

# Annual Report of the New Zealand Conservation Authority

Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008



ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

Cover photo: Totaranui, Abel Tasman National Park, 2008.  
Photographer: Jude Wilson

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**Annual Report of the**  
**New Zealand Conservation Authority**  
**for the period**  
**1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008**

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

30 November 2008

Hon Tim Groser  
Minister of Conservation  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

Dear Minister

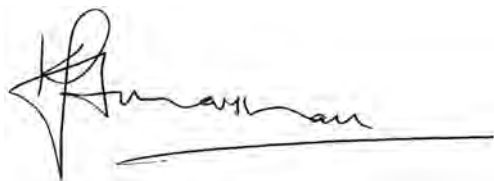
I submit, in terms of section 6E of the Conservation Act 1987, the sixteenth report of the New Zealand Conservation Authority covering the period of 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008. The Act requires that the Authority shall in each year make a report to the Minister on the exercise of its functions and powers.

The Authority has received the annual reports of the fourteen conservation boards which are required to report to it under section 6O of the Act.

This is my final annual report and final task as outgoing Chairperson of the Authority. It has been an honour to lead a team of such knowledgeable and committed individuals for seven years and to serve as a member for twelve.

Together the Authority, the conservation boards, and the Department of Conservation represent a partnership between the community and the Government for the effective administration of New Zealand's unique system of protected areas that is admired through out the world.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kerry Marshall', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kerry Marshall  
Immediate past Chairperson  
New Zealand Conservation Authority



## MISSION STATEMENT

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

### The New Zealand Conservation Authority Members



Back row from left: Catherine Tudhope (Manager), Basil Morrison, Michael Crozier, Wendy Nelson, David Chandler, Robyn Jebson, Kerry Marshall (Chair)  
Front row from left: John Nankervis, Kay Booth, Linda Conning, Barbara Arnold  
Absent: Charles Crofts, Waana Davis, Hally Toia

Photo: Brian Sheppard



Charles Crofts, Waana Davis, Hally Toia

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## 1. SUMMARY

The New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority) met formally on six occasions in 2007/08 – in August, October and December 2007, and in February, April and June 2008. Four of the meetings were held in Wellington, one in Ashburton, Canterbury (October 2007), and one in Omapere, Northland (February 2008).

In Ashburton and Omapere, the Authority met with the Canterbury Aoraki and Northland conservation boards respectively. Joint field trips with the conservation board enabled the Authority to see some special sites and learn more about local issues and opportunities.

The Arthur's Pass National Park Management Plan was referred to the Authority for approval in April 2007 and was approved by the Authority in December 2007.

The Abel Tasman National Park Management Plan was referred to the Authority for approval in October 2007. Approval was pending at the end of the 2007/08 reporting period.

The Authority considered but did not approve a recommendation from the Otago Conservation Board received in December 2006 that the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan be amended. The amendment was for the purpose of enabling consideration of an application by a commercial enterprise to construct a privately-operated road and tunnel from the Glenorchy Road to the Hollyford Road in Fiordland National Park. The Otago Board's recommendation stimulated in-depth discussion over several months including consideration of the relationship between management planning and concessions processing.

While the Authority supported the Department of Conservation's request to the Minister of Conservation (Minister) for extensions to the terms of conservation management strategies, this support has been for purely pragmatic reasons. The Authority has continued to be disappointed by the slow progress made by the Department towards reviewing its conservation management strategies with an increasing number having passed or being close to their expiry dates.

One of the statutory purposes of conservation management strategies is to show how general policies will be implemented by conservancies. The Conservation General Policy was approved in May 2005. Since then the Authority has contributed to, and provided feedback on, several documents prepared by the Department of Conservation (department) to assist conservancies with the review of conservation management strategies. The first of the second round of conservation management strategies (Bay of Plenty) was released for public consultation in March 2008.

The Authority has considered several matters of conservation importance during the year. It appreciated the contributions to this work of presentations and policy updates from many Departmental staff and representatives of other organizations. The Authority has continued to enjoy discussions with Al Morrison, the Director-General of Conservation (Director-General). His questioning of whether the conservation legislative and statutory planning framework are still fit for purpose 20 years after they were adopted has generated a robust exchange of views. Other key discussions focused



on the Conservation Management Strategy template, the Department's Strategic Direction, and the Strategy and Budget Alignment Review.

During the year, the Minister of Conservation sought advice from the Authority on the efficacy of conservation boards. The Authority's advice, prepared after consultation with the Department, conservation boards, and conservation board chairpersons highlighted the importance of appointing the right people as conservation board members, and having constructive relationships between the Department and conservation boards at the conservancy level.

## **2. INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW ZEALAND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

The New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority) is a statutory body established by section 6A of the Conservation Act 1987. It represents the long-term public interest in conservation and is closely involved in conservation planning and policy development affecting the management of public conservation lands administered by the Department for which it has the final decision-making function. It also provides advice to the Minister and Director-General.

The functions of the Authority are set out in section 6B of the Conservation Act 1987, 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, the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978 and the New Zealand Walkways Act 1990. It also has specified responsibilities with regard to consultation with tangata whenua set out in Treaty claims settlement legislation.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY**

The Minister appoints Authority members and the chairperson for concurrent three-year terms. Waana Davis and Hally Toia were appointed in August 2007 to replace two members who resigned early in 2007.

Members of the Authority during the reporting period were:

	Number meetings attended (6 held)
Barbara Arnold, Palmerston North	5*
Kay Booth, Christchurch	5
David Chandler, Auckland	6
Linda Conning, Te Teko	5
Charles Crofts, Diamond Harbour	3
Michael Crozier, Wellington	5*
Waana Davis, Lower Hutt	5 (of 5)
Robyn Jebson, Queenstown	4
Kerry Marshall, Richmond (chairperson)	5
Basil Morrison, Paeroa	5*
John Nankervis, Wellington	6
Wendy Nelson, Wellington	6
Hally Toia, Dargaville	5 (of 5)

\* includes part attendance at one or more of the meetings.

#### **4. BUDGET, FEES AND ALLOWANCES**

The Authority's budget for 2007/08 was \$145,000.

The chairperson receives a daily meeting fee of \$290 and other Authority members receive daily meeting fees of \$215. Members are reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses incurred while engaged on Authority business. Fees and allowances are paid in accordance with the Fees and Travelling Allowances Act 1951.

#### **5. THE CONSERVATION ACT 1987**

##### **5.1 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." The Authority is established under the Conservation Act 1987 and section 4 applies to the Authority in the discharge of its functions.

The Authority uses a template to assist it to give effect to section 4 in its work.

The Authority was represented at a meeting on 12 March between the Department and Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu to discuss the possibility of standard text for conservation management strategies and national park management plans that are wholly within the Ngai Tahu takiwā for sections on the Treaty and customary use.

##### **5.2 Section 6B(1) of the Conservation Act 1987 – Functions of the Authority**

###### **(a) General Policy**

No changes were requested or made to General Policy in the reporting period.

###### **(b) Conservation Management Strategies and Plans**

A conservation management strategy (CMS) outlines a ten-year plan for integrated conservation management in a conservancy. The Conservation Act requires that each CMS be reviewed in its entirety, not later than 10 years after the date of its approval. Each conservancy's CMS is prepared by the Department in consultation with its conservation board. Once a CMS has been publicly released and amended in light of public submissions, the conservation board reviews the amendments and refers the CMS to the Authority for approval.

The Authority has approved sixteen "first round" CMSs. The first West Coast CMS has not yet been submitted to the Authority for approval. The Minister has extended the term of 13 CMSs, some of which were approved by the Authority more than 10 years ago. The Authority supported the extensions but questioned whether some of the timeframes for completing the reviews were realistic. The Authority also noted that its ability to approve a CMS within the projected timeframes will be dependent on receiving quality documents. Consultation with the Minister is an important component of the Authority's role and can also affect the timeframes for approval. The status of the CMS for each conservancy as at 30 June 2008, including any extensions to expiry dates, is recorded in the First Schedule at the end of this annual report.

The Conservation Act 1987 and the Conservation General Policy 2005 set out some overarching requirements for CMSs. Once the Conservation General Policy was approved by the Minister, the Department first developed guidelines, and then a template, and finally a framework to assist conservancies review their CMSs. The Authority was closely involved in the development of the guidelines. Consultation on the template and framework were less extensive and these documents were adopted without Authority support. The Authority and affected conservation boards expressed frustration at the delays imposed on the CMS review process by the process adopted by the Department.

The Department has trialled the CMS framework in producing the draft Bay of Plenty CMS. The Authority's CMS Committee did not manage to engage with Department staff to the extent desired by the Authority at the drafting stage so that its own part of the process could proceed quickly and smoothly. The draft was released in March 2008. Submissions were received and hearings held. The Authority expects to receive the Bay of Plenty CMS later in 2008.

The Authority has asked the Department to also provide draft conservation management strategies in low cost, hard copy versions and easily downloaded versions to increase public accessibility to the drafts.

CMS reviews processes have now commenced in all North Island conservancies except Tongariro/Taupo and the Chatham Islands.

### **(c) Review of the Effectiveness of the Department of Conservation's Administration of General Policies**

The Conservation General Policy was adopted by the Minister in May 2005. The Authority did not receive any requests or recommendations for amendments to the policy during the reporting period.

The General Policy for Walkways (New Zealand Walkways Policy) was adopted in April 1995. While a 10-year review of its implementation had some appeal, the Authority decided not to undertake a review while Government was investigating public walking access generally. In early 2008, the Government introduced the Walking Access Bill to Parliament. In its submission to the Select Committee, the Authority supported the intent of the bill, including the repeal of the Authority's function of advising the Minister or the Director-General on any matter relating to or affecting walkways. The Authority also requested that a new clause be inserted requiring the [proposed] New Zealand Walking Access Commission and any controlling authority to have regard to the provisions of any general policy, conservation management strategy or plan, and the purposes for which the surrounding land is held when making decisions about the management of any walkways over or through public conservation land.

### **(d) Conservation Matters of National Importance**

The Authority considered a number of matters of national importance during the year but undertook no formal investigations. Some of these considerations involved presentations or briefings from the Department or other organisations. Considerations often resulted in the Authority deciding to make submissions or give advice to the

Department or the Minister. There is an increasing trend for the Authority to give its advice to the Department during its discussions with the Director-General and other Departmental officers.

#### *Threatened species conservation*

The Department outlined initiatives underway to support its goal for threatened species conservation which is to “Improve the security of the greatest number of threatened species that are unique to New Zealand and that have the highest risk of loss”. One initiative has been the development of a new system for classifying threatened species that is better suited to small island ecosystems with high levels of endemism. A species optimising model is also under development. This will help decision makers determine which species will receive resources for research and active management for the purposes of securing species from extinction.

#### *Marine mammals*

The Authority made submissions to the Department on:

- Doubtful Sound Bottlenose Dolphins Threat Management Discussion Paper
- Hector’s and Maui’s Dolphin Threat Management Plan.

It sought immediate and precautionary action to protect these animals. As an international advocate for the conservation and protection of cetaceans, the Authority considers that New Zealand needs to show leadership in its own waters.

The Department gave a presentation to the Authority on its Trade in Whale Bone and Whale Strandings discussion paper.

#### *Management of wild animals (deer, thar, chamois and pigs)*

The Department reported on changes to feral deer populations in the last 12 months. Areas of greatest concern were remote areas with less hunting pressure including Fiordland, South Westland, the Raukumara Forest and Te Urewera National Park. Departmental deer control activities had been focused on keeping areas that are free from feral deer in that condition.

After reviewing the Thar Control Plan Annual Report, the Authority noted the apparent inability of hunters to make any meaningful contribution to controlling thar numbers within the approved ceiling.

The Authority raised several matters relating to the Himalayan Thar Control Plan and Management Policy with the Department after considering a letter from the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservancy.

The Authority made a high level submission on the discussion document produced by the Wild Animal Panel set up by the Minister (in accordance with the confidence and supply agreement between Labour and United Future) to explore the role of recreational hunters in reducing numbers of big game animals as part of a nationwide pest reduction strategy. The Authority submitted that priority should be given to indigenous biodiversity over other matters when values come into conflict. The Authority considers

that current legislation is fit for purpose and that biosecurity matters associated with the spreading of disease by wild animals need to be considered.

### *Tourism and recreation*

Representatives of the Tourism Industry Association, the Ministry of Tourism and the Department updated the Authority on the history and recent progress towards agreement on tools that could be used to make consistent and transparent concession decisions where the demand for tourism concessions on public conservation land exceeded the level considered acceptable.

The Department briefed the Authority on its proposal to introduce a new approach to processing applications for low impact tourist guiding concessions that conform to statutory plans and a set of criteria. The new process would see conservancies first developing Conforming Activity Schedules with precautionary pre-set limits on the number of users. The Department's intent is to move from reactive to proactive management for low impact concessions and to free up resources for assessing and monitoring concessions where there is more risk to conservation values. The Authority provided staff with comments about the proposal and its implementation. Key concerns were the Department's wish to identify tracks and set limits outside the CMS process or other inclusive public consultation process.

The Authority congratulated the Minister on abolishing hut and campsite fees on the Great Walks from July 2008 for people aged under 18 years.

The Authority made a submission to the Ministry of Tourism on the New Zealand Tourism Strategy (2015). It was pleased to see that the critical dependency of the tourism industry on the protection and sustainability of the New Zealand environment was recognised therein. Nevertheless, the Authority considered that there was insufficient commitment to protect and enhance conservation assets and there was too much emphasis on increasing commercial use of them.

The Authority made a submission on the Walking Access Bill to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (See also Section 5.2(c))

### *Coastal and marine*

The Authority made submissions on:

- the proposed New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement
- the Marine Protected Areas Draft Classification and Protection Standards
- the Regulation of Environmental Effects in New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

The Authority was disappointed with Cabinet's decision that the regulations proposed under the Regulation of Environmental Effects in New Zealand's EEZ would not apply to fisheries. It considers that there should be integrated management across all interests in the EEZ.

The Authority did not submit on the two draft management plans for NZ Sea Lions as it has a statutory role to provide advice to the Minister and Director-General after the drafts have been amended in light of public submissions.

### *Eels*

The Authority made a submission to the Ministry of Fisheries on the review of sustainability measures for eels in the North Island. It supported the reduction in the quota for long finned eels.

In April, the Authority received a presentation from staff from NIWA and the Ministry of Fisheries on the most recent research on eels, their current status, and priorities for management of the eel fishery. . The Authority remains concerned about the future of long-finned eel populations, the threatened status of which reflects the difficulty of managing species under multiple jurisdictions.

### *Conservation values research*

Department staff gave a presentation on the process and results of its research into conservation values. The Authority welcomed the research as providing baseline data for future studies.

### *Biosecurity*

Staff from Biosecurity New Zealand gave a presentation to the Authority on border security. The Authority asked to be kept informed about developments in the surveillance area, especially in relation to internal borders and the protection of special marine environments such as Fiordland and offshore islands.

The Authority was represented at the biosecurity science, research and technology strategy workshop and was concerned to learn about limitations on the funding for research and to implement the strategy.

### *Forest carbon sinks on public conservation lands*

The Department briefed the Authority on a proposal to make sites on public conservation land available to the Ministry for the Environment for a pilot carbon sequestration project and to companies to offset their carbon emissions. The Authority recommended that the selection criteria for the tender process include evidence that businesses or organisations were making efforts to reduce their carbon emissions.

### *Other submissions*

The Authority also made submissions on:

- Bioprospecting - harnessing benefits for New Zealand to the Ministry of Economic Development
- NZ Research Agenda to the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology
- Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River to the Guardians of the Waikato River Establishment Committee. The proposals were related to the Agreement in Principle between the Crown and Waikato-Tainui relating to the future management of the Waikato River.

## **(e) Change of Status**

The Authority did not consider or make any proposals for the change of status or classification of areas of national and international importance.

#### **(f) Walkways**

The Authority did not provide any advice to the Minister or Director-General on any matter relating to or affecting walkways. See also Section 5.2 (c) for details of the Authority's submission on the Walking Access Bill.

#### **(g) Education and Publicity**

Copies of minutes and agendas and other information regarding the Authority's functions and activities can be found on [www.conservationauthority.org.nz](http://www.conservationauthority.org.nz). Meetings are advertised through public notices.

No new educational publications were produced during the reporting period.

#### **(h) Priorities for Expenditure by the Department of Conservation**

Section 6B(1)(h) of the Conservation Act 1987 provides for the Authority "to advise the Minister and the Director-General annually on priorities for the expenditure of money".

The Authority discussed its priorities in August 2007 and advised the Director-General that they were:

- conservation management strategies and national park management plans
- freshwater
- a greater level of funding for biodiversity relative to recreation
- an increase in biodiversity funding for pest control on a landscape scale

The Authority asks for the opportunity to provide comment annually on proposals to amend the Department's Statement of Intent. The Statement of Intent 2008 reflects the work the Department is undertaking over a three-year period to translate the Department's strategic direction into the Statement of Intent. The Authority supports the goal of increasing the understanding of New Zealanders of the value of conservation to the economic, environmental and social well-being of New Zealand but in 2007 had recommended that the Statement of Intent should clearly demonstrate that the Department's contribution towards a sustainable New Zealand is derived from and supports its conservation mandate. While the Authority expressed some discomfort at the commitment "*Business opportunities .....are enabled*" it was pleased to see that this commitment was qualified with the words *consistent with conservation*".

The Authority wrote to the Prime Minister on 12 February 2008 outlining its concerns about the Department's core funding and seeking an increase in that funding. The Authority members were disappointed by the Minister's reply, on behalf of the Prime Minister, that no funding increase was being considered.

#### **(i) New Zealand Fish and Game Council Liaison**

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

The Authority received a presentation on freshwater issues in Canterbury from Jay Graybill, Manager of the Central South Island Fish and Game Council and how resource consents have compromised water resources. He said that Fish and Game New Zealand thought that the Department gave insufficient priority to the protection nationally of recreational fisheries and advocacy for the conservation of aquatic life and freshwater fisheries generally.

**(j) Ministerial Delegations**

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

**5.3 Section 6C of the Conservation Act 1987 – Powers of the Authority**

**(a) Establishment of Committees**

The Conservation Act provides for the Authority to establish committees to carry out tasks delegated by the Authority. The Authority does not have any standing committees other than its Grass Carp Applications Committee. It forms committees as the need arises and they disband on completion of the allocated task. The following committees were operative during the reporting period:

ARTHUR'S PASS NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMITTEE

Michael Crozier (convenor), Kay Booth, Charles Crofts and John Nankervis.

ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMITTEE

Robyn Jebson (convenor), Barbara Arnold, Waana Davis, Wendy Nelson and Kerry Marshall.

NEW ZEALAND COASTAL POLICY STATEMENT COMMITTEE

Barbara Arnold (convenor), Charles Crofts, Linda Conning, Waana Davis, John Nankervis and Wendy Nelson.

CMS COMMITTEE

John Nankervis, Linda Conning and Wendy Nelson.

PROPOSED NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARD ON ECOLOGICAL FLOWS AND WATER LEVELS SUBMISSION COMMITTEE

Linda Conning (convenor), Michael Crozier, Kay Booth and Robyn Jebson.

GRASS CARP APPLICATION COMMITTEE

David Chandler (convenor) and Basil Morrison.

**(b) Advocate the Interests of the Authority**

The Authority advocated its interests by making submissions and by attending conferences, workshops and meetings. (See also section 5.2 (d)).



## **THE NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980**

### **6.1 General Policy for National Parks**

The Authority did not prepare, amend or approve any statements of General Policy for National Parks in the reporting period.

### **6.2 National Park Management Plans**

Details of national park management plan approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2008 can be found in the Second Schedule at the end of this Annual Report.

#### **MOUNT ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Authority received a recommendation from the Otago Conservation Board in December 2006 for an amendment to the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. The Board wanted to enable consideration of an application by a commercial enterprise for a concession to construct a privately-operated road and tunnel from the Glenorchy Road in Mount Aspiring National Park to the Hollyford Road in Fiordland National Park for use by buses carrying tourists from Queenstown to Milford Sound. The Authority deliberated “in committee” on several occasions and also requested and received additional information from the Board. Robyn Jebson left the meeting for these discussions due to a declared conflict of interest arising from her employment with a major tourism operator in the region.

The Authority declined the proposed amendment. The Authority concluded that, having regard to the status and purpose of the land and the statutory framework that applies to national parks, the adverse effects of the construction and use of the road in the national park outweighed any benefits.

The requirements of the National Parks Act are that while the public is given freedom of entry and access to the national parks, this is subject to the preservation of park values and the Act states that parks shall be preserved, as far as possible in their natural state.

The Conservation Authority reached the conclusion for a number of reasons. Particular concerns of the Authority were that the proposed road would not contribute to the use and enjoyment of Mount Aspiring National Park, and nor was it demonstrated that it would address the issue of perceived overcrowding at Milford Sound.

#### **ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

At its October 2007 meeting, the Authority received the Abel Tasman National Park Management Plan for approval. Bill Gilbertson and Glenice Paine represented the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board. Jo Gould, Katherine Hughes and Paul Thornton were present for Nelson Marlborough Conservancy, and John Morgan for tangata whenua - Ngati Tama, Ngati Rarua, Te Atiawa.

#### **ARTHUR'S PASS NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Authority approved the Arthur's Pass National Park Management Plan in December 2007.

### Westland *Tai Poutini* National Park Management Plan

In June 2008 the Authority approved an amendment to the Westland *Tai Poutini* National Park Management Plan to provide for the construction of pathways alongside the Franz Josef and Fox Glacier access roads.

#### **6.3 Establishment of, Additions to, and Deletions from, National Parks**

No new national parks were established during the reporting period.

The Authority resolved to support proposals from the Department, endorsed by the West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservation Board, to exclude land that has been the subject of development in the urban environment of Franz Josef and Fox villages from the Westland *Tai Poutini* National Park.

#### **6.4 National Park Investigations**

No national park investigations were undertaken during the reporting period.

#### **6.5 Mining in a National Park**

No access arrangements to mine in a national park were sought during the reporting period.

#### **6.6 Amendment to Boundary of the Murchison Mountains Specially Protected Area**

Arising from discussions in 2006 with the Fiordland National Park Management Plan Committee during consideration of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan, the Department proposed that the boundaries of the Murchison Mountains Specially Protected Area be amended. A Specially Protected Area is accessible by the public by permit only and is the national park equivalent of a nature reserve. The Murchison Mountains Specially Protected Area is home of the sole remaining known wild population of takahe (*Porphyrio hochstetteri*). The Authority supported public notification of the proposed boundary change.

### **7. RESERVES ACT 1977**

#### **7.1 Section 51A Introduction of Biological Control Organisms**

The Minister sought the views of the Authority on two proposals to introduce grass carp into reserves.

In July 2007 the Grass Carp Committee, under delegated authority, supported the application to introduce two grass carp into a pond in the Puhinui Domain, subject to satisfactory monitoring reports and a number of conditions to ensure the grass carp do not escape.

In May 2008 the Committee considered a proposal to re-introduce grass carp to the Lower Lake in Whitby, Porirua. Porirua City had undertaken a recent renovation of the lake during which the grass carp population had been removed. The Grass Carp Committee, under delegated authority, supported the reintroduction of 50 grass carp as

there had been no adverse impacts on indigenous organisms from the previous introduction and containment measures had proved to be effective.

## **8. MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

### **8.1 JD Stout Trust**

The Authority is a member of the JD Stout Trust. The Trust makes donations or interest-free loans for conservation and cultural purposes. Mike Crozier was the Authority's representative. A single meeting was held in November 2007.

### **8.2 The World Conservation Union (IUCN)**

The Authority is one of seven members of the New Zealand Committee of the IUCN. The committee meets quarterly. John Nankervis was the Authority's representative.

Diana Shand, NZ IUCN Regional Counsellor, addressed the Authority about the role of the IUCN Oceania Office (based in Suva), and the concerns of the regional counsellors about invasive species, climate change, and the lack of conservation strength in the Pacific Islands.

## **9. CONSERVATION BOARDS**

### **9.1 Conservation Board Nominations**

The Minister is required to consult with the Authority prior to appointing members to conservation boards. In April 2008 the Authority provided its advice to the Minister with respect to the conservation board appointments for 2008.

### **9.2 Authority/Conservation Board Liaison**

One Authority member acts as an Authority liaison person with each conservation board. The following members were the liaison persons with the conservation boards indicated:

<b>Conservation Board</b>	<b>Authority Liaison Person</b>
Northland	Kerry Marshall/Hally Toia
Auckland	David Chandler
Waikato	Basil Morrison
Bay of Plenty	Linda Conning
East Coast/Hawke's Bay	Linda Conning/Waana Davis
Tongariro/Taupo	John Nankervis
Taranaki/Whanganui	Barbara Arnold
Wellington	Michael Crozier
Chatham Islands	John Nankervis
Nelson/Marlborough	Kerry Marshall
West Coast Tai Poutini	Charles Crofts
Canterbury Aoraki	Kay Booth
Otago	Robyn Jebson
Southland	Wendy Nelson

### 9.3 Meetings with Conservation Boards

The Authority meets away from Wellington once or twice a year and uses that opportunity to meet with conservation boards and discuss local conservation issues with regional or national significance. As noted earlier in this report, the Authority met with the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board in October 2007 and the Northland Conservation Board in February 2008.

The Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board highlighted the following matters:

- Canterbury's freshwater system and stresses on it due to the allocation of water resources
- concern that the tenure review process is not adequately protecting lowland biodiversity and landscape values, especially around lakes
- the proposed car park redevelopment at the Aoraki/Mt Cook visitor centre which the Board considers puts too much emphasis on vehicles and ignores the needs of pedestrians.

The presentation from the Northland Conservation Board covered:

- initiatives to stimulate conservation regionally and to promote sustainable management in the marine environment
- local issues including Aroha Island, vehicles on beaches, mangroves, water quality and kai moana, environmental limitations to development
- biosecurity
- implications of climate change.

### 9.4 Annual Reports

The fourteen conservation boards have furnished the Authority with their annual reports for the year ended 30 June 2008 in accordance with section 60 of the Conservation Act 1987.

They are available in hard copy from the boards whose addresses are given at the end of this report, or from [www.conservaionboards.org.nz](http://www.conservaionboards.org.nz) by selecting Conservation Boards by Region.

### 9.5 Implementation of Conservation Management Strategies

Most conservation boards have adopted a systematic process for monitoring progress with the implementation of the CMS for their region and for providing advice to the Department's conservancies in that respect. The boards report on this monitoring in their annual reports.

Under the Conservation General Policy, the Department is required to provide conservation boards with a report (at least annually) on the implementation of conservation management strategies and plans.

## 9.6 Conservation Management Plans

Conservation management plans are approved by conservation boards. No conservation management plans were approved during the reporting period.

## 9.7 Advice to Minister about efficacy of conservation boards

During the year, the Minister of Conservation sought advice from the Authority on the efficacy of conservation boards. The stimulus for the Minister's request was a letter about qualitative social science research by the Department in 2007 called *The role and effectiveness of conservation boards as a community voice in conservation management*. In preparing its reply, the Authority sought input from conservation boards and the Department, and discussed the issue with conservation board chairpersons at their conference in February 2008. It also drew on the experience of several members of the Authority who had previously served on conservation boards.

The Authority's advice highlighted two key ingredients necessary for conservation boards to perform well:

- the appointment of the right people for the job - people with the knowledge, experience capacity, capability and willingness to participate fully in the work of the Board, and to work on a collegial basis and for conservation
- a constructive relationship between the Department and the conservation boards at the conservancy level, each respecting and accepting the functions and role of the other.

The Authority also explained that conservation boards have members who are representative of the community in its area but they do not represent the community.

## 9.8 Meeting of Chairpersons of Conservation Boards

The Authority hosted a two-day meeting for chairpersons of conservation boards in Wellington in February 2008. This provided opportunities for chairpersons to:

- hear directly from the Director-General about the Department's Strategic Direction, its strategy and budget alignment review, and the relationship between the statements of intent and conservation management strategies
- exchange experiences of working with the Department, and hear the views of long-serving conservators about ways that boards can add value to the Department
- develop ways of increasing the collaboration between boards
- matters of mutual interest.

## 10. CONCLUSION

The Authority is not an NGO; nor is it a governance body. It has a statutory role which includes approving conservation management strategies and national park management plans. The Authority takes its responsibilities in management planning most seriously, including informed consultation with the Minister.

The Authority continued its focus of recent years as advocate for the timely review of CMSs and national park management plans. It considers that if CMSs are reviewed every

10 years as provided for in legislation, and if they are forward looking and strategic in their approach, focusing on values and desired outcomes, they should prove to be invaluable to the management of public conservation lands.

The CMSs and national park management plans are an efficient way of providing opportunities for the public to influence long-term direction-setting for conservation management. When the Authority and the conservation boards were established there was a strong commitment in Parliament to a separation of roles and to public consultation. The 10-year life of CMSs and national park management plans provides long periods of certainty for businesses, recreationists and other stakeholders.

There is a significant workload ahead for the Authority as CMSs and national park management plans now overdue for review get reviewed. That workload may impact on the Authority's ability to investigate and influence other matters of conservation significance.

The Authority makes two types of submissions: some to the Department and some to other Government organizations or to panels established by ministers. Under "Whole of Government" protocols, there are limits on the Department's ability to make submissions on policy and operational proposals by other Departments and organizations. Authority submissions therefore permit a respected conservation voice to be heard.

The Department has to make difficult choices about priorities as its resources continue to be stretched. Its Statement of Intent identifies priorities and related resource allocation on a rolling three year basis. These priorities should not be inconsistent with the CMS or National Park Management Plan for any relevant public conservation land or national park.

Collaboration between the Authority, the Department and the conservation boards is important. To quote Philip Woollaston, the first Minister of Conservation, it is a "partnership between the community and the government."

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I should like to thank the staff of the Department who have serviced or supported the Authority during the reporting period, in particular the Director-General Al Morrison, Conservators Mike Cuddihy and Chris Jenkins who hosted us in Canterbury and Northland respectively, Paul Green and Neil Clifton who came to the conservation board chairpersons' conference, and those with roles dedicated to looking after us - Catherine Tudhope and Katrina Edwards.

This report is my final task as chairperson of the Authority as it also marks my retirement from this august body. I have always found the staff of the Department to be dedicated and enthusiastic, keen to share their knowledge and discuss policy development and management challenges, and efficient organisers of splendid celebrations. At year end there were two worth special mention within the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy where I live – my own farewell on the Cable Bay Walkway and the opening of the Ka Whata Tu O Rakihouia at Kaikoura. New Zealand is fortunate to have such dedicated people caring for our public conservation areas and our special plants and animals.

I acknowledge the contributions made by the conservation board members over the reporting period. Being a member of a conservation board can be very rewarding and enables insights about conservation to be gained which are not readily achieved by the public at large. At the same time, membership is demanding and many hours are given outside of meetings which are of their own unpaid time because they feel passionate about conservation in the areas in which they live.

Finally I wish to thank my Authority colleagues who have given generously of their time and their skills and who have brought their considerable and diverse life experience to the discussion of matters that come to the Authority for advice or decision. It has been an honour to lead a team of such dedicated and remarkable people. It was particularly pleasing that Wendy Nelson, who also retires from the Authority this year, was recognized in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her services to the marine environment.

Kerry Marshall  
Chairperson  
2000-2008

## FIRST SCHEDULE

### Conservation management strategies - approval dates

Conservation management strategy	Date Approved	Term extended by the Minister to
Northland	Approved 15 April 1999	
Auckland	Approved 31 May 1995	30 June 2010
Waikato	Approved 24 September 1996	24 December 2008
Bay of Plenty	Approved 4 December 1997	12 December 2009
East Coast	Approved 14 October 1998	14 January 2010*
Tongariro/Taupo	Approved 30 May 2002	
Wanganui	Approved 9 April 1997	9 April 2009
Hawke's Bay	Approved 19 October 1994	14 January 2010*
Wellington	Approved 13 March 1996	13 March 2011
Chatham Islands	Approved 12 August 1999	12 August 2010
Nelson/Marlborough	Approved 12 September 1996	
West Coast	In draft	
Canterbury	Approved 14 June 2000	
Otago	Approved 15 August 1998	15 August 2011
Mainland Southland - West Otago	Approved 10 July 1998	15 December 2012
Stewart Island - Rakiura	Approved 4 December 1997	4 December 2009
Subantarctic Islands	Approved 16 July 1998	16 July 2012

\*The East Coast and Hawke's Bay conservation management strategies are to be combined.

## SECOND SCHEDULE

### National park management plans - approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2008

National park management plan	Date approved	Comment
Abel Tasman	July 1986	Under review
Aoraki/Mount Cook	14 August 2004	
Arthur's Pass	December 2007	
Egmont	14 February 2002	
Fiordland	21 June 2007	
Kahurangi	14 June 2001	
Mount Aspiring	October 1994	Under review
Nelson Lakes	10 October 2002	
Paparoa	18 November 1992	
Rakiura		In preparation
Te Urewera	13 February 2003	
Tongariro	12 October 2006	
Westland Tai Poutini	13 December 2001	
Whanganui	March 1989	Under review



### THIRD SCHEDULE

#### Conservation boards address list

Conservation Board	Board address (c/- Department of Conservation)	Board Support Officer
Northland	PO Box 842 Whangarei 0140	Jeannie Hogarth
Auckland	Private Bag 68908 Newton Auckland 1145	Raewyn Bennett
Waikato	Private Bag 3072 Waikato Mail Centre Hamilton 3240	Des Williams
Bay of Plenty	PO Box 1146 Rotorua 3040	Leilani Fraser
East Coast/Hawke's Bay	PO Box 668 Gisborne 4040	Sandra Groves
Tongariro/Taupo	Private Bag 2 Turangi 3353	Jo Hood
Taranaki/Whanganui	Private Bag 3016 Wanganui Mail Centre Wanganui 4540	Louise Davies
Wellington	PO Box 5086 Lambton Quay Wellington 6145	Bronwyn Bell
Chatham Islands	P O Box 114 Waitangi Chatham Islands 8942	Alex McKillop
Nelson/Marlborough	Private Bag 5 Nelson Mail Centre Nelson 7042	Kay Switzer
West Coast Tai Poutini	Private Bag 701 Hokitika 7842	Janet Orchard
Canterbury Aoraki	Private Bag 4715 Christchurch Mail Centre Christchurch 8140	Brenda Preston
Otago	PO Box 5244 Moray Place Dunedin 9058	Mark Clark
Southland	PO Box 743 Invercargill 9840	Rebecca Hiscock





# National Parks of New Zealand

## Legend

- Cities
- National Parks
- Land Administered by DOC

0 75 150 300 Kilometers

Map Created by Information Services Unit  
Department of Conservation  
August 2008

