



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

Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa

FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2018 TO 30 JUNE 2019

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

Annual Report of the
New Zealand Conservation Authority
Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa

For the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

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

Cover photo: Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki. *Photo: Rick McGovern-Wilson, NZCA Executive Officer*

Back cover photo: Southern crested grebe and chick, Lake Moeraki, South Westland. *Photo: Gerry McSweeney, Wilderness Lodge*

Published by
New Zealand Conservation Authority
PO Box 10420
Wellington 6143
New Zealand
www.doc.govt.nz/conservation-authority
nzca@doc.govt.nz

ISSN 1178-539X

October 2019

Editing and design:
Creative Services Team
Conservation House, Wellington

This publication is produced using paper sourced from well-managed, renewable and legally logged forests.

2 September 2019

Hon Eugenie Sage
Minister of Conservation
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Dear Minister

I submit, in terms of section 6E of the Conservation Act 1987, the annual report of the New Zealand Conservation Authority for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019. The Conservation Act requires that the Authority report each year to the Minister on the exercise of its functions and powers. The Authority has maintained a high level of productivity and coped well with changes in membership during the year under report. We wish to commend the contribution made to the Authority's work by departing members, including the transition of Acting Chairperson Dame Kerry Prendergast to me as incoming Chair on 1 January 2019.

I would like to acknowledge the passing of Jane Davis and Waana Davis, two significant figures in conservation. They leave behind them a legacy that will not be forgotten. I also acknowledge the tragic deaths of Department of Conservation staff members Paul Hondelink and Scott Theobald, alongside pilot Nick Wallis. You and the Department have had a difficult year in mourning these losses, as well as navigating pressures from the public while continuing to strive for and achieve positive conservation outcomes. We are supportive of the extra Departmental security measures that have been put in place and hope that in the year to come we see more support and encouragement for your work.

Meetings

The Authority has maintained a schedule of four meetings in Wellington and two in the regions. The visits outside Wellington included meeting conservation board members and appreciating the local context that Departmental staff and communities face in managing public conservation land.

Authority members also hosted our annual Conservation Board Chairpersons' Conference. This conference continues to be a productive way to build collaboration between the Authority and conservation boards, and strengthen understanding of their roles. Authority members continue to maintain good liaison and linkage with conservation boards through attendance at conservation board meetings and field trips. These visits are a useful way to understand the context of various issues and matters at the conservancy level.

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

Approval of Plans

The Authority approved the Wellington Conservation Management Strategy which became operative on 20 January 2019. There were no other plans received by the Authority for consideration during the period. The timeliness in which conservation management strategies and management plans are being processed has been a regular topic of concern for the Authority.

Functions under the National Parks Act 1980

In May 2018, the Authority had recommended that the Mokihinui riverbed be added to the Kahurangi National Park, as a follow-up to the 2017 recommendation to add the Mokihinui catchment. On 13 February 2019 both additions were announced by you as Minister.

The Authority also resolved at its April 2018 meeting to seek that you recommend to the Governor-General that three land purchases, made by the Nature Heritage Fund in 1995, 2000 and 2001, be added to the Fiordland National Park. These were officially added in October 2018.

Provision of Strategic Advice

During the course of the year the Authority has taken the opportunity to provide advice to you on the following strategic issues:

- Tahr and whitebait management
- Pest control and the Authority's continued support for the use of 1080
- Predator Free 2050 Strategy
- Indigenous biodiversity initiatives and coordination
- The concerning levels of seabird bycatch
- Support for the work of the QEII Trust and the Backcountry Trust
- Continued support for the DOC Community Fund
- Management planning time frames
- Fox River clean-up
- Taranaki Maunga Treaty Settlement
- The addition of Riversdale Flats to Arthur's Pass National Park
- One Billion Trees programme.


The Authority also continued the invaluable practice of scheduling strategic sessions at each meeting with the Director-General or a member of the Department's Senior Leadership Team on an issue relevant for their business group.

During the year the Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki Supreme Court ruling raised significant questions around section 4 of the Conservation Act and how effective implementation of the 'give effect' duty is being complied with by the Department. The Authority, for its part, has initiated a review of its section 4 policy, through our Section 4 Committee, and are looking at the implications of the decision.

We congratulate you and thank you, Minister, for your advocacy and strong leadership for conservation kaupapa across New Zealand. The increased funding the Department has received in recent Budgets, for application across a range of target areas, is timely and very encouraging. While the challenges to conservation remain great and there are the ever-present threats to endangered species, including climate change and managing visitors to conservation lands, we are of the view a well-resourced Department is up to the task.

Nō reira

E noho ora mai



Edward Ellison ONZM
Chairperson New Zealand Conservation Authority

Contents

1.	OVERVIEW OF 2018/19	9
2.	INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW ZEALAND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY	10
3.	MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY	10
4.	MEETINGS	11
4.1	Strategic advice to the Department of Conservation	12
4.2	Field trips.....	12
4.3	Members attendance at Authority meetings 2018/19	13
5.	BUDGET, FEES AND ALLOWANCES	14
6.	THE CONSERVATION ACT 1987	14
6.1	Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987	14
6.2	Functions of the Authority	14
(a)	Advise the Minister on statements of general policy	14
(b)	Approve conservation management strategies	14
(c)	Approve conservation management plans	14
(d)	Review the effectiveness of the Department's administration of general policies	15
(e)	Investigate or advise on conservation matters of national importance.....	15
(f)	Change of land status – stewardship land	15
(g)	Walkways (repealed)	15
(h)	Education and publicity	16
(i)	Priorities for expenditure by the Department.....	16
(j)	New Zealand Fish & Game Council liaison.....	16
(k)	Ministerial delegations	16
6.3	Powers of the Authority	16
(a)	Establishment of committees	16
(b)	Advocacy	16
7.	FUNCTIONS UNDER THE NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980	17
7.1	Review of the General Policy for National Parks.....	17
7.2	National park management plans.....	17
7.3	Additions to, and deletions from, national parks.....	17
(a)	Addition to Kahurangi National Park	17
(b)	Additions to Fiordland National Park.....	17
7.4	National park investigations	17
7.5	National park determinations.....	17
8.	MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS	18
8.1	JD Stout Trust	18
8.2	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).....	18
8.3	Land and Water Forum	18
9.	CONSERVATION BOARDS	18
9.1	Conservation board boundaries	18
9.2	Conservation board nominations.....	18
9.3	Authority/Conservation board liaison.....	18
9.4	Annual reports.....	18
9.5	Implementation of conservation management strategies	18
10.	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	19
11.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	20
12.	SCHEDULES.....	21
	First schedule	21
	Second schedule	22
	Third schedule	23
	Fourth schedule	24

Mission statement

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

New Zealand Conservation Authority members (June 2019)



Back row, left to right: Tāne Davis, Robyn Jebson, David Barnes, Tony Lepper, Mick Clout, Jan Riddell, Mark Brough, Tania Simpson.

Front row, left to right: Rauru Kirikiri, Kerry Prendergast (Deputy Chairperson), Edward Ellison (Chairperson).

Absent: Nicole Anderson, Gerry McSweeney.

Photo: Lisa McLennan, NZCA Servicing Officer

1. OVERVIEW OF 2018/19

In January 2019 Edward Ellison ONZM was appointed as a new member and Chairperson of the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority), following public nomination. Prior to his appointment, Dame Kerry Prendergast filled the position as Acting Chairperson from July to December 2018.

The Authority met on six occasions during the year – in August, October and December 2018, and in February, April and June 2019. The October meeting was held in Queenstown, with the Otago Conservation Board, and included a discussion on the effect of wilding pines in the Wakatipu region; a presentation on the proposed Gondola Development along the Frankton valley; and, a field trip to the Remarkables Ski Field located within the Rastusburn Recreation Reserve. The April meeting was held in Hokitika with the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board and included a field trip to Cobden Island in Greymouth, a whitebait restoration site; the Brunner Mine site, which was recently recognised as a Tohu Whenua Landmark Site; Blackball, for a presentation on the Paparoa Great Walk; and Punakaiki Resort, for a presentation on the Dolomite Point Redevelopment Project. All other meetings were held in Wellington.

The Wellington Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) was approved by the Authority in November 2018. This Strategy represents a lot of hard work from the Wellington Conservation Board and Department of Conservation (the Department) staff and we thank them for these efforts. It became operative on 20 January 2019.

The Authority's standing agenda items with the Department at every meeting include: management planning updates, recategorisation of conservation land, the Director-General's report, and the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy refresh. The Authority also discussed a range of issues of national long-term importance for public conservation.



Authority members and Department staff on the Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and Blowholes Walk.
Photo: Rick McGovern-Wilson, NZCA Executive Officer

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW ZEALAND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

The Authority is a statutory advisor to the Minister of Conservation (the Minister) and to the Director-General of Conservation on conservation issues of national importance. The Authority was established by section 6A of the Conservation Act 1987.

The functions of the Authority are set out in section 6B of the Conservation Act, and in the National Parks Act 1980, the Wildlife Act 1953, the Marine Reserves Act 1971, the Reserves Act 1977, the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 and the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978. The Authority also has specified responsibilities, set out in Treaty claims settlement legislation, in relation to engagement with tangata whenua. These include establishing respectful working relationships, exercising mana recognition and acknowledging kaitiakitanga as an important foundation for Māori conservation outcomes.

Notably, the Authority has the important function of approving the 10-year conservation management strategies and national park management plans that guide the Department's management of public conservation lands, waters and species.

The Authority is committed to the partnership model between New Zealanders and the Department for the management of public conservation resources. This is embodied in the long history of formal engagement of New Zealand citizens in New Zealand conservation management, and the diverse make-up of the Authority and conservation boards. The partnership with conservation boards and the Authority is a long-standing legislative mechanism of the Department's 'conservation through partnerships' ethic.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

The Minister appoints the 13 Authority members, including the chairperson. The members are selected:

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

This process ensures that a range of perspectives, life experiences and geographical knowledge contributes to the advice provided and decisions made by the Authority.

Authority members are appointed for 3-year terms and may be re-appointed, unless they are appointed in replacement of a prior member's term. The current members of the Authority are:

- After consultation with the Minister for Māori Development:
 - Nicole Anderson (Ngāpuhi) of Kerikeri, appointed June 2018
 - Rauru Kirikiri (Te Whānau a Apanui) of Wellington, appointed July 2017
- After consultation with the Minister of Tourism:
 - Tania Simpson (Tainui, Ngāi Tahu, Ngāpuhi) of Hamilton, appointed October 2018
 - Dame Kerry Prendergast of Wellington, appointed October 2017
- After consultation with the Minister of Local Government:
 - Jan Riddell of Winton, appointed July 2017
- On the nomination of Te Rūnanga O Ngāi Tahu:
 - Tāne Davis MNZM (Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Ngāi Tahu) of Invercargill, appointed October 2018

- On the recommendation of the Royal Society of New Zealand:
 - Mick Clout of Auckland, appointed July 2017
- On the recommendation of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of New Zealand:
 - Gerry McSweeney of South Westland, appointed July 2017
- On the recommendation of the Federated Mountain Clubs:
 - David Barnes of Lower Hutt, appointed July 2017
- From public nominations:
 - Edward Ellison ONZM (Ngāi Tahu, Te Atiawa) of Dunedin, appointed January 2019 (Chair)
 - Mark Brough (Ngāti Kahungunu) of the King Country, appointed July 2017
 - Robyn Jebson of South Westland, appointed July 2017
 - Tony Lepper of Alexandra, appointed July 2017.

The term of all Authority members ends on 30 June 2020. Dame Kerry Prendergast filled the role of interim chairperson until Edward Ellison ONZM was appointed to the Authority in January 2019.

4. MEETINGS

The Authority held four one-and-a-half day meetings in Wellington. In addition, two one-day meetings were held in Queenstown and Hokitika, with one-day field trips on the days prior to the meetings. Field trips are a vital part of the Authority's way of operating, giving members the chance to view concerns and opportunities raised in public submissions in situ, and to appreciate the local context faced by Departmental staff and communities in managing public conservation lands. It is also an opportunity for them to spend time with local conservation board members discussing matters important to their regions.

The Authority hosted the annual Conservation Board Chairpersons' Conference on 12 and 13 September 2018, at Conservation House in Wellington. The conferences are designed to build collaboration between the Authority and conservation boards, and for the boards to develop stronger working relationships with the Department. They provide the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the Government's expectations of the boards and the role they play in conservation leadership within their communities, and the opportunity to share ideas and practices.

Main topics on this conference's agenda included:

- stewardship land review
- tourism pressures and management
- Predator Free 2050 Strategic Plan
- the role that conservation boards play in Treaty negotiations
- Conservation Board Letters of Expectation and annual work programmes.

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

- In October 2018, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment joined Department staff to discuss their work in developing the Government Tourism Strategy together.
- In December 2018, Tourism New Zealand joined Department staff to discuss tourism and the social licence to operate.
- Te Kāhui Whakatau (Treaty Settlements), from Te Arawhiti (the Office for Māori Crown Relations), spoke about the Taranaki Maunga settlement, in December 2018 and again in June 2019.

- James Buwalda, co-chair of the Biosecurity 2025 Steering Group, joined by a Ministry of Primary Industries and Department representative, discussed border controls and biosecurity in a conservation context, in February 2019.
- Richard Wells, Managing Director of fisheries consultancy Resourcewise Ltd, presented to the Authority on the seafood industry's current efforts to mitigate seabird bycatch in New Zealand waters, in February 2019.
- Ric Cullinane, Chief Executive of the Walking Access Commission, and Kevin Hague, Chief Executive of Forest and Bird, separately discussed their work and its implications to conservation land and the public, in February 2019.
- Judge Carrie Wainwright discussed section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 and its implications for the Authority, in April 2019.
- Kay Baxter and San Fitzgibbon, Ministry for Primary Industries staff, discussed the review of the Walking Access Act 2008, in June 2019.
- Dr Allan Freeth, Chief Executive of the Environmental Protection Authority, spoke about pest control initiatives, alternatives to 1080 and new techniques, in June 2019.

4.1 Strategic advice to the Department of Conservation

In June 2017, the Director-General initiated a series of strategic sessions with the Authority. A member of the Department's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attends part of each meeting to engage the Authority on a strategic issue important for their business group. The purpose of these discussions is to get strategic advice and guidance from the Authority on issues important to the Department's future success.

- Mike Slater, Deputy Director-General Operations, led a discussion on conservation planning in August 2018.
- Lou Sanson, Director-General, on behalf of Rose Anne MacLeod, Deputy Director-General Corporate Services, on the Department's Budget priorities, in October 2018.
- Martin Kessick, Deputy Director-General Biodiversity, led a discussion on the biodiversity system, in December 2018.
- Mervyn English, Chief of Governance, discussed a plan for upcoming strategic discussions with the Authority, in February 2019.
- Lou Sanson, Director-General, on behalf of Rose Anne MacLeod, Deputy Director-General Corporate Services, led a discussion on the Department's Budget planning for 2019–2020, in April 2019.
- Martin Kessick, Deputy Director-General Biodiversity, and Steve Taylor, Director Heritage and Visitors, and Alastair Johnstone, Senior Policy Advisor, joined the Authority for a discussion on the Department's high-level strategy, with an overview of biodiversity loss, tourism and historic heritage, in June 2019.

4.2 Field trips

The Authority held a meeting in Queenstown, in the Otago Conservation Board's rohe, on Monday 29 and Tuesday 30 October 2018. The Authority had a field trip on Monday 29 October, joined by Otago Conservation Board members Pat Garden (Chairperson) and Bruce Jefferies, and by member Dave Vass for dinner that evening. The day began by visiting the Department's Queenstown office and discussing the challenges of:

- tourism
- encouraging responsible camping throughout New Zealand
- flight concessions management
- the difficulty in recruitment of Department staff within the region.

Department staff then led a presentation discussing the effects of wilding pines in the Wakatipu region, and the pest management work being done. The Authority visited the Remarkables Ski Field, located within the Rastusburn Recreation Reserve, and met with

Ross Lawrence (Ski Area Manager) and Paul Anderson (CEO of NZSki) who presented to the Authority on their pest control operations and other conservation efforts. Following this, the Authority visited the Porter Group offices, where a presentation was received from Alistair Porter (Director) and Brian Fitzpatrick (General Manager, Development) on their gondola development plans. It was a busy day in which we gained a lot of insight into key issues affecting the region.



Authority and Otago Conservation Board members, with the Remarkables Ski Area Manager, at the Remarkables Ski Field. *Photo: Rick McGovern-Wilson, NZCA Executive Officer*

The Authority also met in Hokitika in the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board's rohe, on Thursday 4 and Friday 5 April 2019. A field trip was undertaken on Thursday 4 April, with visits to:

- Cobden Island in Greymouth, a whitebait restoration site
- the Brunner Mine site, which was recently recognised as a Tohu Whenua Landmark Site
- Blackball, for a presentation on the Paparoa Great Walk
- Punakaiki Resort, for a presentation on the Dolomite Point Redevelopment Project.

4.3 Members' attendance at Authority meetings 2018/19

Member	Number of meetings attended (total of 6)
Nicole Anderson	5
David Barnes	6
Mark Brough	6
Mick Clout	5
Tāne Davis	5 (started in October 2018)
Edward Ellison (Chair, 2019)	3 (started January 2019)
Robyn Jebson	6
Rauru Kirikiri	6
Tony Lepper	6

Gerry McSweeney	3
Kerry Prendergast (interim Chair, 2018)	6
Jan Riddell	5
Tania Simpson	4 (started in October 2018)

5. BUDGET, FEES AND ALLOWANCES

The Authority's budget for 2018/19 was \$146,000. Fees and allowances are paid in accordance with the Fees and Travelling Allowances Act 1951. The chairperson receives a daily meeting fee of \$290, and other Authority members receive a daily meeting fee of \$215.

6. THE CONSERVATION ACT 1987

6.1 Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 states: 'This Act shall so be interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi'. As a body established under the Conservation Act, section 4 applies to the Authority in the discharge of its functions.

The Authority established the Section 4 Policy Committee in August 2018. During the reporting year, the Committee undertook a review (still ongoing) of the Authority's policy, Giving Effect to Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987. The Committee also instigated a discussion with Judge Carrie Wainwright from the Māori Land Court at the April 2019 meeting. The Judge spoke about understanding the implications of section 4 in relation to the Authority's role.

6.2 Functions of the Authority

(a) Advise the Minister on statements of general policy

General policy is the highest level of statutory planning for conservation outcomes.

(b) Approve conservation management strategies

A conservation management strategy is a 10-year statutory document. Its purpose is to implement general policy and to establish objectives for the discharge of the Department's functions in the area covered by the strategy, and for recreation, tourism and other conservation purposes. Conservation management strategies are developed by Departmental planning staff in partnership with local conservation boards, and there are opportunities for input from tangata whenua and the public.

The Wellington Conservation Management Strategy

At the April 2018 meeting, the Wellington Conservation Board and the Department presented the draft Wellington Conservation Management Strategy to the Authority for its consideration. The Authority wrote to Lou Sanson (Director-General) and Jenny Rowan (Chairperson Wellington Conservation Board) on 21 November 2018 confirming the approval of the Wellington Conservation Management Strategy, which became operative on 20 January 2019.

(c) Approve conservation management plans

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

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

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

The Authority did not review the effectiveness of the Department’s administration of statements of general policy during the reporting period. Due to the recent Supreme Court ruling,¹ however, the Minister initiated discussion with the Authority in order to undertake a partial review of the two general policies, over the next two years, to fully give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

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

On top of the strategic discussions undertaken with SLT, other conservation matters of national importance discussed with the Department during the reporting period included the:

- Department of Conservation’s Iwi Engagement system
- NZ Biodiversity Strategy refresh
- effectiveness of the Department’s concession process
- Predator Free 2050 Strategy
- Mackenzie Basin work progress and plans
- One Billion Trees programme
- Department’s Visitor Strategy
- national wilding conifers problem
- management of tahr
- Department’s summer visitor compliance programme
- Department’s historic heritage work.

These discussions were iterative; further discussion will take place as more information is received and understanding and thinking evolves.

Advice as above was also provided to the Minister. Other topics included:

- the ownership of Riversdale Flats and Mt White Station
- seabirds and bycatch in commercial fisheries
- protecting and enhancing indigenous biodiversity.

(f) Change of land status – stewardship land

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

As of June 2019, the Authority is still working with the Department, and progress is disappointingly slow.

(g) Walkways (repealed)

¹ Ngāi Tai Ki Tāmaki Tribal Trust v Minister of Conservation and Fullers Group Ltd and Motutapu Island Restoration Trust: www.courtsofnz.govt.nz/cases/ngai-tai-ki-tamaki-tribal-trust-v-minister-of-conservation-1/at_download/fileDecision

(h) Education and publicity

Minutes, agendas and other information regarding the Authority's functions and activities (including its meetings, which are open to the public) are available on the Authority's website at: www.doc.govt.nz/conservation-authority.

No education or publicity activities were undertaken during the reporting period.

(i) Priorities for expenditure by the Department

The Authority had several presentations from the Department during the reporting period on the Budget and expenditure priorities, as above in section 4.1. Work is being done towards more meaningful discussion, to allow for input from Authority members.

(j) New Zealand Fish & Game Council liaison

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

(k) Ministerial delegations

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

6.3 Powers of the Authority

(a) Establishment of committees

The Conservation Act enables the Authority to establish committees to carry out functions or tasks delegated by the Authority.

Committees that were active during the reporting period included:

- Aoraki Mount Cook National Park Management Plan Review Committee
- East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Management Strategy Committee
- Fiordland National Park Management Plan Review Committee
- General Policy for National Parks Review Committee
- Grass Carp Committee
- Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan Review Committee
- Section 4 Policy Committee
- Wellington Conservation Management Strategy Committee
- West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Management Strategy Committee
- Westland Tai Poutini National Park Management Plan Review Committee.

(b) Advocacy

The Authority submitted on two water conservation orders in the 2017–18 reporting year, Ngaruroro and Clive Rivers Water Conservation Order, and the Te Waikoropupū Springs and associated water bodies (including the aquifers, Takaka River, and tributaries) Water Conservation Order. A decision has still not been released on either of these.

The Authority advocated its interests during the reporting period through several submissions:

- Zero Carbon Bill consultation, submitted 19 July 2018
- The International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy consultation, submitted 22 July 2018
- Predator Free 2050 Discussion Guide, submitted 30 January 2019
- Aotearoa New Zealand Government Tourism Strategy, submitted 4 February 2019
- Enduring Stewardship of Crown Pastoral Land, submitted 12 April 2019.

The Authority's submissions are available on its website.

Members also represented the Authority at multiple events and meetings throughout the year. This included:

- Mark Brough on the Māui Dolphin Threat Management Plan Workshop
- Mark Brough, Tony Lepper and Gerry McSweeney on the Thar Working Group
- Jan Riddell and Mick Clout on the Whitebait Working Group.

7. FUNCTIONS UNDER THE NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980

7.1 Review of the General Policy for National Parks

No review of the General Policy for National Parks was conducted during the reporting period. However, as stated above in 6.2(d), the Minister initiated discussion with the Authority in order to undertake a partial review of the two general policies to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

7.2 National park management plans

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

7.3 Additions to, and deletions from, national parks

(a) Addition to Kahurangi National Park

The Authority recommended the Mokihinui catchment area be added to Kahurangi National Park in a letter to the Minister on 28 June 2017. A separate process, including consultation with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, was needed for the Mokihinui riverbed to be added to the expanded park. This included the transition of management from Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) to the Department.

In May 2018 the Authority recommended that the Minister recommend to the Governor-General that the Mokihinui riverbed be added to the Kahurangi National Park, pursuant to section 7 of the National Parks Act. On 13 February 2019, the Minister announced the two additions as a single block.

(b) Additions to Fiordland National Park

The Nature Heritage Fund purchased the blocks of land O'Brien, King and Wang (Johnstone)/Morgan in 1995, 2000 and 2001 respectively, with the intent to add them to Fiordland National Park. The Authority resolved at its April 2018 meeting to recommend to the Minister that she recommend to the Governor-General that the land purchase blocks be added to Fiordland National Park, pursuant to section 7 of the National Parks Act. These were officially added in October 2018.

7.4 National park investigations

No national park investigations were undertaken during the reporting period.

7.5 National park determinations

Determinations are made to waive the requirements that introduced plants and animals be exterminated in national parks and native plants and animals be preserved. They are generally made as part of a national park management plan process.

No determinations were made during the reporting period.

8. MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

8.1 JD Stout Trust

A representative of the Authority sits on a granting Advisory Board which is consulted about, and advises on, the grants made by the Trust. These charitable grants are for the purpose of the preservation of natural or historic sites or amenities for public enjoyment.

The Trust met once during the reporting period. Rauru Kirikiri is the Authority's representative on the Trust.

8.2 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The Authority, along with another government agency, is one of eight members of the New Zealand Committee of the IUCN, known as the World Conservation Union. The committee meets quarterly.

Mick Clout is the Authority's representative on the Committee, and attended two meetings during the reporting year, on 23 October 2018 and 26 February 2019 in Wellington.

8.3 Land and Water Forum

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

9. CONSERVATION BOARDS

9.1 Conservation board boundaries

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

9.2 Conservation board nominations

The Minister is required to consult with the Authority prior to appointing public members to conservation boards. The Authority provided its advice to the Minister on the appointment process for 2019. A high standard of nominations was received for all boards and it was pleasing to see greater diversity and talent.

9.3 Authority/Conservation board liaison

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

9.4 Annual reports

Conservation boards are each required by section 6O of the Conservation Act 1987 to provide the Authority with an annual report. These reports are available from the boards and posted on their individual pages on the Department's website.

9.5 Implementation of conservation management strategies

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

Under the Conservation General Policy, the Department is required to provide each conservation board with a report (at least annually) on the implementation of the conservation management strategy for its region (see section 9.4 above).

Auckland Conservation Management Strategy report

The Auckland Conservation Board independently drafted a report considering progress of the Auckland Conservation Management Strategy's implementation, which became operational in 2014. This was considered at the Authority's August 2018 meeting and Glenn Wilcox (Auckland Conservation Board) was present to discuss the report's content. Overall, the Authority was very impressed with the quality and comprehensiveness of the report and believe it sets a high standard for conservation boards in reviewing the implementation of conservation management strategies.

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Authority reviewed its performance and strategy in June 2019, and continued its programme of reviewing and updating, where necessary, its policies. Those addressed during the year were:

- content and format check for conservation management strategies and management plans presented to the Authority
- Authority procedure after notification of Nature Heritage Fund acquisition of land for national park
- Communications and Engagement Plan
- Giving Effect to Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987.

The Authority's policies and principles can be viewed on its website.



Kayaking, West Coast

Photographer: Gerry McSweeney, Wilderness Lodge

11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tragically, Department of Conservation staff members Scott Theobald and Paul Hondelink passed away in a helicopter crash on 18 October 2018, along with the pilot Nick Wallis. Scott and Paul were integral to the work of the Department, especially in the large-scale management of tahr herds, and the Authority would like to offer their heartfelt condolences to their families and the Department's staff.

We also lost two significant New Zealand conservation figures this year with the passing of Jane Davis, Authority member Tāne Davis' mother, and Waana Davis, who served as an Authority member from 2007–2017. They will be remembered.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Department in servicing and supporting the Authority. A big thank you to Lou Sanson, Director-General, and the large number of staff members who have attended our meetings or provided papers. I also commend the support of Executive Officer Rick McGovern-Wilson, whose knowledge has been invaluable to our work; and Servicing Officer Lisa McLennan, for her efficient support of the Authority.

I also truly appreciate the valuable contributions of my fellow Authority members, and members of conservation boards. As always, they are generous with their time and willingly apply their knowledge, skills and diverse life experiences to contribute to conservation and ensure we remain connected to our communities and Treaty partners.

Edward Ellison ONZM
Chairperson New Zealand Conservation Authority

12. SCHEDULES

First schedule

Conservation management strategies: approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2019. The statutory expectation is that each conservation management strategy will be reviewed at 10-year intervals.

Conservation management strategy	Date approved	Situation at 30 June 2019
Te Hiku o Te Ika	New conservation board as of 17 December 2015	Work under way
Northland	8 September 2014	Operative
Auckland	9 October 2014	Operative
Waikato	8 September 2014	Operative
Bay of Plenty	4 December 1997	Under review
East Coast/Hawke's Bay	14 October 1998 (East Coast) 19 October 1994 (Hawke's Bay)	Under review
Tongariro/Taupo	30 May 2002	Due for review
Wanganui	9 April 1997	Due for review
Wellington (includes Rangitikei/Manawatu, which was formerly part of Wanganui)	20 January 2019	Operative
Chatham Islands	12 August 1999	Due for review
Nelson/Marlborough	12 September 1996	Iwi engagement needs resolving
West Coast	15 April 2010	Amendment process halted
Canterbury (Waitaha)	1 June 2016	Operative
Otago	1 June 2016	Operative
Southland Murihiku	1 June 2016	Operative
Stewart Island/Rakiura	9 February 2011	Operative

Second schedule

National park management plans: approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2019.

National park management plan	Date approved	Situation at 30 June 2019
Abel Tasman	9 October 2008	Due for review
Aoraki/Mount Cook	12 August 2004	Full review publicly paused
Arthur's Pass	13 December 2007	Due for review
Egmont	14 February 2002	Due for review, on hold until conservation management strategy review completed
Fiordland	21 June 2007	Due for review
Kahurangi	13 June 2001	Partial review approved April 2017, full review due
Mount Aspiring	23 June 2011	Initial investigation into review commenced
Nelson Lakes	10 October 2002	Due for review, on hold until conservation management strategy review completed
Paparoa	1 February 2017	Current
Rakiura	9 February 2011	Current
Tongariro	12 October 2006	Partial review approved May 2018, full review due
Westland Tai Poutini	21 December 2001	Full review publicly paused
Whanganui	9 August 2012	Current

Third schedule

Address list for conservation boards.

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

Fourth schedule

Statutory functions and powers of the Authority

Act	Addressed in past 3 years?	Statutory function
Statutory functions (Conservation Act 1987)		
6B(a)	N	Advise on statements of general policy
6B(b)	Y	Approve conservation management strategies and any amendments
6B(c)	N	Review and report on effectiveness of general policies
6B(d)	Y	Investigate matters of national importance
6B(e)	Y	Consider and make proposals for change of land status of national and international importance
6B(g)	N	Encourage and participate in educational & publicity activities
6B(h)	N	Advise annually on priorities for expenditure
6B(i)	Y	Liaise with New Zealand Fish & Game Council
6B(j)	N	Exercise any other powers and functions delegated by the Minister
Statutory functions (National Parks Act 1980)		
18(a)	N	Prepare and approve statements of general policy for National Parks (NP)
18(b)	Y	Approve NP management plans and any amendments
18(c)	N	Advise on priorities for expenditure for NPs
18(d)	N	Review effectiveness of general policies for NPs
18(e)	Y	Consider and make proposals for addition of lands to NPs and establishment of new NPs
18(g)	N	Give advice on any other matter relating to any NP
4(2)(b)	N	Determinations re: native plants and animals preserved – introduced plants and animals exterminated
5A(2)(a)	Y	The Minister shall consult the Authority on introduction of any biological control organism
12(1)	Y	The Minister shall consult the Authority on Specially Protected Areas
14(1)	N	Recommend establishment or revocation of Wilderness Areas
15(1)	N	Recommend establishment or revocation of Amenities Areas
18A	N	The Minister shall consult the Authority on access arrangements to a National Park re: s59 of Crown Minerals Act 1991
44(1)	N	Adopt or amend statements of General Policy
Statutory powers (Conservation Act 1987)		
6C(2)(a)	Y	Establish committees
6C(2)(b)	Y	Release for public info any recommendation, report or advice
6C(2)(c)	Y	Advocate at any public forum or in any statutory planning process



NEW ZEALAND

CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TE POU ATAWHAI TAIAO O AOTEAROA

New Zealand Conservation Authority
PO Box 10 420
Wellington 6143

www.doc.govt.nz/conservation-authority