

Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2008

To: The Chairman, New Zealand Conservation Authority, Wellington

This is the Tenth Annual Report from the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board, as required under Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987.

Introduction

The Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board is a twelve-member citizen body appointed by the Minister of Conservation under the terms of the Conservation Act 1987, Part IIA and Section 6. It is a policy making and advisory body for a range of activities on public conservation land and all other functions of the Department of Conservation.

The roles of the Conservation Board are set out in the Conservation Act 1987 as follows:

- To recommend the approval of conservation management strategies (In particular the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy)
- To approve conservation management plans
- To advise on how conservation management strategies and management plans will be put into practice.
- To advise on proposed changes to the status of land areas of national and international significance.
- To advise on proposals for new walkways.
- To liaise with Fish and Game Councils on conservation matters
- To carry out other powers delegated to it by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act 1987 or any other Act of parliament.

The Board is serviced by the Department of Conservation.

1. Membership

Board Member	Attendance at meetings (Max 6)	From
Dr Murray Parsons	6	Christchurch
Wiki Baker	6	Arowhenua
Gottlieb Braun-Elwert	4	Lake Tekapo
Joseph Hullen	4	Kaiapoi
Fiona Musson	5	Taumutu
John Keoghan	5	Rolleston
Ines Stäger	6	Geraldine
Mandy Waaka-Home	4	Arowhenua
Jimmy Wallace	5	Geraldine
Peter Foley	5	Waimate

Joseph Hullen, John Keoghan, and Jimmy Wallace were appointed to the Board and attended their first meeting in October 2007.

At the first meeting of the new Board (October) Murray Parsons was elected as Chairman. No Deputy Chairperson was elected.

Alan Joliffe and Fred Murray and Yvette Couch-Lewis retired from their positions on the Board.

Due to the resignation of two members, Jo Kane and Chrissie Williams, the board operated with 10 members for the majority of the year.

Chrissie Williams was appointed in 2006 but resigned from the board on 28 November 2007 due to her election as a Councillor to the Christchurch City Council. Jo Kane was appointed to the board in 2007 but was unable to attend any meetings due to her appointment to Environment Canterbury and to the Canterbury District Health Board. She resigned from her position on the Board on 10 December 2007.

In accordance with section 273 of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, four members are nominated by. They are Wiki Baker, Joseph Hullen, Mandy Waaka-Home and Fiona Musson.

2. Board budget

The Board kept within its budget for the 2007/08 financial year, however, the board's travel budget was significantly overspent and it was only due to under-expenditure in other areas that it did not exceed its total budget.

Because of the size and complexity of the Conservancy, additional work is often put to the Board to carry out and no additional resourcing is provided. Requests for additional work come from the Department of Conservation and the Minister of Conservation for work associated with National Park Management Plans and Conservation Management Strategies.

The Board acknowledges its budget is considerable in comparison with other boards. However, Canterbury is one of the largest conservancies in the country and the costs of providing good advice, coupled with on-the-ground inspections are high. Board members live throughout Canterbury to provide a Conservancy-wide perspective and have to travel long distances to meetings.

3. Board district

The Board's area of jurisdiction extends from the Conway and Clarence Rivers in the north and west to the main divide, including all of the Arthur's Pass National Park. The southern boundary is the catchment of the Waitaki River at Kurow, along the river to the east coast. The coastal boundary is the twelve mile limit for marine reserves and the exclusive economic zone for marine mammals.

The main features of the public conservation land within the Board's boundaries are:

- Two national parks (Aoraki/Mount Cook and Arthur's Pass)
- Part of one national reserve (Lewis Pass)
- Seven conservation parks (Craigieburn, Lake Sumner, Hanmer, Ahuriri, Korowai/Torlesse Tussockland Park, Ruataniwha and Hakatere)
- Hurunui Mainland Island
- One marine reserve (Pohatu) and one marine mammal sanctuary (Banks Peninsula)
- 1 gazetted walkway and 23 ungazetted walkways
- A large number of recreation, scenic and historic reserves and stewardship areas.
- Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere Joint Management with Ngāi Tahu

The Canterbury Conservancy directly administers 1001331.7764 hectares including the 215 hectare Pohatu Marine Reserve.

4. Conservation board meetings/field inspections

Meetings

The Board conducted six meetings during the year as follows:

Date	Location
August 2007	Christchurch
October 2007	Ashburton
December 2007	Onuku Marae
February 2008	Christchurch
April 2008	Aoraki Mount Cook
June 2008	Christchurch

Field Inspections

Five field inspections were conducted during the year as follows:

October 2007 – the Board hosted the New Zealand Conservation Authority and visited the Hakatere Conservation Park. Discussion centred around Hakatere as a “place” within the soon to be reviewed Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy. Members of the Board and the NZCA also visited the area of the proposed O Tu Wharekai wetland project. Electricity Ashburton's proposal for an irrigation and hydroelectric scheme on the Stour River was also discussed.

December 2007 – The Board visited Onuku Marae and met with Victoria Andrews re the historic site – Takapuneke/Greens Point which covers 14 hectares of land between Akaroa township and Onuku Marae. The area is the site of the sacking of the village of Ngāi Tahu chief Te Maiharanui by Ngāti Toa chief Te Raparaha in 1830 and is of great historical significance to Maori and Pakeha.

A workshop was held on the Ngāi Tahu Settlement Act and the requirements of Section 4 of the Conservation Act.

February 2008 – The Board visited Mt Cass with Andrew Hurley from Main Power and DOC staff members: Nick Head, botanist, Jen Miller, planner, Bryan Jensen Mahaanui area manager, Robin Smith programme manager biodiversity, to look at the site and discuss the proposal for a windfarm along the Mount Cass Ridge. Nick Head explained some of the unique plants and plant associations on these limestone outcrops.

April 2008 – The Board visited Aoraki Mount Cook and the department’s senior planner conducted a workshop on the CMS review. The Board was shown the construction of the Department of Conservation Visitor Centre redevelopment. The Board visited the extension to the Hermitage building and the Planetarium and experienced a data show of the Southern skies.

June 2008 – Christchurch – The Board visited Landcare Research at Lincoln and was guided through the Herbarium by Ines Schönenberger.

Graham Nugent presented the findings and recommendations of the Game Animal Panel, and outlined the National Pest Management Strategy for Bovine Tb. Further presentations were received on research of biological control of possums.

Maori Conservation Board members’ hui

No Maori members’ hui was held in this financial year.

Committee

The following are the committees the board operated during the 2007– 2008 year:

Committee	Members
Planning: (includes conservation management strategies and plans, advocacy, resource consents, business planning and management planning).	Fiona Musson (convenor) Ines Stäger Mandy Waaka Home Jimmy Wallace John Keoghan
Concessions: (includes recreation, commercial tourism, historic, cultural, iwi)	Ines Stäger (convenor) Wiki Baker Gottlieb Braun-Elwert Joseph Hullen John Keoghan
Water: (includes marine reserves, marine mammals, coastal pollution, taiapure, marine farms, wetlands, general ecological stability, freshwater).	Murray Parsons (convenor) Mandy Waaka-Home Jimmy Wallace John Keoghan Josphe Hullen
Land: (includes weeds and pests, wild animals, tenure review, wild animals, general ecological stability)	Gottlieb Braun-Elwert (convenor) Ines Stager Wiki Baker Mandy Waaka-Home Peter Foley John Keoghan

Committee	Members
Arthur's Pass National Park Management Plan	Mandy Waaka-Home
CMS Priority Setting Committee	<u>Board:</u> Full Board <u>DOC staff:</u> Poma Palmer Norm Thornley Andrew Grant Maurice Bootheirstone Cheryl Colley

The Chairman, Dr. Murray Parsons, is an ex-officio member of each committee.

In addition to the above, one ministerial appointed advisory committee was in operation during the year. This was:

The Pohatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee, which is ongoing. The Chairman is the board's representative on this committee.

5. Board functions under Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987

The work carried out during the year is set out below under the various headings of the functions allocated to the board by statute.

5.1 Conservation management strategies

"To recommend the approval by the Conservation Authority of Conservation Management Strategies, and the review and amendment of such strategies under the relevant enactment." – 6M(1)(a)

The 2007/2008 year has seen preparatory work begin towards reviewing the current Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy. The statutory component of the review will occur in 2009 and 2010.

5.2 Conservation management plans

"To approve Conservation Management Plans, and the review and amendment of such Plans, under the relevant enactments." – 6M(1)(b).

5.3 Implementation

"To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director General on the implementation of Conservation Management Strategy and Conservation Management Plans for areas within the jurisdiction of the board." – 6M(1)(c).

a) Conservation Management Strategy

The Board has appointed a separate committee made up of board members and DOC staff to identify key priorities and improve reporting on those priorities. A report on identified priorities is completed each year by the department which the board then provides its own comments on. This report is separate to the annual report.

The purpose of these action points is to identify particular conservation concerns to which a number of conservation strategies are attached. Over time it is envisaged that this type of reporting will provide evidence of the success or otherwise of the Conservation Management Strategy. Of concern to the board is the lack of hard data

available that would provide an indication of progress made or ground lost in the department's work to conserve the native flora and fauna for all New Zealanders

The priority action points are listed below:

1. Freshwater
2. Plant pests
3. Animal pests
3. Treaty Issues
4. Visitor Services
5. Visitor Asset Management Programme
6. Coastal Marine
7. Endangered Species
8. Ecological Monitoring
9. Tenure Review
10. Motor Vehicles

b) Management plans

The implementation of reserve management plans has been generally superseded by the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy.

5.4 Change of Status

“To advise the Conservation Authority or the Director General on any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance”. 6M(1)(d)(i)”

Work is proceeding towards the gazettal of former pastoral lease land at Castle Hill as conservation area, although there are a number of related matters to be worked through prior to that being completed.

5.5 Conservation advice

“Any other conservation matter relating to any areas within the jurisdiction of the Board”. 6M(i)(d)(ii).

As in all previous reports the issue of government funding for the department is always featured. This year is no exception. Biodiversity funding was once again available, although most of this is tagged for specific work such as animal pests, weed control, species work and public awareness. The board fully supports the injection of more funding for this work.

Weed and pest issues are still evident in many areas, and the board's real concern about escalating wilding tree infestation in the high country areas still remains. The spread of Russell lupin into Canterbury's braided riverbeds and the impacts it has on these ecosystems is a very significant issue for the Board. Of particular concern to the Board is the spread of lupin into the upper Waimakariri River. In order to prevent lupins becoming a well established pest in the Waimakariri over the next 5 years, the Board would like to see an early response via specifically targeted funding.

The board has voiced concern about predator control on a number of occasions. It was pleasing to see that Operation Ark continued to fund predator control

work in the Hawdon and Poulter Valleys (Arthur's Pass National Park) and in the South Branch of the Hurunui River (Lake Sumner Forest Park).

Other conservation matters the board has given advice to the Department and NZCA on are:

- Concessions advice to the Department of Conservation
- Monitoring of the cumulative effects (concessions)
- Aoraki/Mount Cook development – advice to the Aoraki Area
- Use of 1080 poison - advice
- Visitor Asset Management Programme – advice
- Lake Heron/Clent Hills Access – advice to the Department
- Tenure Review – advice to the Department, advocacy LINZ
- Management Plans – advice to the Department
- Moratorium on Hector's Dolphins Permits, Canterbury
- Significant Inherent Values guidelines
- Proposed NZ Coastal Policy Statement

5.6 Walkways

“To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on proposals for new walkways in any area within the jurisdiction of the Board”. (Section 6M(1)(e) Conservation Act 1987).

“A board may recommend that a walkway be declared over public or private land, after it has consulted with the owner/administrator and the occupier of the land”. (Section 6(1) and 8(1) New Zealand Walkways Act 1990).

As mentioned in previous reports, there is a network of 24 walkways throughout Canterbury, only one of which is gazetted. The Board believes this work requires more funding, but again, as in previous years, the Conservancy has not received any funding to carry out the gazettal of these walkways. The board continues to advocate that walkways are important, and that they are a national issue that involves local authorities as well.

Liaison with Fish and Game Councils

“To liaise with Fish and Game Councils on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board” – (Section 6M(1)(f) Conservation Act 1987).

Communication with the North Canterbury and Central South Island Fish and Game Councils has continued during the year with the exchange of agenda and minutes. A board member liaises with each and keeps the Board informed on issues. The main issues of common interest have been Central Plains Water's proposal to dam the Waianiwaniwa Valley for irrigation purposes, Meridian Energy's proposal for a tunnel on the North Bank of the Waitaki River, and the Hunter Downs Irrigation Proposal, and ECan's Natural Resources Regional Plan.

The Board has a concern about the increase in the number of Canada geese and seeks increased control. The Board is pleased that the department has released a discussion document entitled “Review of Level of Protection for Some New Zealand Wildlife” that includes proposals for some alternate control methods to

those contained in the March 1995 South Island Canada Goose Management Plan.

5.7 Delegated functions

“To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act”. (Section 6M(1)(g) Conservation Act 1987)

The Minister has not delegated powers or functions under this sub-section.

5.8 Other functions

“Every board shall have such other functions as are conferred on it by or under this Act or any other Act”. – 6M(2)

The board ensures that its decisions and recommendations are consistent with the requirements of section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987.

6 Powers of the board under Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987

6.1 *“Every Board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions”.* 6N(1).

The board has focused its efforts during the year on:

- Tenure review
- Weed and pest control
- Recreation facilities
- Central Plains Water
- Arthur’s Pass Management Plan Review
- Preparation for the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy Review
- Access issues

The department and board have worked together in unison throughout the year and tried to address each of the aforementioned, as dictated by available resourcing.

The board tended to focus on policy issues and only became involved in management issues when comments or advice are requested by the department.

6.2 *“Without limiting the generality of sub-section(1) of this section each board may”* 6N(2).

6.2.1 *“Advocate its interest at any public forum or in any statutory planning process”.* 6N(2)(a).

There are 10 district plans within the board’s area of jurisdiction.

The relevant committees continually monitor resource consents and take appropriate action if conservation values are threatened.

The board made submissions or commented on:

- Walking Access Bill
- Management of Game Animals

- Canterbury Strategic Water Study
- Central Plains Water application to dam the Wainaniwaniwa Valley for irrigation purposes
- Weeds on conservation land
- Tenure Review
- Changes to the way pastoral lease land is valued
- Aoraki/Mount Cook Visitor Centre and Car Park Development
- Vehicle access on conservation land
- Environment Canterbury’s Long-Term Council Community Plan
- Endangered species programmes
- Zero waste for mountain-based activities
- Hurunui mainland island
- Canterbury Conservancy’s Aircraft Access Strategy
- Mackenzie District Plan Variation 13
- Mt Cass, windfarm proposal by Mainpower
- Kakahu Irrigation Ltd, variation to a consent

6.2.2 “*Appoint committees from members and other suitable persons and delegate to them functions and powers*”.

Each committee of the board has the power to act on behalf of the board and any decisions made are ratified at the following board meeting.

One Advisory Committee has been appointed by the Minister of Conservation to operate under the agency of the Board. This is the Pohatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee, which is a joint Section 6N(2)(b) and 56(2) committee.

Functions delegated from the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board

The Pōhatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee holds the status of a Committee of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board and has delegated to it the following functions and powers of the Board in relation to the Pōhatu Marine Reserve.

- (i) Section 6M(1)(b) of the Conservation Act 1987, subject to the Committee liaison with the full Board regarding the content of any proposed Conservation Plan for Pohatu Marine Reserve before exercise of that function (for avoidance of doubt, this is to be taken to also include the other options specified in subsection 17G(2)(b) and (c) of the Act, and subsection 17G(3)(a) and (c) shall also apply to the Committee in the exercise of this section);
- (ii) Section 6M(1)(c) of the Act;
- (iii) Section 6M(1)(d)(ii) of the Act;
- (iv) Section 6N(2)(a) of the Act, except for participation in statutory planning processes;
- (v) Section 17G(1) in relation to the procedure for the preparation of the Pōhatu Marine Reserve Conservation Management Plan.

Committee Members	
Murray Parsons (Chairman)	Chair of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board was appointed to the Committee upon the retirement of Alan Jolliffe, the previous chair.

George Tikao	Onuku Marae
Nigel Scott	Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu
Graeme Grennell	Koukourarata Runanga
Kath Reid	Akaroa Harbour Marine Protection Society
Shireen Helps	Is a landowner in Flea Bay, adjacent to the Pohatu Marine Reserve and was appointed to the Committee by the Minister following the resignation of Francis Helps, her husband on 14 March 2008.
Peter Langlands	Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society's representative
Bob Meikle	Akaroa Harbour Recreational Fishers Club representative. The club, supported by the local Maori community and commercial fishers, was the applicant for this marine reserve.
Alan Reid	Commercial Fishers
Ray Voller	Ministry of Fisheries
Rei Simon	Wairewa Rūnanga
Eric Ryder	Banks Peninsula Community Board

Rohe/Iwi Links

Pōhatu Pā or Flea Bay was the traditional home to Tūtākāhīkura and his people in pre-European times. The rich flora and fauna was a good source for mahinga kai – food gathering. Maori people gathered fish, seabirds, shellfish and freshwater fish.

Today's descendants of Tūtākāhīkura are Kāi Tahu, Te Runanga o Koukourārata (Port Levy). They actively support Pōhatu as a marine reserve on Banks Peninsula (Horomaka)

Pōhatu acts as a nest (kōhanga) for replenishing fish stocks, providing a key element in the integrated sustainable management of fish resources on Banks Peninsula.

Committee meetings

The Committee held two meetings this year, on Thursday 8 November 2007 and on Thursday 15 May 2008.

Management of the Reserve

Pōhatu Marine Reserve is situated on the south eastern side of Banks Peninsula at Flea Bay. Pōhatu Marine Reserve was established in May 1999. It comprises 215 hectares and stretches from Redcliffe Point to Ounu-hau Point (south of Duke Head) (Refer to map for location.) Hector's dolphin, hoiho/yellow-eyed penguin, white-flipped penguin and kekeno/New Zealand fur seal either live within the reserve or visit the reserve and so have been included in this report.

The reserve is surrounded by a Marine Mammal Sanctuary which extends from Sumner Head to the Rakaia River, and out to a distance of four nautical miles - an area of 1140 sq. km. New Zealand's first marine mammal sanctuary, it was

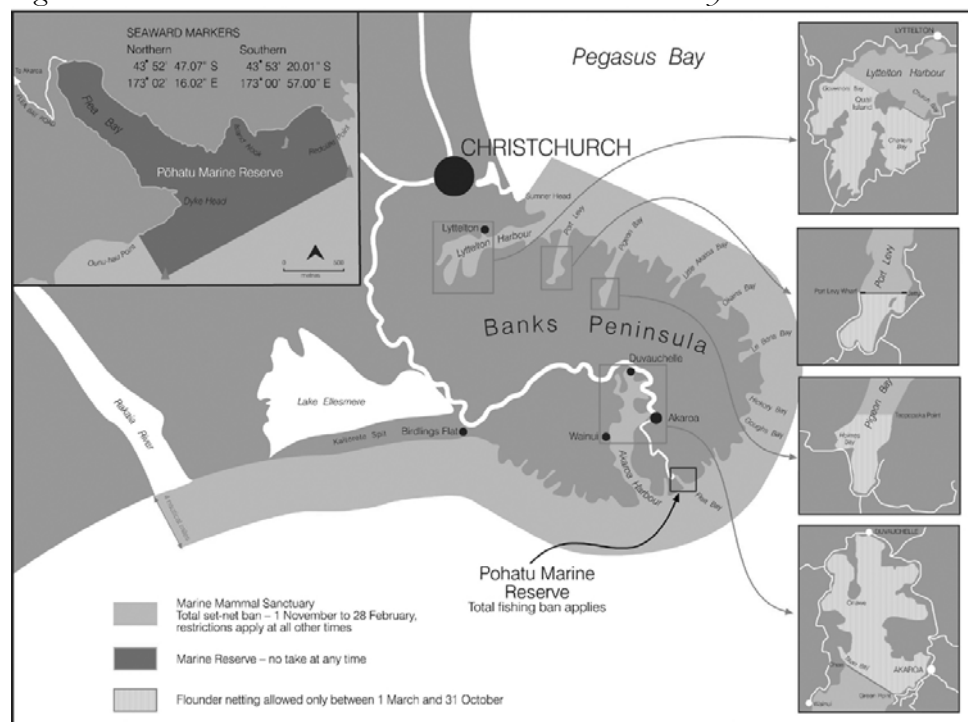
created around Banks Peninsula in 1988, to protect Hector's dolphins/upokohue (*Cephalorhynchus hectori*) from bycatch in setnets.

There is a total ban on all setnetting in the shaded area shown on the main map from November to the end of February.

The four-month setnet ban also helps reduce the risk of entanglement of other marine species, such as the endangered hoiho/yellow-eyed penguin, kororā/white flippered penguin and kekeno/New Zealand fur seal.

Flea Bay is approximately 30 metres deep at the heads and 5 – 6 metres deep further in. The bottom of the bay is filled with 1 metre of silt. The bay is exposed to southerlies, and the water is often murky.

Figure 1: Pohatu Marine Reserve and Marine Mammal Sanctuary



Pohatu Marine Reserve Ecological Monitoring Plan

There has been quite a bit of work over the last year relating to Pohatu Marine Reserve. NIWA and Davidson Environmental Ltd, completed a habitat map of the reserve early in 2008. The map provides an accurate geo-referenced diagram of the habitat (such as rock /hard, coarse-fine sediment, mud silt, etc) and community types (such as include macroalgal, mussel and sea tulip beds, etc.) within Pohatu Marine Reserve. The map is a useful tool for planning and ensures that the habitat types within reserve and control areas are consistent. The map will also assist with operational planning of the reserve, such as identifying sensitive/fragile areas.

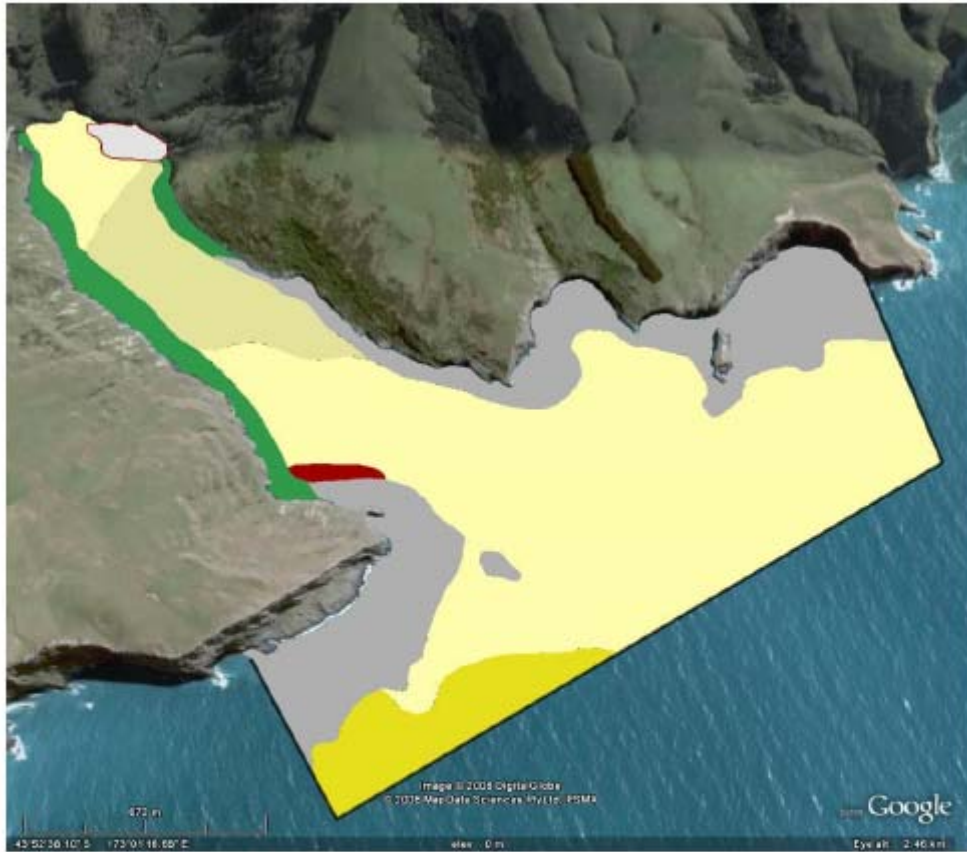


Figure 2. Location of habitat and community types located within the Pohatu Marine Reserve. Pale yellow = mobile sand habitat, fawn = stable sand habitat, bright yellow = deep mud, shell habitat, red = red algal bed on soft substrata, pale grey = shallow rock barren, medium grey = encrusting rock community (exposed) and green = *Carpophyllum* forest.

An important review of all research that has been carried in the reserve over the last decade has also taken place. The document discusses what biological monitoring and general marine research has occurred and why, what fisheries research has taken place and the results of all these studies. It also analyses any gaps in current research and discusses alternative methods and techniques that maybe more applicable to monitoring in low visibility conditions. Finally, the document makes recommendations for an improved preliminary sampling design for Pohatu, using new and previously used methods.

As a follow on from the review document, a draft biological monitoring plan was then prepared for Pohatu, which includes plans to assess the impact of reservation using the following methodologies: underwater visual counts (UVC) and baited underwater video (BUV) to assess fish diversity, abundance and size structure of selected species; potting and tagging of blue cod to assess abundance and size structure, and to determiner their movement patterns and assess how cod are being protected within the reserve; and carry out invertebrate abundance and size structure for spiny lobster, paua and kina using UVC.

Mahaanui Area and Conservancy staff spent many long hours planning and organising a dive team and logistics to implement the biological monitoring survey. It was scheduled for April 2008, but due to inappropriate weather and poor water visibility the survey was

unable to be conducted in the 07/08 financial year. The survey is rescheduled for Spring 2008, when weather patterns are expected to improve and water temperature warms (during winter the temperature drops from a nice 14°C to a nasty 7°C).

Shorelife

Visible at low tide:

- Mussels/kūtai, limpets/ngākihi, chiton, sea tulips/kāeo, whelks, crabs/pāpaka, cats eyes/pūpū, barnacles/koromāungaunga, periwinkles/ngaeti, tubeworms, brown, green and red seaweed.
- Spotted shags/kawau, terns/tara, tītī and gulls/tara.

Threatened species

(a) Hector's dolphin

Hector's dolphin/ūpokohue is the smallest marine dolphin in the world (maximum length 145 cm) and is found only in New Zealand's inshore waters. It is naturally inquisitive and people friendly and loves to bow ride and play in the wake of boats.

Threat Management Plan

The Department of Conservation (DOC) and the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) have jointly developed a non-statutory Hector's and Maui's Dolphins Draft Threat Management Plan (TMP). In August 2007 the draft plan was released for public consultation, generating over 2500 submissions. Due to the large number of submissions, decision making was delayed until March 2008. This was subsequently further delayed.

Decisions regarding the measures to manage fishing related threats to the dolphins, as part of the TMP were announced by the Minister of Fisheries on 29 May 2008. For the South Island east coast (Cape Jackson in the Marlborough Sounds to Slope Point in the Catlins), commercial and amateur set netting is now banned out to 4 nautical miles offshore, with the following exceptions:

- commercial and recreational set netting allowed to 1 nm offshore around the Kaikoura Canyon
- set netting for flounder permitted between 1 April and 30 September in existing defined flounder areas around Banks Peninsula and Queen Charlotte Sound using defined nets

Trawling is now banned to 2 nautical miles offshore (flatfish nets with defined low headline heights are still permitted). The present fishing regulations in the Banks Peninsula Marine Mammal Sanctuary (BPMMS) will stay in place until these regulations come into effect (likely October 2008).

The decision to proceed with the statutory process for managing non-fishing related threats to the dolphins via marine mammal sanctuaries (also part of the TMP) was announced by the acting Minister of Conservation David Parker the same day.

A further announcement on 26 June 2008 by the Minister of Conservation commenced the 28-day submission period for the public to comment on a proposed 4 new marine mammal sanctuaries, including alterations to the existing BPMMS. The proposed alterations to the boundaries of the existing MMS

involve extending the boundary along the shore to the mouth of the Waipara River and the seaward boundary from 4 nautical miles from the coast to 12 nautical miles from the coast. The new area proposed will encompass approximately 413,000 hectares and cover 389.31 km of coastline and will include restrictions to seismic surveying.

Moratorium on Hector's dolphin permits

A moratorium on Hector's dolphin permits for the Lyttelton and Akaroa Harbour Operational Areas has been approved by the Director-General of Conservation on 25 January 2008. The moratorium is in place until 1 May 2012. The moratorium is in place due to the current lack of information about the effects of tourism on Hector's dolphins and the need to adequately protect dolphins

(b) Yellow-eyed penguin (hoiho) and white-flipped penguin (kororā)

The bay is a natural breeding site for both penguin species. The remoteness and steep bluffs provide some protection from disturbance and predators.

Kororā (white-flipped penguin) are a strong sub-species of *Eudyptula minor* (little penguin) that is endemic to the Canterbury Coast. They are in decline on Banks Peninsula and are under threat from ferrets, cats and stoats.

It is estimated that there are 893 pair in Pohatu – Flea Bay – (2004 census, Cashman). In a 2000-02 survey undertaken by Challies and Burleigh the total Banks Peninsula population was estimated at 2112 pair.

Pōhatu and neighbouring Stony Bay are the only sites on Banks Peninsula where kororā nest out on hillsides up to 200 metres altitude. The remainder are confined to debris slopes and caves at the foot of cliffs or on shorelines.

Hoiho are less common, mostly breeding further south on the Otago Peninsula and in the Catlins. There are only a few breeding pairs on Banks Peninsula and most are in the Pōhatu Marine Reserve. Being small (they stand around 50cm tall) and flightless they are at risk from predators such as cats, stoats and ferrets.

Other marine life

- Massive crayfish/kōura – up to five kilograms ten pounds which take sanctuary in the deep volcanic rocks;
- Blue moki – some up to 6 kilograms
- Forty species of reef fish – such as wrasse, trumpeter and blue cod/kopukopu, leather jackets/kōkiri
- Groper/hāpuku
- Butterfish/mararī (a vegetarian – eats seaweed) and large banded wrasse swim amongst the kelp forests
- Pāua and rockfish

Because the Department of Conservation has been hindered in its attempts to carry out surveys in the Pōhatu Marine Reserve due to poor underwater visibility and weather conditions not conducive to standard monitoring methodologies, it

asked NIWA to outline a more appropriate monitoring regime for Pōhātu which could be undertaken by trained, but not necessarily, specialist staff.

The Pōhātu Marine Reserve continues its important role in preserving the marine biodiversity of the region. The focus of the committee has been to implement sound management practices for the Reserve. Public awareness of the seaward boundary continues to create the biggest problem for the Department of Conservation.

Increased surveillance, a multi-agency response to compliance issues, increased public awareness and education on the positive effects of the Reserve on biodiversity and increased fish stocks in the surrounding waters are all important outcomes for the Committee.

Seal Counts using Thermal Imaging

The Mahaanui Area and technical support trialled the use of a thermal imaging camera to collect data on NZ fur seal abundance and distribution at colonies around Banks Peninsula. The trial was successfully carried out in Oct 2007 using a helicopter, and New Zealand Fur Seals were shown to have a distinct thermal signature. This was the first time NZ fur seals have been surveyed using this method and its already showing potential for efficient and effective wide-scale use for fur seal colony surveys in the future.

The method will be tested against more traditional methods, such as aerial counts, boat counts and land-based counts (if possible) to determine if the method can perform better, i.e. is more accurate, and time and cost efficient. The survey will be planned for September/October 2008 and will be conducted using Area and Conservancy staff. The method may also have potential to be used for national seal census work, which is severely lacking in data.

Seal Diet Study

Area and Conservancy staff are conducting a project to gain information on the diet of NZ fur seals around Banks Peninsula. The project will help DOC to understand the interaction between fur seals and fisheries in our local patch, as diet analysis has not been carried out on Banks Peninsula fur seals to date. The aim is to collect 100 fresh scats and any regurgitants from two fur seal breeding colonies, Te Oka and Otanerito Bay, each season over the period of at least one year.

So far, we have collected and analysed summer and autumn 2008 samples. Preliminary results have shown that arrow squid and lantern fish are forming the majority (i.e. >80%) of their diet in these 2 seasons. This is good news for fishermen, as lantern fish have no commercial value and arrow squid is not targeted by recreational fishers.

Update on the Marine Protected Areas Process

The Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Fisheries have undertaken national tasks for the implementation of the Marine Protected Areas Policy (MPA) (released in January 2006). Following their release for public consultation in June 2007, the two draft MPA implementation papers on Coastal and Marine Habitat and Ecosystem Classification, and the Protection Standard, were finalised

and approved by both Ministers. The MPA papers and other material such as a summary pamphlet and a set of frequently asked Questions & Answers are posted on the Biodiversity website, DOC website and MFish web site.

The MPA planning processes that are currently underway include the West Coast, Hauraki Gulf, and the Sub-Antarctic Marine Protection Planning Forums. The Kaikoura marine protection process is also underway. Further priority areas are still being discussed with the Ministry of Fisheries as there are some issues to resolve with the Protection Standard. Priority areas are also subject to joint resources. An indicative timetable is expected to be released in the 08/09 year.

Coastal –Marine Area Resource Information Project

Canterbury Conservancy has undergone a data gathering exercise over the last 10 months, to collate scientific reports pertaining to their Coastal-Marine Area (CMA). The CMA extends from the Conway River in the north, to the Waitaki River in the south, and between the Mean High Water Mark and the 12 nautical mile territorial limit.

A total of 1250 reports have been collected, relating to physical processes, ecology and human use in the CMA. This information was entered in to a database which contains the following details: Authorship, publication details, abstracts, key words, URL links that enable many of the original reports to be uploaded, and what coastal area the information relates to.

The information has been analysed in a general manner and from this, many original maps have been compiled. For example, maps have been made which show species distribution (fish, birds, marine mammals), fishing areas and targeted species (commercial & recreational), coastal stability, coastal-marine geomorphology, whale/dolphin strandings, seafloor sediments, coastal outfall pipes and numerous others maps. All this information along with a covering report, photographs, and analytical graphs is currently being compiled onto an interactive web-based CD. The CD should be completed by October 2008 and it will be distributed out to various parties.

Comment from the Pohatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee

This was the ninth year of the Pohatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee's existence. The focus of the committee has been to implement sound management practices for the Reserve. Lack of public awareness of the seaward boundary creates the biggest problem for departmental staff. The committee's view is that ignorance as an excuse for fishing within the reserve has only a limited life. It has urged the department to be proactive in promoting the Reserve through brochures and signage.

6.3 Draft general policies

“The Conservation Authority may consult any conservation board about the draft of a general policy after receiving submissions on it” (Section 17b(3)(1)(ii) Conservation Act 1987).

The General Policy for National Parks and the Conservation General Policy were adopted in May 2005.

6.4 Freshwater fisheries management plans

Draft freshwater fisheries management plans are to be prepared by the Department “*in consultation with the Conservation Boards affected by them*” (Section 17K(1)(a) Conservation Act 1987).

No such plans affecting the board’s district are in preparation at this time.

6.5 Reduction of width of, or exemption from, marginal strips

“*The Minister of Conservation shall consult the relevant Conservation Board about any proposal made by a Crown Land disposal agency to reduce the width of, or provide an exemption from, a marginal strip, and on being satisfied that it is reasonable in the circumstances to do so, the relevant conservation board...may request the Minister to publicly notify the proposal*”. (Section 24BA Conservation Act 1987).

No applications were considered.

7 Responsibilities under other sections of the Conservation Act 1987

7.1 “Co-opting members of the Board” 6Q(1)

No one was co-opted onto the Board during this financial year.

7.2 “Advice on granting lease or licence in the absence of a CMS or CMP”

No advice was given during the year.

8 Board functions under the National Parks Act 1980

8.1 “The board is responsible, in conjunction with the Department, for preparing draft reviews of management plans, for hearing and deciding on public submissions on any draft review and for recommending any review to the New Zealand Conservation Authority for approval”. Sections 30(a) and 45-47.

There are two national parks in the board’s area of jurisdiction.

The Arthur’s Pass National Park Management Plan has been reviewed and was approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority on 13 December 2007.

8.2 “Advise on any other matter relating to National Parks [Section 30(f)(iii)] including licences permitting the carry on of any park trade, business or occupation within the park” [Section 49(e)]

a) Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park

The progression of the Aoraki/Mount Cook Village Visitor Centre re-development is continuing.

The board is taking a keen interest in the Aoraki/Mount Cook Visitor Centre redevelopment work. Building began in February 2008 and is due for completion by mid-November 2008. Arowhenua runanga has worked in a practical and advisory capacity with the department in relation to the carvings and interpretative panels that will be installed in the new building. Whitehorse Hill road end facilities have been completed and the Hooker Valley Track development is currently in the design stage. Hooker

Valley is identified as the main visitor ‘hotspot’ in the Conservancy and is therefore of great interest to the board.

The Board continues to advise the department on the issuing of guiding, tramping, heli-skiing, hunting and other concessions in the Park.

b) Arthur’s Pass National Park

The board has an ongoing interest in the Arthur’s Pass National Park and the activities and facilities there, especially the visitor services, recreational facilities and opportunities. It also receives regular reports from the West Coast Conservancy on the portion of the Park that it manages and is often alerted to any negative impacts on conservation values within the Park by the Arthur’s Pass Association, which acts as a public “watchdog” for the Park.

9 Liaison

The board has appointed various members to liaise with outside agencies and Canterbury Conservancy Areas as follows:

Liaison Persons

Organisation	Liaison Person
Otago Conservation Board	P. Foley
West Coast Conservation Board	J. Keoghan
Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board	J. Hullen
Fish and Game (1) North Canterbury	F. Musson
Fish and Game (2) Central South Island	W. Baker
Mount Cook Museum Trust	W. Baker
Ngāi Tahu	M. Parsons (Chairman)
Environment Canterbury	M. Parsons (Chairman)
New Zealand Conservation Authority	M. Parsons (Chairman)
Aoraki and Twizel Areas	G. Braun-Elwert
Raukapuka Area	I. Stäger
Mahaanui Area	J. Hullen
Waimakariri Area	J. Hullen
Himalayan Tahr Control Plan Implementation Group	J. Keoghan

9.1 Other conservation boards

The conservancy’s immediate neighbours are the Otago, West Coast Tai Poutini and Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Boards. The Chairman monitors minutes of the various boards for issues of common interest.

9.2 Community

The board has continued to involve the community in its work. It holds meetings around the Canterbury area and the public is encouraged to participate in public forums at these meetings. This is seen as successful as at most meetings people take the opportunity to bring their concerns to the board. However, the board would like more people to take advantage of this option. The board seeks to represent the public interest and continues to strive to learn the views of the public. This is a challenging and difficult task. During field inspections the board also takes the opportunity to meet the local

community in their own environment to observe and discuss issues. This is seen as an essential part of the board's work to forge good neighbour relationships among the community, board and department.

9.3 District and regional councils

The board has continued to develop a good relationship with councils. Councillors and district mayors are invited to attend meetings and local issues often appear on the board's agenda.

Environment Canterbury staff have been involved in some of the board's field inspections. Board members met with Environment Canterbury Councillors to discuss issues of mutual interest.

9.4 Iwi

Ngāi Tahu has four representatives on the board. They are individually selected by their Papatipu Runanga and their status as representatives of local hapu is endorsed by Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu. Board minutes are circulated and conservation issues of concern feature regularly on meeting agenda of both organisations. The Ngāi Tahu representatives on the board ensure a Maori perspective is considered before any final conclusions are reached.

9.5 Non governmental organisations

The board has continued to foster regular meetings with non governmental organisations when appropriate. Two Northern Associates meetings were held during the 2007/08 year and were chaired by board members. The meetings are attended by representatives from groups such as Royal Forest and Bird Society, QEII Trust, Willowbank Wildlife Park, Federated Farmers, Godley Head Heritage Trust, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, runanga representatives, Canterbury Environmental Trust, Orton Bradley Park, The Summit Road Society and Guardians of the Styx.

Two Southern Associates meetings were held in Timaru, these have been chaired by Board members.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

On behalf of all board members, I am pleased to submit the ninth Annual Report of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board for the year ending 30 June 2008.

As can be seen in the annual report the Board has concentrated its energies on policy issues rather than management issues, and in this regard it has functioned well.

Of major importance during the year was discussion about the upcoming review of the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy. Members and Department of Conservation staff spent some time on this to look for a way to reported progress, or otherwise in meeting the aims of the CMS. We have instigated a method of reporting trend data where this is possible and have asked the Department to identify trend data that is already being collected for other purposes to be included in future years. This is a work in progress but one which we believe, will give a better picture of Conservation activities and their outcome. This is included in our Annual Report.

Tenure Review has once again occupied the minds of the Board. The Board has continued to make appropriate submissions on the proposals being released. The Board has for some years now expressed concern about the management of the tenure review process. The Board will continue to monitor the process very carefully and make appropriate submissions on proposals and other submissions where it has serious concerns.

Water Issues

Members continue to provide significant time, effort and expertise into the work of the Board in spite all having busy lives in their own right. I wish to record my appreciation to all board members and especially the Committee Convenors for their efforts throughout the year. Their positive contribution to the team has been very much appreciated.

Each year we have a rollover of three or four Board members. Retiring members were Alan Jolliffe (chair), Yvette Couch-Lewis (Ngai Tahu), and Fred Murray. Due to other work commitments, Jo Kane and Chrissie Williams resigned from their positions.

This has been the eighth full year since the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy has been applied as the major blue print for management of conservation in Canterbury. All Board submissions to various organisations and comments on conservation issues are based around this document.

One Advisory Committee operated during the year, the Pohatu Marine Reserve Advisory Committee. Two meetings were held during the 2007/08 year

It is pleasing to report that the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Award was again presented. This year's (2007/08) joint winners were as follows:

Isaac Wildlife Trust for success with captive breeding of endangered birds such as kaki and kakariki.

Speights Coast to Coast working to protect whio/blue ducks in Arthur's Pass National Park.

I wish to thank the Conservator, Community Relations Manager, Community Relations, Officer Board Support and other staff for being continually available and being open and honest with the Board. Whilst often operating under considerable resourcing constraints, the Department has offered the Board the best that it can.

Finally it once again remains for me to thank the families of board members for their support. Much family time is sacrificed by board members in carrying out their responsibilities for what is essentially a voluntary service to the community.

Thanks also goes to previous members for their continued support.



M Parsons
Chairman

Dated 30 June 2008