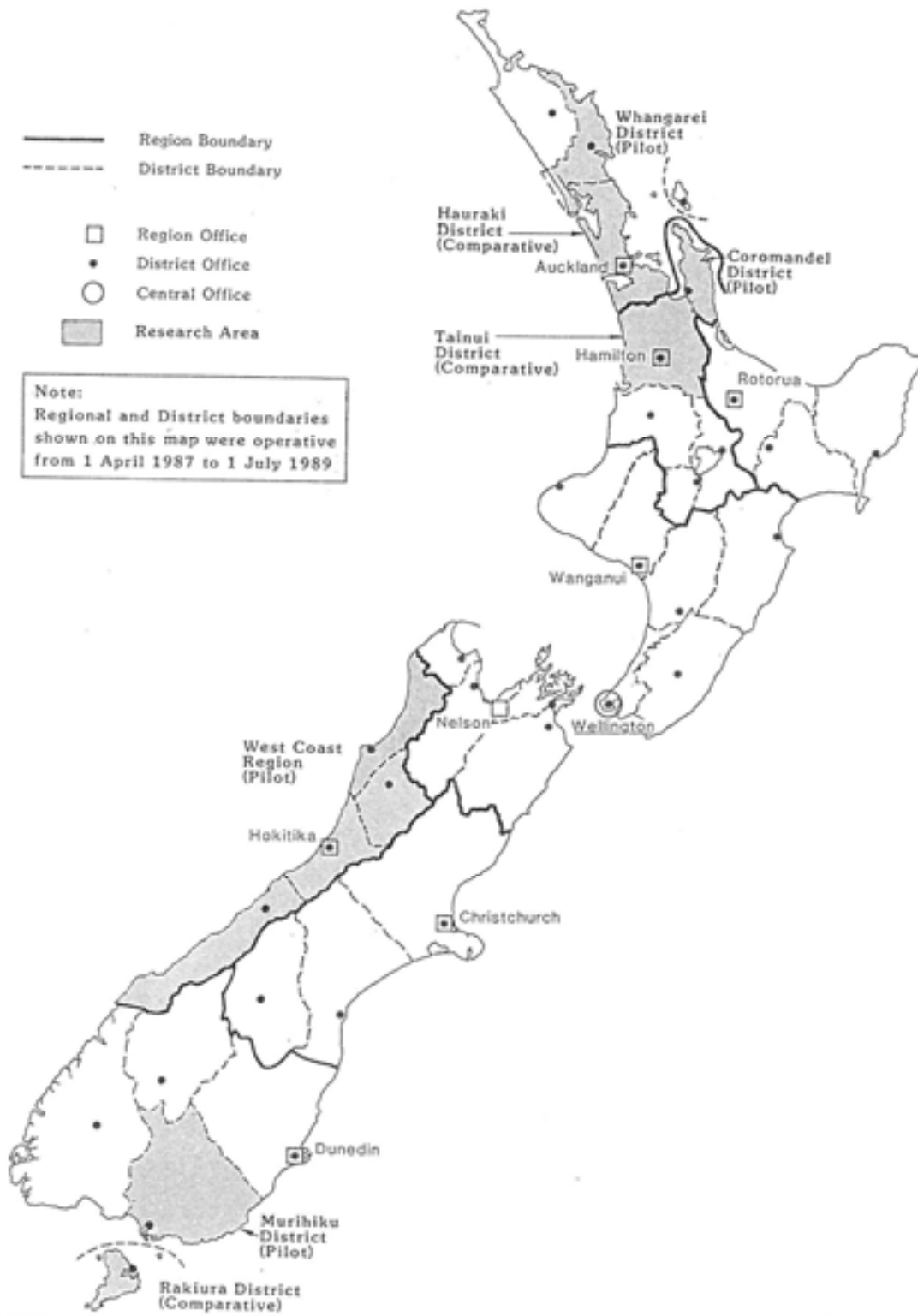
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APPENDIX 1

Project Conservation Research Evaluation Areas



APPENDIX 2

PROJECT CONSERVATION GOALS

1. To engage voluntary effort from the community to assist in the conservation of New Zealand's natural and historic environment.

NB: Project Conservation will complement the permanent wage and salaried staff, and not replace their functions.

2. To support and strengthen links between conservation organisations and the Department, particularly at the district and regional level.

3. To provide new opportunities for people, especially the younger urban population to experience the values of the natural environment and to become more sensitive to those values.

4. To provide training in basic conservation tasks in order to foster recruitment of groups presently under-represented in the Department of Conservation.

APPENDIX 3

PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH

Information was provided by the following people:

West Coast Region

<u>Name</u>	<u>Designation</u>
Annette Hamblett	Project Conservation Coordinator (Interview).
Craig Murdoch	Controlling Officer for Project Conservation (Interview).
Ted Brennon	Conservation Officer, Arahura District; supervisor of ACCESS trainees and volunteers (Interview).
Mel Nichols	Conservation Officer, West Coast Region; also Vice Chairperson, local branch of Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (Interview).
Frauke Gabriel	Volunteer, working holiday (Interview).
Rick	Volunteer (self administered questionnaire).
Annie Hughes	ACCESS tutor (self administered questionnaire).
Ross residents (4)	Volunteers caring for Ross Cottage (Group discussion).
'Outdoor Skills' ACCESS Group (6)	Trainees (Group discussion).

Murihiku District

Fergus Sutherland	Project Conservation Coordinator (Interview).
Lou Sanson MacFie	District Conservator (Interview).
Cathie	Conservation Officer, Education (Interview).
Chris McMillan	Area Conservator, Invercargill (Phone interview).
Bill Gimblett	Volunteer Leader (Interview).
Barbara Anglem	Teacher, Southland Girls' High School; involved in school pupil volunteers (Phone interview).

District Staff Meeting District Conservator and Area Conservators (Group discussion and notes of meeting).

Whangarei District

Tom Edmonds	Project Conservation Coordinator (Interview).
Richard Anderson	Controlling Officer for Project Conservation (Interview)
Gerry Brackenbury	Publicity and Education Officer (Interview).
Mark Tribole	Conservation Officer, Maori Liaison (Interview).
Ngati Wai ACCESS group, Tourism Module (6)	Volunteers (Group discussion).
Janine Boyd	Member of Volunteer Committee (Phone interview).
Hui at Whakapoumahara Marae	DOC staff and tangata whenua (Notes of meeting).

Coromandel District

Catherine Delahunty	Project Conservation coordinator (Interview).
Toko te Aho	District Conservator (Interview).
Peter Carter	Manager, Eastern Area (Interview).
Tom Cookson	Manager, Western Area (Interview).
Geordie Murman	Conservation Officer (self-administered questionnaire).
Veronica Black	Senior Community Development Worker, Thames Hospital Board; assists with organisation of ACCESS (Interview).
'Friends of Kauaeranga' Meeting	5 Volunteers and 4 DOC staff (Notes of meeting).
'Friends of Moehau'	6 volunteers (group discussion).

Hauraki District

Chris Roberts	Senior Conservation Officer (Interview).
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Jan Cotterall	Conservation Officer, Education (Interview)
Rex Mossman	Chief Ranger, Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park (Interview)
Chris Clark	Conservation Officer (Interview)
Jo Ritchie	Recreation Planner, Northern Region (Interview).

Tainui District

John Greenwood	District Conservator (Interview).
Bruce Postill	Senior Conservation Officer (Interview).
Neil Deans	Flore/Fauna, Wetlands (Interview)

Rakiura District

Ron Tindall	District Conservator (Phone interview, Self administered questionnaire)
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Central Office

Christine Smith	Overall Project Conservation Conservator (Interview)
Neville Jones	Senior Conservation Officer, Recreation and Tourism; member of Project Conservation steering group (Interview)
Bev Abbott	Advocacy and Education; member of Project Conservation steering group (Interview)
Bella Ansell and Neal Gordon	Training (Group discussion)

APPENDIX 4

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF VOLUNTEERS INTERVIEWED

(Total = 19)

1. Age	15-19	5
	20-29	2
	30-39	6
	40-59	5
	60+	1
2. Sex	Male	8
	Female	11
3. Ethnicity	Maori	7
	European/Pakeha	11
	Other	1
4. Income	Under \$10,000	14
	\$10-19,000	3
	\$20-29,000	1
	Not known	1
5. Labourforce Status		
(a) In labourforce	Professional	1
	Self-employed	3
	Wage-worker	2

		6
(b) Not in labourforce	Voluntary worker	1
	Home duties	2
	Student	3
	Retired	6

		13

6. Residence

West Coast	5
Murihiku	1
Whangarei	6
Coromandel	6
Overseas	1

7. Previous experience of voluntary conservation work?

Yes	9
No	10

8. Membership of conservation organisation

Yes	10
No	9