

CONFIRMED

**MINUTES OF THE OTAGO CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON 25 JULY 2008 IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR,
CONSERVATION HOUSE, 77 LOWER STUART STREET, DUNEDIN
STARTING AT 9.00 AM**

326832

PRESENT

H S Langsbury (Chairperson)
R R Allan
G H Nixon
B J Parker
A Penniket
I Scott
A M Smith
J E Williams

IN ATTENDANCE

M van der Goes	Acting Conservator
R Thomas	Coastal Otago Area Manager – agenda item 11.1 only
J Barkla	Technical Support Officer – agenda item 11.1 only
M Clark	Community Relations Officer (Board Support)
Russell Ibbotson	Chairperson - Southland Conservation Board
Les Wright	West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board
Selva Selvarajah	Director - Resource Management, Otago Regional Council – agenda item 8.1 only

A member of the press and some members of the public were also present during parts of the meeting, as well as the public forum.

1 WELCOME – KARAKIA – APOLOGIES

Following a karakia by J Williams, H Langsbury welcomed everyone present, including Peter Chin, the Mayor of Dunedin; Russell Ibbotson, the Chairperson of the Southland Conservation Board; and Les Wright, a member of the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board.

On behalf of the board, H Langsbury thanked Peter Chin for the Dunedin City Council's far-sighted decision to purchase land at Harbour Cone, and the council's contribution to conservation via its biodiversity fund. He also thanked those board members who had taken part in yesterday's planting of four broadleaf trees supplied by B Parker.

H Langsbury then noted that R Jebson had not been reappointed to the New Zealand Conservation Authority, so she would no longer be liaising with the board on the authority's behalf.

It was agreed that apologies be received and sustained from:

E J McAtamney
C Morris
M J Planner

C F Tanner
 J Connell (Conservator, Otago Conservancy)
 M Slater (Conservator, West Coast Tai Poutini Conservancy)
 C Hickford (Community Relations Manager, West Coast Tai Poutini Conservancy)

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA (SBC 8)

The agenda had been circulated.

RESOLVED

That the agenda be confirmed as circulated.

Allan/Parker

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (SBC 9)

The public minutes of the board meeting held on 9 May 2008 had been circulated.

RESOLVED

That the public minutes of the board meeting be confirmed as circulated.

Allan/Parker

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

I Scott thanked the department for the report titled 'Rock Wrens on Ski Fields'.

5 CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 Confirmation of Outwards and Receipt of Inwards Correspondence

The correspondence register had been circulated with the meeting agenda.

RESOLVED

That the inwards correspondence be received and the outwards correspondence be confirmed.

Langsbury/Nixon

6 STRATEGIC PLANNING

6.1 Conservation Management Strategies (SBC 81)

(a) Implementation of Otago CMS

H Langsbury noted that no board members had emailed any comments relating to Otago CMS implementation between board meetings. Even though the current CMS would not be used for much longer, he believed that it was worthwhile for members to continue to highlight any matters that needed attention during the coming review of the document.

Referring to page 28, 2.2.1 Mahinga Kai and Waahi Tapu/Waahi Taoka, J Williams said that it was important for the department to undertake consultation with local rūnaka on places of importance to iwi before the CMS review got underway.

M van der Goes said that she expected Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to assist the department with the review of CMS documents as it was doing with national park management plans. She acknowledged that consulting local rūnaka directly was also important.

(b) Review of Bay of Plenty CMS

The board submission of 12 May 2008 and a letter of 23 June 2008 from the DOC Bay of Plenty Conservancy had been circulated.

J Williams said that he was concerned about the ‘stripped-down’ nature of the Draft Bay of Plenty CMS.

R Ibbotson remarked that the Southland Conservation Board’s view was that it would do what it felt was appropriate, whether or not it fitted the favoured model for CMS documents.

RESOLVED

That the board submission be endorsed.

Nixon/Williams

6.2 Review of Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan (SBC 83)**(a) Update**

M van der Goes said that B Hunt was busy working on the draft park management plan. A version of the draft plan would be circulated to board members before the next board meeting, so that the board had an opportunity to discuss it thoroughly at the meeting. It was planned to publicly notify the draft plan this November, which would mean that the hearings of submissions might be held around March next year. The ‘places’ in the park that were being given special attention included the West and East Matukituki, the Routeburn, the Dart/Rees, Mt Aspiring/Tititea, the Siberia Valley, and the Olivine Wilderness Area. The department was in discussions with Ngāi Tahu regarding the preparation of standard sections for inclusion in all South Island national park management plans. With regard to aircraft landings at Bevan Col, the department proposed to present two options and allow submitters to choose the one they preferred. Greater consistency between Otago and West Coast conservancy views was being explored in respect of kayaking and activities that would be permitted in the Olivine Wilderness Area. WARO (Wild Animal Recovery Operation) licences had previously allowed helicopter operators to work throughout the park, and some operators had offered trophy hunting via these licences. The department was reviewing these arrangements.

A Penniket said that the department could end up with inadequate wild animal control in wilderness areas if it took the concept of wilderness areas too far.

G Nixon recalled that the board had drawn a distinction between WARO operations and trophy hunting from helicopters, supporting the former and expressing concern about the latter.

I Scott suggested that the WARO operators could be offered one trophy per 100 tails, say, so that they had an incentive to carry out useful wild animal control.

G Nixon said that he would contract I Scott and B Hunt in a month or so to see whether there were any issues which needed attention before the board meeting. In a North American national park he had visited, one flight to a certain remote site was permitted every second day – an interesting approach which could be considered in connection with aircraft landings at places like the Waiatoto River valley.

A Smith asked that a working draft park management plan be circulated to all board members well before the board meeting at Haast.

(b) Lessons from Review of Fiordland National Park Management Plan

H Langsbury invited Russell Ibbotson, Chairperson of the Southland Conservation Board, to share any lessons that board had learned from the review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

R Ibbotson presented apologies on behalf of Southland Conservation Board members Brian Hore, Ian Buick and Robin McNeill, who had intended to join him at today’s meeting, but who could not now attend. He said that the review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan had involved the receipt of about 2000 public submissions and 32 days of hearings. While this had required a huge commitment of time by some Southland board members, submitters had really appreciated the opportunity to have their say and had shared

a lot of useful ideas. Board participation in the hearings was a most valuable experience. Air access and the management of the Fiordland wapiti herd were two of the most controversial issues. The Southland board had stood its ground against the New Zealand Conservation Authority and the department, because it wanted the issues to be resolved in a way that would be supported by key user groups and the wider community. The aircraft operators got together and formed a Fiordland Aviation Group, which proffered a workable solution to the issue of air access.

R Ibbotson encouraged the Otago board to be open to alternative solutions suggested by other people. For controversial issues, the presentation of options was better than prescription. He believed that it was important for a board sub-committee to consider the draft national park management plan carefully prior to public notification, even though the department 'owned' the document at that stage of the process. Finally, it could be very helpful to take NZCA members to see a site associated with a significant management issue, so that they had a clearer understanding of the physical setting and its influence.

7 ADVICE

7.1 Proposed Hawea Conservation Park (SBC 72)

Copies of the discussion document, the board submission of 28 May 2008, a submission of 26 May 2008 from Hunter Valley Station Ltd, a letter of 12 June 2008 from the DOC Otago Conservancy, and REPORT 0815 had been circulated.

M van der Goes drew attention to the departmental papers, including REPORT 0815, which summarised the department's efforts to share information with neighbouring landowners and other interested parties prior to the public notification of the proposed park. The hearings of submissions had been held and the department was analysing the submissions before making a final decision.

Referring to a recent article in the Otago Daily Times, B Parker said that the process appeared to be very much in-house. He asked whether a board member could be appointed to the hearings panel when conservation park proposals were being considered.

M van der Goes said that the legislation did not allow for such board participation. The purpose of the public notification in this instance was to give people an opportunity to state whether they supported the concept and whether they considered the proposed name to be appropriate. Most of the submitters had given their views on the management of the proposed park, but this aspect would be addressed during the review of the Otago CMS. She had explained this to all of the submitters who attended the hearings.

J Williams said that he had attended the hearing in Dunedin on 26 June and had heard Ray Macleod of Landward Management Ltd speaking on behalf of Hunter Valley Station Ltd.

RESOLVED

That the board submission be endorsed.

Langsbury/Parker

7.2 Proposed Oteake Conservation Park (SBC 72)

An email of 20 May 2008 from the DOC Otago Conservancy and the board submission of 14 July 2008 had been circulated; and copies of the discussion document had been sent to some board members only.

B Parker wondered why it was going to be called the Oteake Conservation Park, when there did not appear to be any public access to it from the Lower Waitaki. Other board members pointed out that there seemed to be a provision for public 4WD access via the East Branch of the Awakino River.

M van der Goes said that the department had received 57 submissions on the Oteake Conservation Park proposal and was planning to hold hearings from 11-15 August at Alexandra and Dunedin. Some submitters might be heard by telephone. The Hearing Commissioner was going to be Chris Hickford, the Community Relations Manager for the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservancy.

RESOLVED

That the board submission be endorsed.

Penniket/Nixon

7.3 Proposed Land Exchanges – Craigroy Tenure Review (SBC 73)

REPORT 0808 had been circulated and a letter of 22 July 2008 from Fish and Game Otago was tabled.

J Williams asked why the department appeared to be anticipating tenure review with these proposed exchanges.

M van der Goes said that the proposed exchanges formed part of the tenure review proposal, but the legislation required the board to be consulted on such exchanges.

It was agreed that further discussion on the topic should take place after Niall Watson of Fish and Game Otago had been given the opportunity to speak at the public forum.

Following the public forum [see the record of the public forum appended to these minutes], J Williams said that it appeared that the high country areas to be acquired by the department might be allocated to the department anyway following tenure review.

A Smith suggested that the board should focus on what it was being asked to do, viz. to agree that the proposed exchanges “will enhance the natural and historic resources of land managed by the department and promote the purposes of the Conservation and Reserves Acts”.

M van der Goes said that the proposed exchanges would clearly result in a net gain for conservation. The Nevis Bridge Reserve had never been used for the construction of a bridge, and a marginal strip would be provided alongside the river at that site and at the Nevis Bridge Site (conservation area) if the exchanges went ahead.

A motion by J Williams, seconded by B Parker, that the board should defer giving its view on the proposed exchanges until the tenure review of the property had been completed, was lost on voices.

RESOLVED

That the board agrees that in this circumstance, the proposed exchanges will enhance the natural and historic resources of land managed by the department and promote the purposes of the Conservation and Reserves Acts.

Langsbury/Nixon

J Williams and B Parker abstained from voting on the resolution.

7.4 Proposed Vesting of Long Point Recreation Reserve in Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust (SBC 73)

REPORT 0809 had been circulated.

R Allan said that the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust would be responsible for the overall management of the site, but it intended to set up a local advisory committee to assist with this.

M van der Goes confirmed that public access rights would not be affected by the proposed vesting.

RESOLVED

That the board agrees that the proposed vesting will not have any adverse effects on the management of the land and the interest of the public in the reserve, and that public notification is not necessary.

Allan/Scott

8.1 Moeraki Sewage Discharge (SBC 91)

A board letter of 16 May 2008 to the Otago Regional Council had been circulated.

H Langsbury welcomed Selva Selvarajah (Director-Resource Management, Otago Regional Council) to the meeting and invited him to speak in response to the board's letter.

S Selvarajah tabled some detailed information relating to the performance of the Moeraki Sewage Scheme and explained the significance of the various results. When it was built in the 1990s, the Moeraki system was the best system available. Originally, there were two parallel systems, but these had been reconfigured so that they operated in series. The use of wetlands in the system was based on good intentions. However, they were not always as effective as experts had expected them to be. In an attempt to improve the system's performance, the ultraviolet bulbs were being cleaned manually on a regular basis. The Otago Regional Council did not believe that it was realistic to require the Waitaki District Council to spend a lot of money on an upgrade when the current resource consent expired in a couple of years. It would rather have available funds spent on a long-term solution than a quick fix. The Waitaki Council's application for a variation to the resource consent was still with the Otago Regional Council. When the former council applied for a new resource consent, the regional council would consider whether it should require a land-based option for the discharge or a zero level of undesirable organisms. A combined Hampden-Moeraki Sewage Scheme could help to resolve the problem with the discharge, but it should not be used as a reason to delay improvements. He pointed out that because the Waiherowhero Stream drained a farm catchment, there would still be health risks even if there was no discharge from the Moeraki Sewage Scheme.

Replying to a series of questions from board members, S Selvarajah said that the regional council could send a team to meet with all of the upstream farmers in the Waiherowhero catchment, with the aim of reducing the discharges from their farms. He agreed that it was appropriate to erect a sign at the site where the Waiherowhero Stream flows over the beach into the sea, in order to warn visitors about the condition of the water. The sign would have to be carefully worded so that it did not cause undue alarm. A sand filter could be effective in normal conditions, but it might not cope well with the occasional heavy rain event.

He added that the Waiherowhero Stream catchment was not a unique case. Many lowland waterways along the Otago coast were in a poor state. Fonterra and the Queenstown Lakes District Council had spent many millions of dollars on systems to improve the quality of discharges or sewage treatment. However, some councils with a small resident population could not afford the cost of major upgrades. The Ministry of Health and Public Health South had not issued any directives relating to the Moeraki sewage discharge. Their focus was more on the monitoring of community water supplies.

A Smith said that a suitable warning sign at the site of the overflow on the beach near Moeraki was needed now, while holding talks with landowners in the catchment was more of a medium-term solution to the problem.

I Scott reminded everyone that birds and recreationists contributed to the pollution of waterways.

R Ibbotson said that Environment Southland was grappling with similar issues. While science had shown the extent of the problem, there was a polarisation of attitudes between town and country. Public education had not worked well enough, so an approach based on rules and regulations had become necessary.

S Selvarajah said that although 90% of the dairy farmers in Otago had fenced off streams on their land, the Otago Regional Council had recently found it necessary to initiate 24 prosecutions.

On behalf of the board, H Langsbury thanked S Selvarajah for taking the time to speak to board members about the Moeraki sewage discharge issue, and said that he looked forward to future updates on that issue and on the state of coastal waterways in Otago.

8.2 High Country Tenure Review (SBC 34)

A letter of 20 June 2008 from DTZ New Zealand Ltd and the Preliminary Proposal for the Cloudy Peak tenure review; and letters of 17 July 2008 from Opus International Consultants Ltd and the Preliminary Proposals for The Larches and Mt Alexander, had been circulated.

A Penniket, G Nixon and B Parker agreed to prepare draft board submissions on the preliminary proposals for Cloudy Peak, The Larches, and Mt Alexander, respectively.

With regard to the Cloudy Peak tenure review, G Nixon said that good public access to proposed conservation area CA2 was important, while A Smith noted that proposed conservation area CA1 would be subject to grazing.

8.3 Project Hayes (Proposed Lammermoor Wind Farm) (SBC 94)

H Langsbury said that Fergus Sutherland, the former board chairperson, had agreed to be a lay witness and to give some evidence on the board’s behalf.

R Ibbotson expressed interest in knowing when the board would be presenting its case. M Clark undertook to let him know.

Following a discussion about the board’s lack of formal legal advice, J Williams offered to speak to two RMA lawyers in the University’s Law Faculty.

8.4 Central Otago District Plan Change 1 : McArthur Ridge Resource Area (SBC 94)

A letter of 19 June 2008 from the Central Otago District Council had been sent to G Nixon and E McAtamney.

M van der Goes said that the department had reached agreement with the developer and the Central Otago District Council on the resource consent, so no further action was necessary.

G Nixon agreed that there had been a good outcome and he was thankful for departmental planner Bruce Hill’s efforts to liaise with him on the issue.

8.5 Proposed National Environmental Standard on Ecological Flows and Water Levels (SBC 37)

An email of 9 May 2008 from the Ministry for the Environment had been circulated, and the associated discussion document had been circulated previously.

After speaking to Murray Neilson (Technical Support Officer – Freshwater Ecosystems) in the conservancy office, B Parker believed that the board should advocate in favour of keeping all options open and avoiding the over-allocation of freshwater resources. The Proposed National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management was released for public comment this week.

H Langsbury asked for the department’s submission on the Proposed National Environmental Standard to be copied to B Parker and the Southland Conservation Board.

A Smith pointed out that the water from freshwater systems ended up in the sea, where it had a significant effect on marine systems.

8.6 Proposal to conduct helicopter landings and take-offs – Alpine Choppers Ltd (SBC 93)

An email of 28 June 2008 from M Planner and the board submission of 30 June 2008 had been circulated.

M van der Goes said that Alpine Choppers Ltd had withdrawn its resource consent application because the Queenstown Lakes District Council had decided to accept the DOC concession process as a means of determining where resource consents for helicopter landings should be granted. This outcome followed a meeting on the issue involving aircraft operators, landowners, and representatives from DOC, LINZ, and the QLDC. All of the helicopter landing concessions were coming up for renewal, and she would update the board as this process got underway.

<p>RESOLVED That the board submission be endorsed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Smith/Nixon</p>

8.7 Control of Aircraft Overflights (SBC20)

A letter of 3 July 2008 from the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board had been circulated.

It was agreed that the board should ask the NZCA for an update on the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between DOC and the CAA.

M van der Goes said that when the department discussed the future management of aircraft activity on public conservation land with aircraft operators, it would raise aspects such as flight corridors and flight times.

9 PUBLIC EXCLUDED

RESOLVED

That pursuant to the Local Government Information and Meetings Act 1987, the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following subjects and for the reasons given:

General subject of each Matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Grounds under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
9.1 Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes of 9 May 2008	To protect the privacy of natural persons.	48(1)(a)(ii) OIA (9)(2)(a)
9.2 Matters arising from previous Public Excluded Minutes	To protect the privacy of natural persons.	48(1)(a)(ii) OIA(9)(2)(a)
9.3 High Country Issues	To enable the department to carry on negotiations without prejudice or disadvantage.	48(1)(a)(ii) OIA (9)(2)(j)
9.4 2008 Loder Cup Award	To protect the privacy of natural persons.	48(1)(a)(ii) OIA (9)(2)(a)
9.5 2008 Conservation Awards	To protect the privacy of natural persons.	48(1)(a)(ii) OIA (9)(2)(a)
9.6 Proposed Amendment to Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan	To prevent the use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage.	48(1)(a)(ii) OIA(9)(2)(k)

That the following officials and persons be permitted to remain at the meeting, after the public has been excluded, because of their knowledge of these topics:

Agenda Item 9

Marian van der Goes	Acting Conservator
Mark Clark	Community Relations Officer (Board Support)
Russell Ibbotson	Chairperson, Southland Conservation Board
Les Wright	Member, West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board

This knowledge, which will be of assistance in relation to the matters to be discussed, is relevant because the stated persons have had input into, advised on or been advised of the matters sought to be excluded.

Langsbury/Smith

RESOLVED

That the public be re-admitted.

Langsbury/Parker

10 BOARD ADMINISTRATION

10.1 Board Expenditure (SBC 5)

REPORT 0812 (Board expenditure to 30 June 2008) had been circulated.

Board members noted the current position.

10.2 Discussion of Items Raised in Public Forum

There was general agreement that no further discussion on the Proposed Hawea Conservation Park was needed.

A Smith suggested that the term and concept of 'botanical trampers' should be brought to B Hunt's attention.

10.3 Discussion of Items for Media Release

H Langsbury said that the proposed vesting of the Long Point Recreation Reserve in the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust would be a worthy addition to any items which the Otago Daily Times might publish.

10.4 Board Meetings and Field Trips (SBC 7)

A list of proposed meeting dates and venues for 2008-2010 had been circulated.

M Clark undertook to send a letter of thanks to Sophie Fern of the Centre for Science Communication.

M van der Goes said that when she was a member of the NZCA, most of the boards the authority visited gave a presentation which highlighted significant regional issues that the board was working on. This board could start thinking about a presentation along those lines for the authority's visit next February.

10.5 Reducing the board's carbon footprint (SBC 3)

H Langsbury thanked the board members who turned up yesterday afternoon to help plant four broadleaf trees donated by B Parker.

A Smith suggested that lunch waste could be reduced if board members brought their own cups.

10.6 Board 2007/08 Annual Report (SBC 10)

The draft report had been circulated.

It was agreed that the draft Board 2007/08 Annual Report be endorsed, subject to the section about the Off-Road Vehicle Forum being moved under the heading of Advocacy (ie. pp 9-10).

11 INFORMATION ITEMS

11.1 Conservancy Status Reports (SBC 11)

REPORT 0813 (Otago Conservancy Status Report), REPORT 0814 (West Coast Tai Poutini Conservancy Status Report), and a Report on the Grand and Otago Skink Recovery Programme had been circulated.

(a) General

M van der Goes drew the board's attention to the report on plans to erect larger signs at sites on the Haast Pass Highway, indicating the distance to the next toilet facility.

G Nixon noted with concern that thar had been found on the Dunstan Mountains. There was some speculation about whether they could have escaped from captivity or could have been deliberately released. He congratulated the department on the successful wilding pine control work in the Upper Manuherikia.

A Penniket wondered why there was no update on Operation Ark. M van der Goes presumed that it was because there had been no significant developments.

Referring to the item on whales (page 8 of REPORT 0813), A Smith said that she was willing to take someone with her on a coming trip to collect samples. M van der Goes said that she would pass this on to Jim Fyfe.

Discussion on the Grand and Otago Skink Recovery Programme followed. G Nixon congratulated the department on the good results and said that they augured well for skink protection in Central Otago.

M van der Goes undertook to pass this on to James Reardon and his team. The success of the GAOS Recovery Programme had implications for the protection of other species.

H Langsbury noted that access was still an issue with regard to management of the western populations of grand and Otago skinks.

I Scott suggested that the board and the department should consider more effective ways to encourage landholders to co-operate with species protection efforts. Attempts should be made to persuade landholders that the presence of threatened species on their properties was an asset rather than a liability.

H Langsbury drew attention to a media report on the felling of large native trees beside the Haast Pass Highway between Haast and Pleasant Flat. Transit New Zealand (now the NZ Transport Agency) considered that the trees in question were a safety risk. Mount Aspiring National Park bordered the highway for much of the distance between Pleasant flat and Haast – sometimes on both sides – and it was indistinguishable from the road reserve in most places.

L Wright and M van der Goes said that there were precedents on the West Coast for allowing relatively narrow, tree-lined corridors to remain undisturbed eg. road to Jackson Bay, Punakaiki, Arthurs Pass, site near Bruce Bay.

RESOLVED

That the board sends a letter to the Minister of Conservation (with copies going to the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Tourism, the Minister for the Environment, the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board, and the DOC West Coast Tai Poutini Conservancy; and being open to the media):

- 1 expressing the board’s serious concern about the felling of large, apparently healthy native trees from beside the Haast Pass Highway near Haast;
- 2 explaining the board’s jurisdiction over the whole of Mount Aspiring National Park, which borders long sections of the Haast Pass Highway;
- 3 highlighting the significance of the scenic tourist route along this section of the highway;
- 4 advocating a national agreement between Transit New Zealand and protection agencies on the management of native roadside trees throughout the country;
- 5 seeking a cessation of the further removal of such trees until a national agreement is in place.

Scott/Williams

(b) Proposed Developments at Nugget Point/Tokatā

Robin Thomas (Coastal Otago Area Manager) gave a PowerPoint presentation on proposed improvements to the infrastructure at Nugget Point/Tokatā involving five key sites:- the Roaring Bay hide, the proposed new vehicle park and road end, the present road end, the track to the lookout, and the lighthouse/viewing platform area. He estimated that the current usage of the site could be over 70,000 a year. The local community supported the proposed changes, which would cost around \$600,000 with synergies from the participation by other agencies. A low fence would be used to deter yellow-eyed penguins from crossing the road.

A Smith left the meeting at this point.

(c) Otago Plants and Places

John Barkla (Technical Support Officer) then gave a PowerPoint presentation on rare and interesting native plants in various parts of Otago, and the efforts being made to protect them. He agreed that the damage caused to native vegetation by hares might have been under-estimated.

11.2 Concessions – Triggered Applications and Concessions Monitoring (SBC 25)

REPORT 0810 had been circulated.

It was agreed that the current triggers should be retained, and that the board should receive a summary of concession applications along the lines of REPORT 0810 once a year before the July board meeting.

11.3 Marine Protected Areas Policy and Implementation Plan (SBC 79)

M van der Goes said that the department was doing what it could with regard to MPA Implementation, but was also waiting for the Ministry of Fisheries to do its part.

A Penniket said that it would take a major effort for an organisation to reactivate the department's Nugget Point/Tokatā marine reserve proposal. He noted that there were already a few MPA forums in other regions.

M van der Goes said that Otago was still one of the high priorities for MPA Implementation, but not much funding had been made available for this work.

It was agreed that A Penniket should draft a board letter to the Minister of Fisheries, expressing the board's concern about the slow rate of MPA Implementation in Otago and seeking his assistance to increase the rate of progress.

11.4 New Zealand Conservation Authority (SBC 61)

The NZCA minutes of 9-10 April 2008 had been circulated.

11.5 Other Conservation Boards (SBC 63)

11.6 Fish and Game Councils (SBC 66)

There were no additional reports under these items.

11.7 Board Liaison with Territorial Local Authorities (SBC 67)

B Parker said that he would like to be informed by email when the minutes of Waitaki District Council meetings become available to the public. M Clark undertook to follow up on this.

R Allan said that the Dunedin City council was currently removing invasive trees from the Town Belt.

I Scott said that she would be talking to the Queenstown Lakes District Mayor after the board meeting.

11.8 Yellow-eyed Penguins (SBC 30)

YEP Consultative Group meeting notes of 21 May 2008 and 'Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust News' Issue 38 (May 2008) had been circulated.

11.9 Miscellaneous Publications

Various publications and reports were tabled.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm.

Confirmed: / / 2008

Chairperson:



**RECORD OF THE PUBLIC FORUM HELD ON 25 JULY 2008 IN THE
CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CONSERVATION HOUSE, 77
LOWER STUART STREET, DUNEDIN STARTING AT 1.30 PM**

On behalf of the board, H Langsbury welcomed five members of the public and invited them to share any views or comments they had on conservation in Otago.

Niall Watson, Chief Executive - Fish and Game Otago, tabled some papers which summarised the sports fishery, landscape, recreational, historic, cultural, biological and hydrological values associated with the Nevis River. He was pleased that the board had not yet made a decision on the Proposed Land Exchange – Craigroy Tenure Review (agenda item 7.3 refers), because he believed that the small protected areas beside the Nevis River should be retained to protect historic and recreational amenity values.

After outlining the history of the Kawarau Water Conservation Order, N Watson said that the members of the tribunal which would be considering the proposed variation had been announced. The Nevis River was one of few remaining unmodified rivers, and it contained populations of gollum galaxiids (*Galaxias gollumoides*) at the northern limit of their natural range. This species had the status of 'gradual decline'. The formation of a hydro lake in the Nevis Valley would fragment the surviving populations and possibly allow koaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*) to become established. Koaro were capable of climbing into the new lake and displacing the gollum galaxiids. He urged the board to defer its decision on the proposed land exchange until after the public submission phase of the tenure review process.

Ray Macleod, General Manager – Landward Management Ltd, said that he was present as an observer on behalf of Hunter Valley Station. While Hunter Valley Station had formally disengaged from the DOC process relating to the Proposed Hawea Conservation Park, he was interested to hear what the board and the public had to say about it.

H Langsbury said that the board had already discussed that topic, so R Macleod asked for a summary of the board's discussion. M Clark read this from his notes.

Janet Ledingham, Chairperson – Forest and Bird Dunedin Branch, commended the department on its successes with grand and Otago skink conservation and tenure review. She suggested that there was an opportunity to establish a Kakanui Conservation Park because of the good progress with tenure review on each side of the Kakanui Mountains. The Te Papanui Conservation Park was valued by the public, but Project Hayes threatened to spoil the 'wilderness experience' which visitors could enjoy there and on the nearby parts of the Rock and Pillar Range managed by the department. It had been reported that the Otago Conservator was not opposed to Project Hayes.

J Ledingham continued by expressing wholehearted support for the Proposed Otake Conservation Park, but concern about the large 'hole' in it as a result of the exclusion of the Mt Ida and Soldiers Syndicates. She supported the proposed Hawea Conservation Park too. A lichen interpretation panel was suggested for the Flat Top Hill Conservation Area. Ideally, Glenaray Station would be one of the whole property purchases which the Crown considered from time to time. While good progress towards a Proposed Remarkables Conservation Park had been made, she opposed the proposal for a hydro dam in the Nevis Valley, as Fish and Game Otago did. Altitudinal sequences should be protected wherever possible as part of tenure review agreements. On the whole, the Dunedin Branch of Forest and Bird congratulated the Otago Conservancy on its significant achievements for conservation in Otago and appreciated the consultation by conservancy staff in connection with tenure review.

Looking to the future, J Ledingham advocated the inclusion of the Otago Goldfields Park concept in a new Otago CMS. She believed that the department should try to retain the pool of volunteers who had helped with historic hut restoration. There had been no projects for this group for a couple of years. She hoped that potential marine reserves on the Otago coast would become a prominent conservation issue again. Unfortunately, the All-of-Government process for making submissions on wind farm proposals was giving the department a bad name among those who opposed the proposals for reasons associated with conservation and landscape values. She suggested that the board should lobby against the use of the process so that the department was not constrained in its RMA advocacy role. Forest and Bird did not oppose all wind farms, providing the effects could be mitigated to an acceptable extent. Finally, she asked the department to be mindful of the needs and interests of 'botanical trampers' – a distinct group of visitors, including older people, who wanted reasonably good access to the many interesting areas of public conservation land managed by the department.

M van der Goes said that she could not respond on behalf of Jeff Connell with regard to specific wind farm proposals, but she acknowledged that All-of-Government submissions constrained the department in its advocacy because it was a Government department. She believed that it would be a sad day if people relied on the department to protect landscapes which were valued by the community.

B Parker observed that All-of-Government submissions put the onus on the board to advocate in support of conservation and landscape values.

G Nixon said that the board also supported wind farms in the right location and the establishment of practical public access to areas of public conservation land. The protection of altitudinal sequences might be possible in connection with the tenure reviews of Loch Linnhe and Craigroy Stations.

RECORD OF TREE PLANTING IN KAIKORAI VALLEY AND FILM EVENING IN DUNEDIN ON 24 JULY 2008

Board members H Langsbury (and two of his daughters), R Allan, B Parker, and I Scott; and M van der Goes (Community Relations Manager) and M Clark (Board Support Officer) from the DOC Otago Conservancy office, turned up at the corner of Townsley Road and Kaikorai Valley Road, Dunedin around 4.00 pm to plant four broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*) trees on a sloping bank near the Kaikorai Stream.

The owner of the site, Laurie Taylor of Tru Built Industries, had given the board permission to add its trees to previous plantings by Kaikorai Valley College students, while B Parker had kindly donated the four young trees. Those present walked a short distance along the track which led northward along the bank of the Kaikorai Stream from Townsley Road, noting the many native trees and shrubs which had been planted on both sides of the track.

Later that evening, Sophie Fern of the University of Otago Centre for Science Communication, showed a few board members and M Clark three short natural history films produced by students. The first film explored reasons for the extinction of Adams' Mistletoe (*Trilepidia adamsii*) in Northland, the second highlighted the damage caused by rats in a southern beech forest, and the third followed the brief life of a New Zealand sea lion (*Phocartos bookeri*) born on the coast near Dunedin.