



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

In-Confidence

Department of Conservation Status Report

Week beginning: 4 March 2019

Seen by Hon Eugenie Sage
Minister of Conservation

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Kauri dieback

Kauri dieback consultation

- The kauri dieback programme is consulting on long-term plans to protect kauri from the disease.
- The third round of consultation covers the final refreshed strategy, a proposed kauri dieback disease pest management plan, and options for the agency required to implement the plan. The consultation opened on 18 February and closes on 18 March.
- Biosecurity New Zealand is running a series of hui and community meetings across kauri lands between 2-12 March. We will ensure staff are present at all meetings, and will provide general support.

Kauri dieback track work

- Track upgrade work is complete in the Bay of Islands. We are awaiting building consents to be checked and completed by the Far North District Council before a public announcement is made.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1.2 Myrtle rust

- A joint DOC/Biosecurity New Zealand website on myrtle rust went live in the last week of February. Biosecurity New Zealand are the lead administrators for the website.
- The website will serve as a hub for all myrtle rust content, and as a helpful guide for communities keeping a look-out for the fungus.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

2 Updates

2.1 Kākāpō breeding season

- The kākāpō team is currently managing a record-breaking kākāpō breeding season.
- All except one of the breeding-aged females have mated on Whenua Hou and Anchor Island. Nesting has not occurred on Hauturu-o-Toi/Little Barrier Island.
- As at 27 February, 214 eggs have been laid during the 2019 season, surpassing 2016's record of 122 eggs.
- Egg fertility is currently 49%, which is lower than average.
- The strategy of removing eggs from kākāpō that laid before mid-February to encourage further breeding activity has paid off, with 26 females mating for a second time. Removed eggs from first clutches are being incubated, and the chicks hand-reared.
- To date, 43 chicks have successfully hatched, with more on the way.

- Twelve chicks have been returned to nests, with the remainder being hand-reared between the island kākāpō sanctuaries, Dunedin Wildlife Hospital and DOC's Murihiku office. More chicks will be returned to nests in the coming weeks.
- Eleven Whenua Hou females have been artificially inseminated, with the team currently awaiting results. In a world first for kākāpō conservation, one of these inseminations was assisted by drone technology, which was used to transfer the semen across the island, cutting down transport time to under ten minutes, thus preserving semen quality.
- Kākāpō Gulliver, one of only three kākāpō descendants from the only Fiordland bird, Richard Henry, has successfully mated, producing fertile eggs for the first time.

Contact: _____





2.4 Potential complaint from Waipu Cove campground annual site holders (Whangarei)

- We are phasing out annual site holdings at the popular Waipu Cove camp in Whangarei. There is potential for some of the annual site holders to be upset about this decision, which may result in media interest further and correspondence to you.
- The Waipu Cove Domain Reserves Board is the administering body for the Waipu Cove Recreation Reserves, including the Waipu Cove camp.
- In 1998, the Minister of Conservation's delegate exercised discretion available under s44(2) of the Reserves Act 1997 that allowed for annual site holdings. This was to enable the Reserves Board to take loans and generate additional revenue to fund capital developments and upgrades required to meet campground regulations. These upgrades and loan repayments were completed some years ago.
- This agreement was understood from the outset to be temporary. Over recent years, the Reserves Board has reduced the number of annual site holdings, through natural attrition, to 77. This attrition has slowed over time.
- There is strong public demand for camping at this site over summer. This matter has been the subject of letters to the Minister over a number of years, where members of the public have been concerned that the annual site holdings were not being phased out as was intended, thus depriving members of the public of opportunities to use the camp facilities.
- In the last week of February, we sent a letter to the Waipu Cove Domain Reserves Board, informing the board that all annual site holding will cease after the 2024/25 summer period. This timeframe was agreed at a meeting with the Waipu Cove Domain Reserves Board, with whom we are working closely.
- We are prepared to respond to any media queries through our Whangarei office.

Contact: 

2.5 Ramp Up Programme

Budget 2018 – \$181.6m recruitment report as of 27 February 2019

- Roles advertised this fortnight:
 - Technical Advisor, Island Biosecurity (Wellington)
 - Technical Advisor, Animal Pest System (Hamilton)
 - Threats Manager (Nelson)
 - Recruitment Coordinator (Wellington)
- Roles provisionally appointed this fortnight:
 - Geospatial Information Analyst (Palmerston North)
 - Tahr Programme Lead (Christchurch)

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 Loder Cup

- DOC has begun work to organise the Loder Cup award for 2019.
- We have contacted the nominating organisations for the Loder Cup Committee and membership is soon to be finalised. Following this, we will brief you to confirm the new committee appointments, and the call for nominations will go out.
- The closing date for nominations is 18 April and the committee will have until the end of May to confirm a recommendation for the Loder Cup recipient, which we will then put into a briefing for you to consider.
- We expect the award ceremony to take place during Conservation Week 2019, which runs from the 14 – 22 September.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.7 Toyota Kiwi Guardians: New opportunities

- In November 2015, DOC and Toyota NZ entered a partnership with the purpose of increasing children's connection with nature. The 'Toyota Kiwi Guardians' (TKG) programme was launched in 2016 and, to date, has helped almost 40,000 children connect with nature.
- We are now looking at broadening the reach of the programme, and working across three opportunities to join up TKG with existing/emerging DOC programmes of work:
 - **NZ-Chinese community:** Toyota and DOC are committed to TKG being an inclusive, appealing, family activity choice for all families in Aotearoa. We wish to explore opportunities to grow engagement in the NZ-Chinese community and have identified social media as an initial, cost-effective tool. Four Chinese social media influencers have been selected (working through the Chinese social media platform, WeChat) with a combined total online reach of c180,000 NZ-Chinese community members, and average views per post of 13,000.
 - **TKG & Takahē Awareness Month:** All five public takahē sanctuaries across the country are also TKG adventure sites. We are currently working with these sites to provide discounted access to Kiwi Guardians and their families during Takahē Awareness Month 2019 (in April).

- **TKG & Department of Corrections:** The DOC/Corrections partnership features an *Environmental and Conservation Friendly Corrections* strategy. A pilot, aligned to this strategy, is being run in Corrections' Central North Island region, which identified that Corrections staff and their whanau wished to be involved with TKG. We are working with Corrections to identify opportunities to enable this. In addition, we are investigating the significant longer-term potential to connect TKG with offenders and their families, with the aim of making a difference to Kiwi kids/families who may not currently perceive engaging with nature as possible/feasible. This project also has the potential to join up with work being done under the *Healthy Nature Healthy People* initiative.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.8 New Zealand Minerals Forum, 28-29 May

- Organised by Straterra (the minerals industry advocacy group), this forum is a two-day conference and exhibition covering mining in New Zealand. Agenda items of note include:
 - Day 1 - address from Hon Megan Woods (including an update on the Government approach to minerals) and a session on West Coast alluvial gold mining: access considerations, alluvial gold economy and future opportunity for growth.
 - Day 2 - a session titled 'Focus on the West Coast Region: Framing our economic contribution to the sector' (the lead is Mike Meehan, CEO, West Coast Regional Council), and a 'Political Leaders Debate' that will include Hon Jonathan Young, Hon Shane Jones and Hon Megan Woods.
- Minister Woods attended the conference last year and announced the release of the clean-tech mineral prospectivity data.
- DOC officials from the Planning, Permissions and Land team in Operations will be attending this year's forum.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.9 Tiakina Ngā Manu – Battle for our Birds operations communications

- As staff gear up for the forecasted mega mast, communications material to support BfoB operations is being rolled out across the country.
- The predator response communications have been designed to help the consultation phase of operations, and to provide information to the public.
- 5000 booklets have been distributed to areas where operations are imminent.
- The brochures give a strategic overview of the heavy seeding of forests (masting), specific areas where we anticipate a mast event, native species under imminent threat and the various pest control methods used. There is a reference to past successes. We have provided hard copies of the information booklets, fact sheets and PowerPoint presentation to your office.
- DOC's animated video on the cycle of mast years is proving to be our most popular organic video to date.
- Almost 20,000 people have viewed the video in the past week, and it has a high engagement rate of 9.4%, compared to the Facebook average of 5.9%.
- We will promote the video to a wider audience, targeting areas where BfoB will be carried out.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.10 Security support for DOC staff, contractors and volunteers

- The 1080 Roadshows, held at the end of 2018, were an opportunity for DOC staff to discuss the issues we face with this key operational matter.
- Since the Roadshows, our new Security team (building on the work of Project Safeguard and comprised of short-term seconded staff and contractors) has considered feedback, and has been focussing on the priority areas identified below:
 - Developing systems which enable us to work effectively with NZ Police to manage incidents of threats and harassment
 - Developing guidelines for our people to operate safely and putting in place an incident report system. Guidelines will include information on how to deal with difficult people and abusive phone calls, and how to manage social media.
 - Identifying specific risk areas, upcoming relevant events and operations, and taking steps to support these areas of the business, in partnership with communications and health and safety.
- Over the next few months, NZ Police and DOC will jointly conduct further workshops and roadshows to target the specific needs of our people, including workshops designed to explore issues for some of our most affected staff (front line staff, visitor centres, administration, DOC's Wellington office).

Contact: Karen Jones, Deputy Director-General People & Engagement: [REDACTED]

2.11 Conservation Week 2019 – 14-22 September

- Planning is under way for Conservation Week 2019, the aim of which is to engage people with our biodiversity and inspire them to take action.
- 2019 is Conservation Week's 50-year anniversary and we will use the occasion to reflect on the parallels between the past and the future, highlighting that **'Now, is the time for action'**. We will look at actions taken by those in the past that have saved species, created marine reserves and restored habitats, and how they have inspired us take action today, to protect our native taonga for the future and our children.
- The campaign will focus on storytelling - telling the stories of those who have acted and how this collectively enabled us to deliver significant results. Young people will share what they want for the future. The goal is to illustrate that taking action does not need to be difficult, but can be fun, and you can make a difference.
- The key audience is families with children aged 8-13. We will also be engaging closely with baby boomers to capture and reflect their experiences of conservation over the past 50 years.
- One stakeholder event is proposed in each of the nine regions, with a strong drive to involve Treaty partners in the envisioning and design of these events. Once dates are set, we will provide these to your office for you to indicate which events you would like to attend.
- As in 2018, there is an overlap between Te Wiki o te Reo Maori and Conservation Week. We are discussing with Te Taura Whiri how we can build on last year's successful collaboration. We understand that birds will be the focus for Te Taura Whiri's Te Reo phrasebook this year.
- We will also be promoting Conservation Week to our community and commercial partners to amplify Conservation Week's physical and web presence across the country.
- Scouts NZ, which originally founded Conservation Week in 1969, is planning a competition for scouts to design a "Conservation Week" badge. The

competition will be launched within scout networks on 3 March, with entries closing 18 May. Scouts NZ is keen to involve you in an announcement around this and we will provide your office with more details in due course.

Contact: _____

3 Events, Announcements and Media Opportunities

3.1 Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance – Official launch of the Strategy

- Kotahitanga mō te Taiao is an alliance between DOC, councils and five iwi across the top of the South Island.
- The alliance worked throughout 2018 to co-design a strategy to guide and direct where and how to work together to achieve the best conservation outcomes for the region.
- In the final week of February, members of the alliance unanimously agreed to seek ratification of the strategy from their entities.
- Iwi have recommended that Matariki in June should be the official launch of the approved strategy. This will recognise the parallels between the Māori New Year and the new beginnings of this co-designed strategy, with a new way of working in close partnership,
- Iwi see the launch of the strategy as a significant symbol and celebration of New Zealand's 250 years Dual Heritage – Shared Future.
- There is an opportunity for you and your colleagues to share in this celebration with iwi chairs and council mayors.
- DOC's Director, Partnerships is happy to liaise with your office and the other alliance members to plan this opportunity.

Contact: _____

4 Director-General Engagements

March

5–6 March	SLT Retreat, Pounui, Wairarapa
7–8 March	SSC Leadership team Retreat, Peppers, Martinborough
8 March	Tourism Policy School, Otago University
8 March	Catalyst Trust, Rees Hotel, Queenstown
11 March	DOC Engagement with Air NZ Sustainability Advisory Panel, Auckland
13 March	New Frontiers Conference, Trentham
13 March	DOC/Ngāi Tahu Governance hui, Christchurch
25–29 March	World Protected Areas Leadership Forum, Melbourne

April

1–2 April	Sustainable Trails Conference, Blenheim
3 April	Senior Leaders hui, Wellington
4 April	Government Health and Safety Representative Conference, Wellington
4–5 April	NZ Conservation Authority meeting, Hokitika
11 April	DOC/LINZ Quarterly meeting, Wellington
11 April	Local Government 2019 Gala Dinner, Auckland

12 April	Chief Executives Environment and Economy Forum, Wellington
17 April	Sustainability CE's away day, Pounui, Wairarapa
18 April	Tourism CE's Strategy Day, location TBC
May	
5 May	Public Service Leaders' Summit, TBA
2 May	Catalyst Trust, Queenstown
June	
16 June	TRENZ Conference, Rotorua

5 Addendum

This section includes content that is sensitive or is being considered by the Minister of Conservation or other Ministers. This information is not being released proactively.

Subject headings of content in this section are:

- Update on Citizens Initiated Referendum
- Response to NZSC decision in *Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki*
- Public service surveys



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Week beginning: 11 March 2019

Seen by Hon Eugenie Sage
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Date: ____ / ____ / ____

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Ramp Up Programme

Budget 2018 – \$181.6m recruitment report as of 11 March 2019

- Roles advertised in the last week:
 - Payroll Officer (Wellington)
 - Recruitment Advisor (Roles) – Fixed term (Wellington)
 - Recruitment Advisor (Roles) – Fixed term (Wellington)
 - Senior Recruitment Advisor (Wellington)
 - Senior Recruitment Advisor (Wellington)
 - Portfolio Assurance Advisor (Wellington)
 - Portfolio Assurance Advisor (Christchurch)
- No roles were provisionally appointed in the last week.

Current overall recruitment progress to date against investment areas

Investment Activity	Roles under recruitment to date	Planned 2018/19
Enhancing biodiversity by controlling and eradicating predators (not including roles funded from Contingency for biodiversity initiatives).	18	40.2
Managing the impacts of increasing numbers of visitors to public conservation land	23	22
Enhancing biodiversity protection in the Mackenzie Basin	3	4
Strengthening DOC's organisational capacity and capability (policy, asset management, core organisational capability)	17	17.7
Contingency for biodiversity initiatives (freshwater, marine, terrestrial)	*	21.9
<i>Totals</i>	61	105.7

** As outlined in the Biodiversity Contingency Business Case, approximately 149 roles to lift capabilities and capacities over four years were anticipated to deliver the programme outcomes. This is currently being reviewed where targeted contract resource may provide better outcomes than internal recruitment options.*

Contact:

1.2 RMA advocacy

There are no updates this week.

Contact:

1.3 Kauri dieback

Kauri dieback consultation

- Round three of Biosecurity NZ's consultation on the future protection of kauri closes on 18 March. The final hui discussing the National Pest Management Plan with the public is on 12 March in Auckland.
- Relevant DOC staff have been participating in the hui to help ensure local queries are addressed.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1.4 Myrtle rust

Myrtle rust website

- A new website on myrtle rust is now live, jointly developed by Biosecurity NZ and DOC: <http://myrtlerust.org.nz/>
- An announcement was made last week via a joint media release. Biosecurity NZ are the lead administrators for the website, which serves as a hub for all myrtle rust content and as a helpful guide for communities when looking out for the fungus.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

2 Updates

2.1 More damage to Tai Poutini Westland National Park Fox Glacier access road

- The Fox Glacier Valley access road, which gives vehicle access from State Highway 6 into the valley, carpark and walking track that leads to the glacier viewing point, was damaged in a storm event on 21 February.
- The damage was caused by the rising level of the main river bed, depositing of significant material from adjoining Mills Creek, and the moving of the main river channel and flow.
- The section of road that has been damaged is approximately 300 metres long: approximately half has been completely washed away and a half substantially damaged.
- Air access to the glacier is not affected.
- The deposition of material from Mills Creek, lifting of the main river bed, and pressure on the main channel is ongoing.

Impacts on the area

- The road and walking track are very popular. Approximately 400,000 visitors use the road and track annually to view the glacier.
- Glacier viewing is a key component of the visitor experience to South Westland and overnight stays are a key element of the Fox Glacier township economy.
- Other popular visitor sites in Fox Glacier include Lake Matheson Walk and Gillespies Beach.

Management

- The Fox Glacier Access Road is a DOC road.
- We receive a roading authority subsidy from NZTA for management and maintenance. This subsidy of 51% is higher for approved emergency works.
- The Mills Creek landslide is the largest active landslide in New Zealand at present and is aggravated by heavy rain events. There is no way to prevent the landslide causing damage in the valley.
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- Decisions about the access road are made in consultation with NZTA, alongside roading and geotechnical engineers.
- We will update you when we have decided what to do about the latest damage.

Contact:

2.2 Progress update on direct seeding trials in New Zealand

- In mid-February, DOC's direct seeding project (the Burford seeder) was raised during your discussion regarding the QEII National Trust with Kay Booth, acting Director-General at the time. The following is a brief summary of progress to date.
- In 2017, we commenced a trial to determine the viability of restoration planting in New Zealand using the direct seeding technique. Seeding trials were undertaken in spring 2017, and autumn and spring 2018, on 12 properties and 20 sites across a range of ecosystems in Canterbury, Otago and Southland.
- Direct seeding involves strip spraying to reduce grass competition, with little to no maintenance. In optimum conditions (flat, open terrain) direct seeding can deliver restoration outcomes at 10–15% of the cost of traditional tubestock planting, with a single operator being able to direct seed up to 50 linear kilometres a day.
- The results of the trial so far are:
 - There is germination of manuka, kanuka, pittosporum, broadleaf, hebe, flax, cabbage tree, coprosma, corokia, ozothamnus, olearia and kowhai.
 - Ten sites measured in Spring 2018 revealed the lowest average at 1.66 and the highest average at 7.26 seedlings per metre.
 - Seedlings are persisting despite considerable competition.
- Our next steps are to continue trials/monitoring and further develop partnerships to improve knowledge and delivery of direct seeding. This may include working with the QEII National Trust. We understand the One Billion Trees funding panel considered the QEII National Trust's direct seeding proposal recently and the decision is pending.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.3 Undaria in Breaksea Sound

- In December 2018, during a regular dive survey into Breaksea Sound, *Undaria pinnatifida* (*Undaria*) was discovered growing on the northern wall. This is the first time that *Undaria* has been found in North Breaksea.
- The subsequent survey in January 2019 delimited the area to a stretch of approximately 2km.
- The outbreak is still some way from the open coast – control would be almost impossible if it reached there.
- The current control focus has been aimed at stopping the spread of *Undaria* south into the Acheron passage.
- Environment Southland (lead agency), MPI (planning and intel) and DOC (operations) are now looking at future control options:
 - the feasibility of further control in Breaksea Sound to stop the spread of *Undaria*
 - whether the costs associated with further control would be prohibitive
 - what assistance other stakeholders (universities / Fiordland Marine Guardians / research institutes) will be able to provide
 - what other tools can be developed to aid the programme.
- Dive surveys are continuing while control options are being explored, with the aim to control the spread of *Undaria* still a priority.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.4 River catchments and At-Risk Catchments

- We are continuing to work with MfE on the potential for aligning three catchments as part of our river catchment work under the Biodiversity Contingency funding and MfE's At-Risk Catchment Project (ARC).
- So far, four catchments have the potential to align – the Hotoe in Auckland, the Waitaki in Canterbury, the Pelorus in Marlborough and Te Awa Tupua, the Whanganui catchment.
- We will give you a briefing in the week beginning 11 March that will outline: the process used to select our priority river catchments; which catchments we are proposing to commence work on this financial year; and the potential implications for aligning some of those catchments with the ARC project.
- We are also preparing a joint briefing for you and the Minister for the Environment, Minister Parker. The briefing will recommend that you and Minister Parker meet with officials to explore opportunities and synergies between the programmes and next steps in terms of announcing these work programmes.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Seizure of tabua and coral

- In January, two specimens were seized under the Trade in Endangered Species (TIES) Act: tabua from [REDACTED] and coral from [REDACTED]. Their permits did not comply with the requirements of the TIES Act (one was a copy, not the original and one was expired by three months).
- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have expressed dissatisfaction with this outcome. [REDACTED] has contacted the office of Greg O'Connor, MP. [REDACTED] has emailed the Director-General.
- We are dealing with these issues by responding to Greg O'Connor's office and [REDACTED] email.
- As you are aware, DOC has previously noted these types of issues. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 NZSki Limited – approval of application for chairlift and trails in the Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve (Remarkables mountains)

- An application by NZSki has been approved to establish a replacement passenger lift system and new trails within the Sugar Bowl at the Remarkables ski area, Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve, Queenstown.
- The application was submitted to DOC on 2 August 2018. Prior to receiving the formal application, preliminary verbal discussions between DOC and NZSki indicated the work could be below the threshold for notification, however no official advice was given until a detailed written application was submitted. Once this was received and assessed by DOC, it was apparent notification would be required.
- The decision was made to publicly notify the entire Sugar Bowl application, due to the need for a lease for the top station of the chairlift and the scale and nature of the associated earthworks for trail construction.
- NZSki has criticised DOC publicly about the time it has taken to process the application. Following considerable analysis, a submission and hearing

process, and extensive deliberations, the decision-maker [REDACTED] has approved the application, subject to special conditions. The final trail length and the width of trails in places have been reduced from those originally proposed. We worked through the Sugar Bowl application as quickly as reasonably possible.

- The Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve area holds conservation values that required us to complete a site assessment; for this to happen the snow needed to melt first, so a visit could not be undertaken until early November.
- Conditions include complying with a well-established restoration protocol, and completing reserve-wide ecological and landscape assessments, to aid a better understanding of conservation values in the reserve and the cumulative effect of proposals.
- Managing ecological and landscape impacts was a key consideration during the decision-making process. We consider that the adverse ecological and landscape effects of this proposal, while not able to be fully avoided, can be appropriately mitigated through the specified conditions.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

2.7 OIA on whoo consuming 1080 during the 2016 Battle for our Birds (BfoB) operation in Egmont National Park

- On 25 February, we received an OIA request from [REDACTED] via the online service fyi.org. We will give you a noting memo once our response is complete.
- The information sought includes correspondence relating to native whoo ducks consuming cereal bait containing 1080 during the 2016 BfoB/ZIP operation in Egmont National Park.
- During the operation, whoo were found to have been ingesting cereal bait containing 1080. This was confirmed by lab tests, where three faecal samples tested positive for the presence of 1080.
- Following this finding, a panel of experts from DOC, ZIP and the Whoo Recovery Group assessed the risk to whoo to inform our future actions.
- There were no known whoo mortalities during the 2016 BfoB operation. Data collected from the subsequent breeding seasons showed record numbers of ducklings fledging.
- The next aerial 1080 application within Egmont National Park is scheduled to commence in April.
- Due to the 2016 findings, whoo will be fitted with transmitters throughout the 2019 operation so that they can be monitored to gain more knowledge about the potential risk to them.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.8 Oparara Arches PGF Project

- \$5.7m of Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) funding was announced on 28 November to improve visitor facilities and environmental protection at Oparara Arches in Karamea. Oparara Valley Trust and Tourism West Coast developed the project, and DOC was approved to deliver the project.
- The Trust wrote to Mark Patterson MP on 5 March, raising concerns about delays and their involvement in the project.
- The current delays to the project are due to external factors:

- the quality of the information received from the PGF submission has generated additional work for DOC that needs to be completed before proceeding with project initiation
- an existing agreement between MBIE and NZTA in relation to PGF funding for roading projects created constraints on project delivery that needed to be negotiated between NZTA and DOC.
- Before detailed planning, then construction, can commence, we need to undertake comprehensive cultural and ecological impact assessments to ensure any work done provides positive outcomes. The current work in this area completed by the Trust is limited in scope and does not provide the level of confidence expected of DOC in these key areas.
- We are employing a Trust representative to the project team in mid-late March, to provide direct continuity and close connection with the Trust in delivery of this project.
- Your office may be approached for information to respond to the issues raised by the Trust in the correspondence to Mark Patterson. We can provide further details as needed.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.9 Toyota Kiwi Guardians: October – December 2018 outcomes

- In November 2015, DOC and Toyota New Zealand entered into partnership with the purpose of increasing children's connection with nature. The Toyota Kiwi Guardians (TKG) programme was launched in 2016, and to date has helped connect around 35,000 children with nature.
- A TKG dashboard is developed each quarter, providing results on programme uptake, development, media reach, events and social media engagement. Some highlights of this quarter include:
 - 5,031 total medals were claimed in Q4, an increase of 49% from the Oct-Dec 2017 period. At 31 December 2018, 35,005 medals had been claimed since TKG's launch in March 2016.
 - A new Action medal, *Toa Kaipūtaiao – Citizen Scientist* was launched in collaboration with the University of Otago Marine Metre Squared (Mm²) project. TKG now has 110 Adventure medals and 12 Action medals available.
 - A Toyota Kiwi Guardians Family Fun Day was held at Ambury Regional Park (Auckland) on 14 October.
- We have provided a copy of the full Q4 TKG dashboard to your office.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.10 [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- Auckland based Partnerships Ranger [REDACTED] is seconded to CEU as Communications Advisor – Asian Sector.
- DOC has renewed its relationship with the Chinese Conservation Education Trust. The Trust's purpose is to 'foster a love and understanding of New Zealand's special places, plants and animals'.
- We use the full range of channels to communicate with various audiences including Skykiwi.com, New Zealand's biggest Chinese media outlet which

covers 90 percent of residential Chinese, and WeChat, a Chinese government approved social media platform.

- We also provide media stories to Chinese language media, including NZ Herald Chinese edition and World TV. This week World TV will be filming a story on Predator Free 2050. interviewing programme manager Brent Beaven.
- Recent communications targeting the Chinese community in Auckland included stories on how to practise Buddhist live animal release while respecting the environment and marine compliance in the Hauraki Gulf.



Contact: 



2.11 Upcoming publications

Two of DOC's Biodiversity staff are authors of a recently published article that considers the tools under development to achieve PF2050.

Conserving New Zealand's native fauna: a review of tools being developed for the Predator Free 2050 programme

Journal of Ornithology. *Elaine C. Murphy*, James C. Russell, *Keith G. Broome*, Grant J. Ryan, John E. Dowding. 2018.

- This paper reviews some of the many techniques being discussed or developed to achieve Predator Free 2050, including research on new toxins, novel baits, toxin – delivery devices, lures and repellents.
- Eradications may be achieved in stages and barriers will be needed to protect cleared areas. Regulatory hurdles will need to be overcome, and community consultation and support will be required throughout the programme.

- The use of some new technologies may be contentious, and not every new idea will necessarily be adopted. Technical, social and organisational challenges exist, and national and international collaboration will be required for PF 2050 to succeed.

Contact:

3 Events, Announcements and Media Opportunities

None this week.

4 Director-General Engagements

March

11 March	DOC Engagement with Air NZ Sustainability Advisory Panel, Auckland
12 March	New Frontiers Conference, Trentham
13 March	DOC/Ngāi Tahu Governance hui, Christchurch
13 March	NZ Forest Owners Association, The Boatshed, Wellington
25–29 March	World Protected Areas Leadership Forum, Melbourne

April

1–2 April	Sustainable Trails Conference, Blenheim
03/04/19	Senior Leaders hui, Wellington
04/04/19	Government Health and Safety Representative Conference, TSB Arena, Wellington
4–5 April	NZ Conservation Authority meeting, Hokitika
11 April	DOC/LINZ quarterly meeting, Wellington
11 April	Local Government 2019 Gala Dinner, The Pullman, Auckland
12 April	Chief Executives Environment and Economy Forum, Wellington
17 April	Sustainability CE's Strategy, Wellington
18 April	Tourism CE's Strategy Day, TBC

May

1 May	Public Service Leaders' Summit, TBC
2 May	Catalyst Trust, Queenstown

June

16 June	TRENZ Conference, Rotorua
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5 Addendum

This section includes content that is sensitive or is being considered by the Minister of Conservation or other Ministers. This information is not being released proactively.

Subject headings of content in this section are:

- Marine mammal viewing permits
- Update on Citizens Initiated Referendum – Legally privileged

Proactively released



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

In-Confidence

Department of Conservation Status Report

Week beginning: 18 March 2019

Seen by Hon Eugenie Sage
Minister of Conservation

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Kauri Dieback update

Waipoua Forest

- We are continuing to work with Te Roroa and Biosecurity NZ on options for the ongoing joint management of the Waipoua Forest. Joint management activities will support the wider Kauri Dieback Programme, and include the ongoing monitoring of the extent of Kauri Dieback in the forest, with the potential use of remote sensing.

National Pest Management Plan (NPMP) / Management Agency

- Public consultation on the NPMP and proposed management agency is nearing its completion. The last public hui was held on 12 March, in Auckland.
- We will continue to work with Biosecurity NZ to identify work required to effectively set up the future management agency, and to implement the plan once it is approved.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1.2 Myrtle rust update

- None this week.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1.3 RMA Advocacy update

DOC is considering the following RMA decisions:

Declarations

None this week.

Submissions

- We have submitted in opposition to an application for a marine permit to establish three shellfish farms in Big Glory Bay on Stewart Island. We opposed the application in part as we considered that the assessment of environmental effects was inadequate to determine if effects would be appropriately managed.

Appeals

None this week.

Designations

None this week.

Water Conservation Orders

None this week.

Other

NZTA Manawatu Gorge Bypass Project – Te Ahu a Turanga

- In December 2018, we submitted in opposition to the Notice of Requirement for Designation (NoR) for the NZTA Manawatu Gorge Bypass. The road alignment will impact on significant ecological areas, including rare and threatened habitats in the Manawatu Region. The approach of the NZTA, to seek the NoR separate to resource consents, is problematic as we do not have the required level of information to identify adverse effects and ensure those effects are adequately avoided, remedied, mitigated or offset.
- We are due to lodge evidence with the hearing panel on 15 March, with the hearing to commence 25 March. We have contacted the NZTA in advance of lodging evidence and legal submissions, asking it to consider adjournment to allow the NoR and resource consents to be heard concurrently. We believe this will provide time for the NZTA to assemble information to reasonably demonstrate that it can achieve the required net ecological gain.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2 Updates

2.1 Detection of granulate ambrosia beetle (*Xylosandrus crassiusculus*)

- Biosecurity New Zealand has provided your office with information on the granulate ambrosia beetle incursion, first detected in Blockhouse Bay in Auckland on 20 February 2019.
- The ambrosia beetle is native to East Asia and has been recorded on a wide range of broadleaf species in over 50 families of plants overseas.
- Biosecurity New Zealand is leading investigative and response actions, while DOC is maintaining a watching brief.
- The beetle is a known high-risk economic pest, and although its impacts on our native vegetation are uncertain, we are concerned because we have over 600 broadleaf (non-coniferous) trees and shrubs in NZ that the beetle may potentially adversely impact on.
- Biosecurity New Zealand is keeping us informed of decisions and progress.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.2 Ramp Up Programme update

Budget 2018 – \$181.6m recruitment report as of 18 March 2019

- Roles advertised this week:
 - Science Advisor, Marine (perm) – Wellington
 - Science Advisor, Marine (perm) – Nelson
 - Science Advisor, Marine (perm) – Auckland
 - Science Advisor, Marine (perm) – Auckland
 - RMA Planner (perm) – Christchurch
 - RMA Planner (perm) – Christchurch
 - Freshwater Manager (fixed term*) – Wellington

- Roles provisionally appointed since last report:
 - Senior Advisor, Human Resources (fixed term*) – Auckland
 - Digital Content Advisor (perm) – Wellington
 - Senior Advisor, Human Resources (fixed term*) – Wellington

* These roles are established as permanent but are to be temporarily filled with fixed term candidates

Current overall recruitment progress to date against investment areas

Investment Activity	Roles for Recruitment to Date	Planned 2018/19
Enhancing biodiversity by controlling and eradicating predators (not including roles funded from Contingency for biodiversity initiatives).	19	40.2
Managing the impacts of increasing numbers of visitors to public conservation land	23	22
Enhancing biodiversity protection in the Mackenzie Basin	3	4
Strengthening DOC's organisational capacity and capability (policy, asset management, core organisational capability)	19	17.7
Contingency for biodiversity initiatives (freshwater, marine, terrestrial)	26	21.9
<i>Totals</i>	90	105.8

Contact:

2.3 New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy (NZBS) update

- Early engagement is continuing on the NZBS. Events held over the past month include a stakeholder workshop in Hamilton; hui in Taupo, Rotorua, Whakatane, Auckland, Napier, Whanganui, Lyttleton, Dunedin, and Invercargill; a meeting of the cross-agency working group; sessions with DOC staff in regional centres and a youth workshop in Wellington. We have also met with regional councils via a number of forums.
- The three reference groups met on 27 and 28 February, where they focused on both the NZBS and the National Policy Statement - Indigenous Biodiversity. Key themes coming from the reference groups meeting include:
 - The Te Ao Māori Group has begun developing a framework for the strategy, based on a tukutuku panel. There was strong support of the concept from the other two reference groups. The model itself is a work in progress, and the Te Ao Māori reference group will be holding an additional workshop on 22 March to develop the draft model further.
 - The importance of integrating nature and society was reiterated by all three reference groups, including the need to highlight the intrinsic value of biodiversity and the importance of the strategy having both ecological and social outcomes and measures.
 - There was consensus across the reference groups that system issues are a key driver of biodiversity loss and should be a priority for action.

This included discussion about the need for reforms to the governance system, including clearer leadership, stronger accountabilities, more formal audit and review arrangements and improved reporting systems. Ensuring biodiversity legislation is fit for purpose was also seen as a key part of system improvements.

- Funding and resourcing were considered a priority for achieving the outcomes of the NZBS.
 - Discussion on implementation focused on the need for collaborative and iterative planning, and the bringing together many participants in the system to develop plans for the short term that can be iterated over time. It was considered that the implementation plan should be a separate document, with regular scheduled progress reporting and review.
- Over the coming weeks, we will be holding the remainder of the early engagement hui, and analysing what we have heard to develop a draft discussion document. The reference groups will be meeting in early April to provide feedback on an early draft of the discussion document.
 - We will be meeting with you on 3 April to discuss the draft discussion document structure and components, including testing ideas for a vision, principles, outcomes and goals. We will provide you with a memo ahead of this meeting.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.4 Ruapehu-Tongariro Tourism Development Programme

- We will be providing you and the Minister of Tourism with a briefing on 22 March, on a collaborative planning approach that is being initiated in the Ruapehu region.
- The approach is called the Ruapehu-Tongariro Tourism Development Programme. It will have leadership from DOC and our Treaty Partner.
- The Development Programme will address the increasing pressure from high visitor numbers that are putting a strain on conservation, cultural, social and community values, infrastructure, and the visitor experience at Tongariro National Park.
- The programme has two components:
 - to develop a long-term visitor management plan led by DOC and our Treaty Partner, and
 - to support the implementation of Ruapehu District Council's Regional Visitor Development Plan where appropriate.
- The Minister of Tourism is set to visit Whakapapa on 17 May and will be further updated at this time on the Development Programme. You may wish to join this visit.
- Officials are available to meet with you should you require further details on this matter.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Taranaki Crossing feasibility study update

- In October 2018, the Steering Group, comprising representatives from iwi, MBIE and DOC, awarded a contract to Hutchings and Bamford to undertake a feasibility study.
- The feasibility study took into consideration your requirements, as requested when the provincial growth funding was announced, including:
 - Iwi considerations
 - Legislative and policy context
 - Visitor sector dynamics
 - Ecological impact
 - Economic impact
 - Infrastructure requirements
- On 12 February, the Steering Group met to discuss the final draft report and give feedback to the consultants, who submitted the final report on 13 March.
- DOC and MBIE will provide a joint briefing to Ministers on the outcome of the feasibility study.
- We will also provide you with a memo and a copy of the full report by 12 April. The memo will include DOC's views of the recommendations, for your consideration.
- Treaty negotiations are currently being undertaken over Taranaki Maunga. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- Officials are available to meet with you, should you require further details on this matter.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust brokered support

- A key objective of DOC's Business Partnership Strategy is to enable businesses of every size to undertake conservation activity.
- In October 2018, cruise company, Noble Caledonia, contacted DOC to indicate an interest in gathering passenger donations for a conservation project. The company was looking for an opportunity that could be implemented over the 2018/19 cruise season for its New Zealand voyages.
- Noble Caledonia's New Zealand cruises visit locations along the Southern Coast and Rakiura. This provides a good opportunity for the company to connect with the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust (YEPT).
- Opportunities to donate to the YEPT were promoted to passengers aboard the company's New Zealand cruises for the 2018/19 season.
- Noble Caledonia hopes to continue this relationship in the coming cruise seasons. YEPT is very happy with this outcome.
- In order to develop this relationship for YEPT, further discussions are under way that should see Noble Caledonia provide conservation information to its passengers visiting the Southern Coast, including educational material about minimising human impact on penguins and sealions, and the challenges faced by these species.

- To amplify the reach of this work, discussions are also under way with the New Zealand Cruise Association, which is interested in supporting and promoting such initiatives to its members.
- This builds on existing work we are doing with the NZ Cruise Association.

Contact:

2.7 Motutapu moth plant

- You have asked for an update on moth plant control on Motutapu Island.
- Following discussions with Ngai Tai ki Tamaki over the past two weeks, herbicide is again available for use on Motutapu Island – with the exception of spraying out for planting site preparation.
- Moth plant is present on Motutapu Island at low levels in pasture and restoration plantings, and at medium levels on coastal cliffs. It has potential to become more widespread.
- DOC has previously carried out low levels of moth plant control on the areas closest to Rangitoto Island. This programme has been inactive in the last two years due to other priorities. The Motutapu Restoration Trust carries out the majority of moth plant control on the island, mainly associated with their plantings and tracks.
- The original position of Ngai Tai ki Tamaki was “no use of herbicides” on Motutapu Island. This has been revisited in recent discussions, however, and the iwi’s position has changed to restrict use of herbicides on archaeological sites only, or as a precursor to restoration planting.
- Cut-and-paste methods for moth plant and herbicide use for general weed control can now continue - this includes DOC’s veldt grass programme.
- The new restrictions will allow the Motutapu Restoration Trust to continue with moth plant control, but DOC’s moth plant control programme remains inactive.

Contact:

2.8 Hunter access to southern Pureora Forest Park

- The New Zealand Deerstalkers Association (NZDA) has raised with us its concerns about the loss of public access at five southern Pureora Forest Park locations, in the Northern King Country.
- Local hunters have historically enjoyed access to these locations for recreation and livelihood purposes, but this is now restricted.
- We have met with representatives to understand the full context of the NZDA’s concerns, and have been investigating the reasons for public access to southern Pureora Forest Park being restricted. Our investigation indicates that in most cases public access has been lost or restricted due to health and safety concerns of adjacent private landowners and/or forestry managers.
- DOC and NZDA representatives have agreed a course of action to clarify and restore access to the area. This will involve joint discussions with private landowners, the Ruapehu District Council, and forestry managers over the next four to six weeks.

Contact:

3 Events, Announcements and Media Opportunities

3.1 Invitation for Minister to give keynote speech at Pūkaha Fundraising Dinner – 3 May, 6pm

- Pūkaha Mount Bruce Board is a community-led conservation partnership that runs the restoration project in the 943h Pūkaha Forest and the captive breeding programme at the site. It also manages the visitor centre, located on State Highway Two, 30 minutes north of Masterton.
- Each year the board hosts a fund-raising dinner which includes a key note address. This is a core fund-raising activity for the board and it traditionally attracts a sell-out crowd from across Wairarapa, Tararua, and Wellington.
- The board would like to invite you to give the key note address at this year's event, to be held at the visitor centre.
- The event will begin with a cocktail hour at 6.00 pm. Guests will be seated for dinner at 7.00 pm and the keynote address is timed for 8.30 pm, to be followed by desert and an auction of donated goods at 9.00 pm.

Contact: _____

4 Director-General Engagements

March

25–29 March World Protected Areas Leadership Forum, Melbourne

April

1–2 April Sustainable Trails Conference, Blenheim

3 April Senior Leaders hui, Wellington

4 April Government Health and Safety Representative Conference, Wellington

4–5 April NZ Conservation Authority meeting, Hokitika

11 April DOC/LINZ quarterly meeting, Wellington

11 April Local Government 2019 Gala Dinner, Auckland

12 April Chief Executives Environment and Economy Forum, Wellington

17 April Sustainability CE's Strategy, Wellington

18 April Tourism CE's Strategy Day, TBC

May

1 May Public Service Leaders' Summit, Wellington

2 May Catalyst Trust, Queenstown

10 May PF2050 Ltd Board meeting, Auckland

16 May TRENZ Conference, Rotorua

June

13 June State Services Leadership Team Retreat, Ohariu Farm

5 Addendum

This section includes content that is sensitive or is being considered by the Minister of Conservation or other Ministers. This information is not being released proactively.

Subject headings of content in this section are:

- Ungulate monitoring results and next steps
- Attorney General v the Trustees of the Motiti Rohe Moana Trust - Court of Appeal update
- Milford Opportunities Project update
- Provincial Growth Fund application

Proactively released



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

In-Confidence

Department of Conservation Status Report

Week beginning: 25 March 2019

Seen by Hon Eugenie Sage
Minister of Conservation

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Responding to the increased National Security Threat Level

- In response to the unfolding tragic events on the afternoon of 15 March, we locked down our Christchurch sites. The lockdown was managed under a CIMS structure and we have now undertaken a debrief, with some learnings to be implemented.
- We have provided wellbeing information and Ministry of Health guidelines on 'managing after a crisis' information to all staff, and extra support is being offered at place.
- A High Alert review has been undertaken of our security environment against the increased national threat level and managers and site leads have been issued with a number of tasks in relation to this.
- These actions range from all teams taking the time to review their safety and emergency management procedures to locking down yards and other facilities, and not hosting non-essential visitors or contractors at this time.
- We have empowered managers and site leads (who ensure one point of coordination at multi-agency or multi-unit sites) to do their own assessment of their site risks and to communicate their plans.
- We are working within the all-of-government protective security assessment framework and the useful guidance distributed by the security agencies.
- The need for these extra security procedures will be reviewed every two weeks, or if there is another significant change to the National Security Threat assessment.

Contact: Karen Jones, Deputy Director-General, People and Engagement:
[REDACTED]

1.2 1080 Leadership

- We are focussed on ensuring the continued use of 1080, a key tool for landscape scale predator control.
- There are three areas of focus for DOC - safety and wellbeing, coordination, and the ability to deliver critical conservation work. There are workstreams under way relating to each of these areas, including communications and community engagement, cross agency coordination (in particular, with NZ Police, MPI and EPA), staff and contractor safety and security, and legal advice.
- An internal Leadership Group has been established to achieve the following outcomes: that DOC is speaking effectively with NZ and that our conversations are outcome focussed; we are trusted by our Treaty partner and by the general public; DOC staff feel supported in their work with 1080 and are confident to talk about it and why it is used; stakeholders have confidence in us, and are clear on DOC 1080 contacts; and we continue to be evidence based and scientifically credible. This work is particularly important as we face a mast year.
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] A separate briefing paper has been provided to you on this work, as requested [19-B-0196 refers].

Contact: [REDACTED]

1.3 Kauri Dieback

National Pest Management Plan / Management Agency

- Public consultation on the proposed NPMP and Management Agency approach is now complete.
- Biosecurity NZ is preparing a briefing paper on the outcome of the consultation and recommended changes.
- The paper will look to identify a lead management agency from a range of possible options, including DOC. We will update you on the paper's recommendations, and have asked that the briefing be provided to you in full, as soon as possible. We are yet to be consulted on the paper, which is due to the Minister for Biosecurity on 29 March.
- DOC is continuing to contribute to the development of standards and guidelines that will be used by the new agency to support its decision making.

Behaviour change research

- We have been trialling a number of behaviour change methods at hygiene stations, with the aim of achieving full compliance.
- We are now in the process of analysing the data collected during the trials and will use this to inform future improvements to our messaging and hygiene practices.

Track upgrades

- Track upgrade work is under way for three DOC tracks on the Auckland mainland. We expect the work to be finished by summer 2020.
- Last week we released a media statement to advise the public of the upgrade work on these three tracks.
- DOC is in the process of assessing tracks on Aotea/Great Barrier Island to confirm the mitigation work required.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1.4 Myrtle rust update

- Our myrtle rust response team now has its full complement of staff and we are on track with all the actions needed to manage our response to the outbreak.
- Myrtle rust reports on PCL land continue to increase slowly. Wetter weather conditions over the next two-to-three months will be favourable for further myrtle rust growth.
- We are observing that sites that recorded only a few individual infected plants in previous years are starting to show heavier signs of infection. Based on advice received from our Australian counterparts, we expected this to occur.
- Passive surveillance is continuing through national biodiversity and seed collection networks.
- Our seed collection programme for storage of native myrtles is ongoing. To date, 61% of the proposed species for collection has been completed.
- We continue to monitor the impact of myrtle rust at two significant sites for pōhutukawa, namely: Raoul Island (where the first observation of myrtle rust was observed in NZ) and Rangitoto Island (a significant site where myrtle rust is not currently present).
- We are also continuing to contribute to the development of the draft Long-Term Management Plan. The draft plan will be reviewed by the Governance Group shortly.

- We note that myrtle rust has been observed within the fruits of hybrid ramarama in an urban environment. Scientists are now checking wild populations of ramarama and rohutu. This finding may have significant long-term implications for ramarama, particularly if it results in reduced seed production and viability for these species. We will keep you updated as we become more fully informed.

Contact: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1.5 RMA advocacy update

There are no RMA advocacy activity updates to report this week.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2 Updates

2.1 Fatality on Mangapurua Track, 17 March

- On 17 March, a woman was killed when she fell off a bluff whilst cycling the Mangapurua track in Whanganui National Park.
- The Mangapurua track is a section of the Mountains to the Sea trail, one of the national cycleways.
- The Police are currently investigating the incident. We are also carrying out our own investigation into the incident.
- We have met with family and friends of the woman and are providing ongoing support.
- Local tangata whenua have put a rahui in place at the site. This has been communicated to stakeholders, the media and concessionaires.
- Family and friends of the deceased joined local iwi for a tapu lifting ceremony on 21 March.

Contact: [REDACTED]





2.3 New Zoo Lizard Import Health Standard

- Import Health Standards (IHSs) are required for all imported goods (including animals) to manage biosecurity risks.
- MPI has produced an IHS for zoo lizards and their eggs. This means importation of lizards and their eggs from zoos in the EU (which hosts major trade volumes of live reptiles) will be permitted for the first time, into New Zealand for zoo containment only.
- DOC has submitted in opposition to the introduction of this standard, as we are concerned that unidentified risks (latent and emerging diseases) are likely to be very significant.
- MPI's rules (driven by international trade agreements) require direct proof that a specific risk exists and do not consider the increasing incidence of new emerging diseases to be admissible evidence. All currently known and identified risks are planned to be mitigated under the draft IHS by testing, quarantine and the permanent containment of the animals within zoos.
- We consider that importation of lizards from the EU potentially increases disease risks to native lizards held in New Zealand zoos for conservation breeding, or following emergency salvage. If such lizards are subsequently released to the wild, this could open a pathway for the introduction of exotic diseases.
- We will be initiating an independent risk assessment and visiting Auckland and Wellington zoos to discuss their plans and how they intend to manage the risks to native species they hold. We are looking into potential alternative institutions for the holding of native lizards for conservation.

Contact: 

2.4 Invasive ants in the Pacific

- As part of DOC's Pacific Strategy, we have been collaborating with MPI to secure MFAT's approval to fund a \$170,000 project on "Invasive ants in the Pacific". This project will:
 - provide training for Pacific Island country representatives on the early detection and emergency response to invasive ant incursions
 - enhance knowledge and skills
 - enable participants to develop emergency response plans for invasive ants.
- The new funds will go to MPI, which will incur the project costs.

- DOC drafted the original proposal and has been influential in securing MFAT funding. MFAT is funding the project through its Pacific Security Fund. We have been actively encouraging MFAT to include invasive species in its wider Pacific security approach. This is in keeping with the expanded definition of “security” to include environmental security, as agreed by Pacific Islands Forum members, and as part of the “Boe Declaration on Regional Security”.
- We will ensure the environmental impacts of invasive ants are addressed in the project’s regional training workshops (and that any costs to DOC will be met by funding set aside for this project)

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Mt Messenger bypass – Biodiversity offset and environmental compensation measures

- You have asked for an update on the Biodiversity Offset and Environmental Compensation agreement for the Mt Messenger bypass.
- As you are aware, the proposed Mt Messenger bypass will have significant adverse effects on biodiversity and ecological values at the site. These adverse effects cannot be sufficiently avoided, remedied or mitigated, making it necessary for a combination of biodiversity offset and environmental compensation measures. The biodiversity offset approach aims to achieve a *no net loss* in line with the Government’s Guidance on Good Practice Offsetting. Where this cannot be achieved, we have negotiated additional environmental compensation leading to a positive effect, rather than a no net loss.
- The biodiversity offset and environmental compensation measures being proposed include:

Biodiversity Offset

- The planting of 6ha of kahikatea swamp forest aimed at achieving no net loss of kahikatea canopy cover.

Environmental Compensation

- Undertaking intensive pest and predator control on 3650 ha of land where long-tailed bats exist. This will protect the long-tailed bat’s maternity roosts, and have wider benefits for other species inhabiting the area (kiwi, forest health etc)
- Restoration planting a further 9 ha at the impact site
- Fencing and planting of the riparian margin of approximately 11km of stream
- Planting of 3400 seedlings of significant (mature emergent podocarps) trees lost to the road corridor
- Fencing off road corridors in locations where kiwi are at high risk of vehicle strike
- The provision of \$200,000 towards lizard research in North Taranaki District
- The establishment of an ecological review panel to provide advisory oversight of the pest and predator control programme.
- Our intention is for the animal pest control identified above to occur in perpetuity, or at least until the pest species in question are no longer an issue for indigenous biodiversity. Other measures, such as plantings, will be managed until they are self-sustainable and, where these are on private land, protected via long-term covenants.

Contact: [REDACTED]

3 Events, Announcements and Media Opportunities

3.1 DOC/Nelmac/Kea Conservation Trust Partnership Announcement

- In the Status Report for the week beginning 18 February, we updated you on the development of a small partnership between DOC/Nelmac (Kumanu) and the Kea Conservation Trust.
- The partnership is focused on kea recovery in the Nelson/Tasman region, and will have a three-year term.
- Nelmac (Kumanu) has agreed to donate \$10,000 per annum, for three years to the Kea Conservation Trust, to be used as the trust sees fit (including for overheads and administration costs) to support kea recovery.
- Nelmac (Kumanu) has also agreed to contribute \$10,000 per annum of in-kind support to DOC, to support our lead-removal programme from buildings and structures to lessen the risk of lead exposure to kea. This support could be in the form of labour, equipment, materials and/or supplies.
- The partnership will be announced via a joint Nelmac/Kea Conservation Trust media release (including a quote from DOC) to be issued on 4 April.
- A small, informal afternoon tea to celebrate the signing of the agreement will be held in Nelson on 4 April.
- We can liaise with your office, should you wish to be involved in this announcement.

Contact:

3.2 Dulux NZ Staff Painting Event – 4 April

- A key objective of the Dulux/DOC partnership is to focus on the protection, and restoration of recreation and historic assets for future generations.
- In 2018, DOC's Commercial Partnerships Team and Dulux representatives made a site visit to Baring Head, hosted by Friends of Baring Head (FOB) and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). The purpose of the visit was to scope the potential for the Dulux/DOC partnership to assist with the restoration of two cottages and a former generator building at the site.
- DOC contributed to the purchase of Baring Head through the Nature Heritage Fund. The site was purchased to be added to the East Harbour Regional Park, and is a scenic reserve vested in, and managed by GWRC
- Dulux NZ staff are planning a painting event to take place at Baring Head on 4 April, to paint the cottages and the generator building on the site. Up to 50 Dulux staff, as well as staff from DOC's Commercial Partnerships team will participate in the event, which will be facilitated by GWRC and FOB.
- Baring Head is part of the Rimutaka Cycle Trail, and the aim is to have the cottages operating as bookable accommodation, which will provide a source of revenue for wider restoration efforts, and support local economic development.
- The restoration will also enable more New Zealanders to connect with nature and to experience the area around Baring Head. This contributes to the DOC Stretch Goal for 90% of New Zealanders' lives to be enriched through connection to our nature and heritage.
- There is an opportunity for you or your staff to attend the event, to witness the transformation of the buildings and hear of the wider plans for the site from Friends of Baring Head and Greater Wellington Regional Council. We will liaise with your office, should you or your staff wish to take up this opportunity.

Contact: _____

4 Director-General Engagements

March

25–29 March World Protected Areas Leadership Forum, Melbourne

April

1–2 April Sustainable Trails Conference, Blenheim

3 April Senior Leaders hui, Wellington

4 April Government Health and Safety Representative Conference, Wellington

4–5 April NZ Conservation Authority meeting, Hokitika

10 April Collaboration Commitment to PF2050, Wellington

10 April The Trustees of the NZ National Parks and Conservation Foundation, Conservation House, Wellington

11 April DOC/LINZ quarterly meeting, Wellington

11 April Local Government 2019 Gala Dinner, Auckland

12 April Chief Executives Environment and Economy Forum, Wellington

17 April Sustainability CE's Strategy, Wellington

18 April Tourism CE's Strategy Day, TBC

May

1 May Public Service Leaders' Summit, Wellington

2 May Catalyst Trust, Queenstown

10 May PF2050 Ltd Board meeting, Auckland

16 May TRENZ Conference, Rotorua

June

13 June

State Services Leadership Team Retreat, Ohariu Farm

5 Addendum

This section includes content that is sensitive or is being considered by the Minister of Conservation or other Ministers. This information is not being released proactively.

Subject headings of content in this section are:

- Information Sharing Agreement under development
- Pacific Reset

Proactively released

Proactively released