



Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

Annual Report 2015 - 2016

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Pursuant to Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987
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Table of Contents

1.0 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

2.0 MEMBERSHIP ON THE BOARD

3.0 THE BOARDS AREA

4.0 BOARDS FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

4.1 BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

4.2 FIELD TRIPS

4.3 SPECIAL EVENTS

5.0 ADVOCACY AND STATUTORY WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THE BOARD

5.1 STATUTORY PROCESSES

5.2 STRATEGIC PLANNING

5.3 POLICY

6.0 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY THE BOARD

7.0 SPECIFIC LIAISON ROLES

Acknowledgements

Cover Photo: Ruawahia 2B Trustee - Tipene Marr, Associate Minister Conservation – Hon Nicky Wagner, Bay of Plenty
Conservation Board member – Dr Julian Lee

Photographer – Anne Mackersey 11 March 2016

1.0 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ki te Minita o Te Papa Atawhai.

Tena ra koe i runga i nga tini ahuatanga o te wa. Ahakoa nga ngaru nunui i papaki mai nei, kei te kaha pupuri ki te ohaki a o tatou tupuna “kia kaha, kia toa, kia manawanui”.

No reira, tangihia ratou ma kua haere ki tua o te arai.

Kua waihongia mai e ratou he tohu hei arahi mai.

Kia tika te hoe a to tatou waka ki te pae tawhiti ki te tonuitanga.

Tihehi mauri ora.

On behalf of the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board, it is a pleasure to present the following report on the performance of the Board.

We have been fortunate to having gone from a completely new Board two years ago, to building a continuity of members complemented with a solid foundation of knowledge, experience and governance navigation. With that experience, and comfort within our own skin, we were better equipped to deal with some key challenges, both for the Board and the Department.

Forging positive relationships with Iwi, driven to some extent on the one hand by various Treaty Settlements, has required a different way of thinking about managing our Public Conservation Land (PCL), but on the other hand, it has seemed almost incomprehensible that our Parks, Reserves and PCL have not previously benefited from the added knowledge, matauranga, manaaki and kaitiakitanga of the Department's Treaty Partners. An example of such a relationship is that which the Board has fostered with Ngati Whare throughout the drafting of the Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park Management Plan (CMP) - a positive relationship of mutual confidence and respect.

An increasing pressure point within our rohe, and not too dissimilar to other PCLs is the cumulative demands of a population, increasing tourism numbers, and more and bigger events that are being placed upon our car-parks, trails, toilet/waste management facilities, huts, waterways, mountains and forests. Sustainable environmental foot printing, has provided opportunity and managed growth in some areas, while in others it has outstripped infrastructure capacity. We are at a critical strategic cusp of Healthy Nature, Healthy People values framework, where some cultural differences of Healthy Nature Healthy People may not always align with our environmental kaitiakitanga. Clearly we have some tensions that need to be balanced within our Conservation Management Strategy (CMS).

Concession triggers, concession monitoring and the risks or opportunities cascading within this area has provided some challenging considerations. For example, the alignment or otherwise with Iwi aspirations and Treaty Settlements, or grazing, educational, or other concessions on Stewardship Lands. Concessions, concessionaires, and concession monitoring has required a review lens-over, with the long-term future strategic positioning very much in mind.

The board have undertaken three field trips this year and these have proven to be very important in establishing a connection to the range of places that make up the Board rohe, and connectivity with the staff working within our takiwa. With such a large and diverse region, and with members drawn from the full spread of the area, we consider it important that we continue to visit places

within the region that are relevant to the issues we have oversight of and to this end we plan to undertake a similar number of field visits over the coming year.

Our Board continues to work in a positive constructive manner with our Department District Offices and staff, with a developing relationship of mutual confidence and trust. From an operational, troops on the ground perspective, the Board has noted the impact of recent current restructuring on the Department's staff and resources. It is apparent that some areas are under some capacity pressure, as the Department continues to carry and fill vacancies. This has, to some extent, impacted on the Board's ability, strategically, to achieve all that it would like. We urge the Department to actively recruit, build and fill its vacancies to complete the Department's organisational capacity.

Notwithstanding the capacity issues, I would like to convey my thanks to the staff of the Department. They made themselves available, engaged with the board in a positive and constructive manner, and continued to provide the board with knowledgeable support.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank my fellow Board members for their contributions over the period. They deserve significant recognition for their commitment to their roles and for the work they do. All members have other vocations and calls on their time, and their commitment to the Board and to the conservation outcomes we collectively seek to achieve is a credit to them all.

Naku noa na



Ken Raureti
Chairperson
BOP Conservation Board



Photo: Te Puia, Rotorua – Board members Maori Culture Emersion

Photographer, Alexandra Walters, 10 March 2016

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2.0 MEMBERSHIP ON THE BOARD

Board Members	Home Location	-Meeting Attendance				
		Board	Field Trips	Sub-committees	Workshop	Liaison
Ken Raureti (Chairman)	Rotorua	4	3	3	1	2
Anne Mackersey (Deputy Chair)	Tauranga	3	2	2	1	1
Dr Julian Lee	Opotiki	3	2	3	1	0
Heidi Lichtwark	Maketu	3	1	1	1	0
Jim Doherty	Kaingaroa	4	2	0	1	0
Phil Simpson QSM	Tauranga	3	2	0	0	0
Rob Franklin	Whakatane	3	3	0	0	2
Steve Morris	Papamoa	3	3	0	1	0
William (Bill) Clark	Whakatane	4	3	3	0	1



Photo: Kaituna River at estuary and Cut.

Picture from left to right – Julian Fitter (Maketu Ongatoro Wetland Society), Anne Mackersey, Ken Raureti, Jim Doherty, Bill Clark, Phillip Simpson (Board members), Helen Neale (CNI Statutory Manager) Courtney Bell (BOPRC), Gavin Smith (Tauranga Iwi Engagement ranger), Rob Franklin (Board member).

Photographer Alexandra Walters, 10 May 2016

3.0 THE BOARDS AREA

The Bay of Plenty Conservation Board area is complex, diverse, extensive and rich in history. The richness and values of the public conservation land within this rohe is reflective of the first inhabitants of the Mataatua, Tainui and Te Arawa waka that through to this day continue to reside, harvest and utilise the resources of the environment.

Whilst the boundary lines drawn on the map shows the BOP Conservation Board area is quite stencilled, in takiwa, rohe boundaries for the Iwi is a bit more complex. So, through an Iwi generic landscape viewfinder, the broader area is defined as *Mai Nga Kuri a Whareki ki Tikirau*, from the Waihi/Bowentown/Western Bay of Plenty, to Cape Runaway, *tae atu ki a Tuwatawata, Whirinaki te Pua-a-Tane*, through to Tuwatawata and the Whirinaki, *mai Maketu ki Tongariro*, from Maketu to parts of the Tuwharetoa, *tae atu ki e Pare Hauraki*, and stretching over to Tokoroa, Matamata, Waharoa and Paeroa generally. From the many mountains, volcanoes, podocarp forests and hinterlands, from the fresh water tributaries, geothermal features, lakes and freshwater systems, through to the mangroves, estuaries and the great ocean of Toi, therein lies the diversity, complexities, and the richness of our BOP Conservation Board area.

The forests of Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne, Raukumara and Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Parks are enjoyed by a wide range of recreational users from around and beyond the region. These ancient ranges are connected intimately with significant coastal forest and dune-lands that lie at the fringes of the Board's area and continue into the depths of the marine world through to various islands and beyond. Two marine reserves are located within the Board's rohe being Tuhua and Te Paepae o Aotea Marine Reserves.

Wetland features, associated vegetation and the geothermal wonders of the Rotorua Lakes and surrounding reserve network also provide unique features to an area that is as diverse in species as it is in people groups and communities.

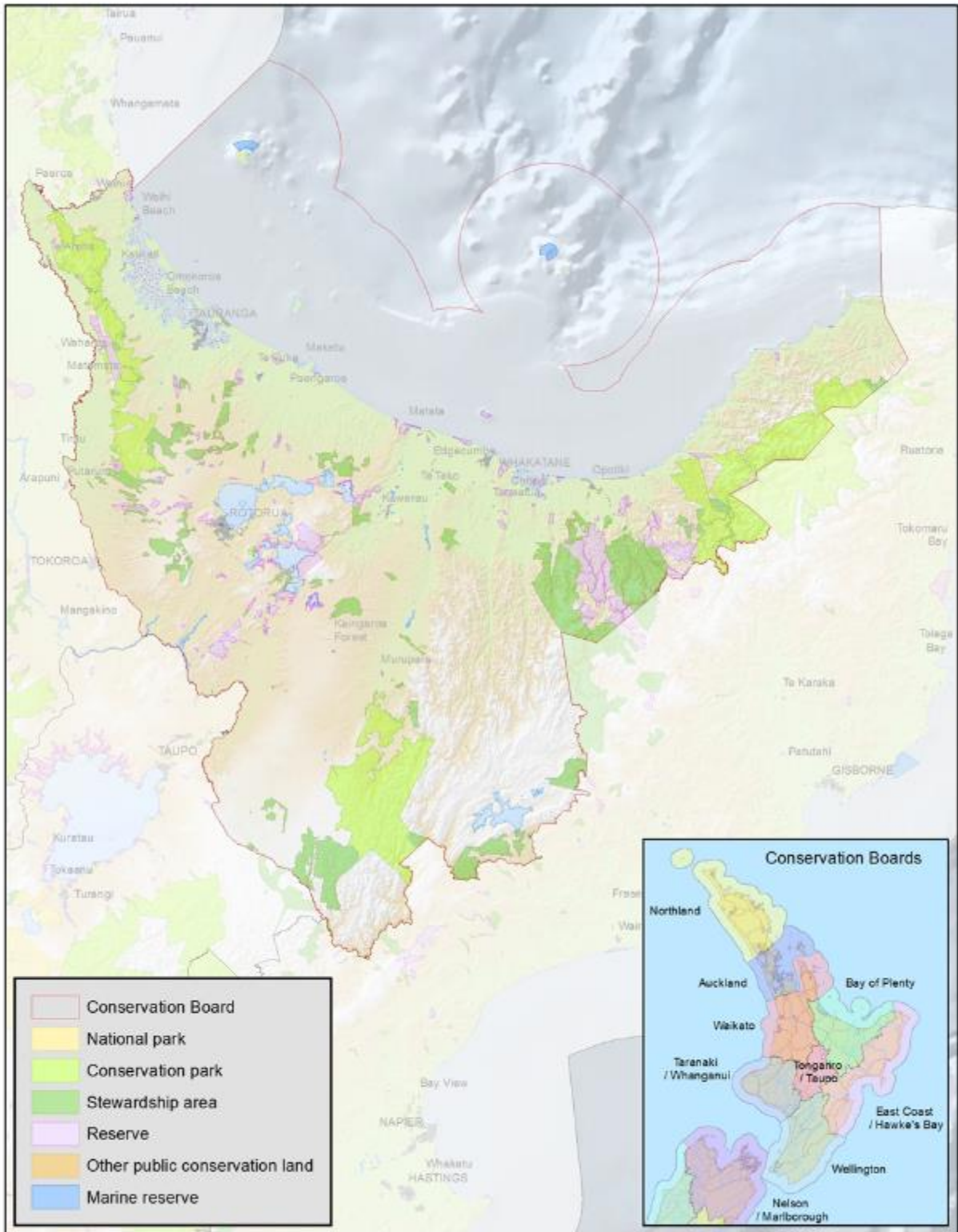
This physical location represents our ongoing responsibility to iwi under the Treaty of Waitangi as the Board's area is homeland to the whanau, hapu and iwi of Pare Hauraki, Tauranga Moana, Te Arawa and Mataatua Waka.

A broad sample of key conservation challenges and focuses within the region are;

- wildling pines
- battle for our birds – kiwi, kokako, whio
- rapid population increase and resulting balance of recreations verses ecosystem protection

Within the region Treaty Settlements are at varying stages of pre-treaty settlement to post treaty settlement. The Department's staff and iwi have been initiating discussions around co-governance of a number of significant areas of Public Conservation Land in anticipation of these arrangements following settlements.

The BOP region hosts a large range of water catchments and lake reservoirs that flow out to the coastal ecosystems and the Pacific Ocean. Lastly, a significant boundary is shared with the East Coast/Hawkes Bay Conservation Board along the Raukumara Ranges.



Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

New Zealand Government
Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri

0 25 50 100 Kilometres



Document Path: G:\GIS\Projects_2015\Northland\R7562_Centre_R1_Board_Maps\R7562_Bay_of_Plenty_Board_Maps.mxd

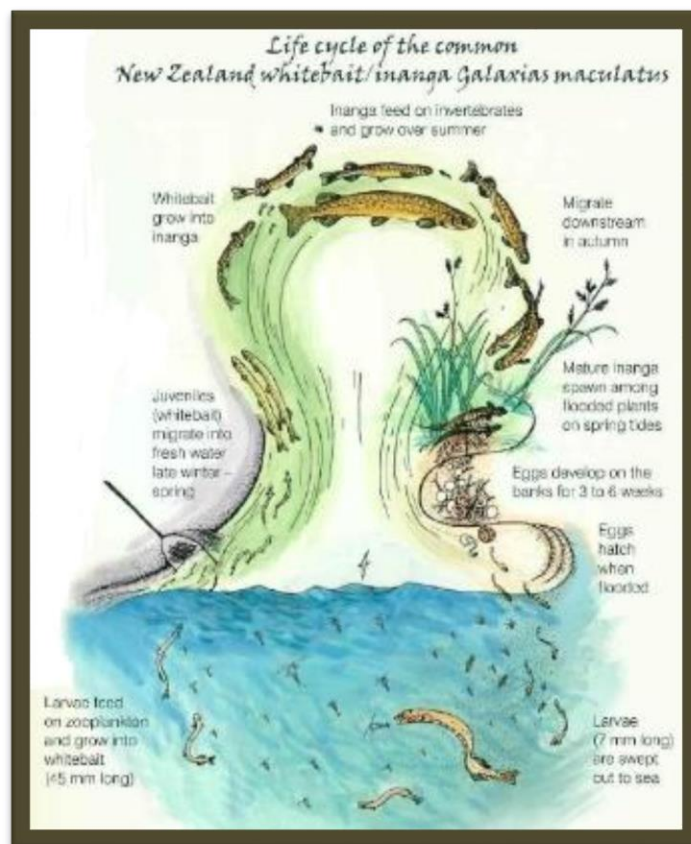
4.0 BOARDS FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

4.1 BOARD MEETING AND WORKSHOP SUMMARY

These dates were:	
Meetings	
2 September 2015	Murupara
7 December 2015	Whakatane
10 March 2016	Rotorua
9 May 2016	Tauranga

Workshops	
28 October 2015	Rotorua

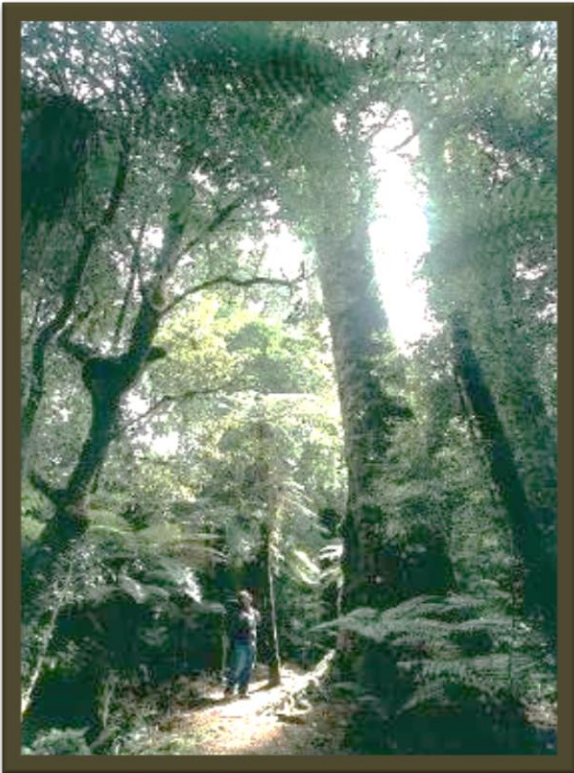
During the October Workshop one of the topics explored by the Board was the habitats and ecosystems needed to support the inanga life cycle. The Board designed their May field trips around engaging with catchment and habitat restoration volunteers, strategic partners, staff and managers from across the Bay of Plenty.



4.2 FIELD TRIPS

These dates were:	Area	Specific sites	Guest, Strategic Partners, Presenters
2 September 2015	Murupara	Whirinaki Te Pua-a - Tāne	Ngati Whare, DOC
11 March 2016	Mt Tarawera	Ruawahia 2B Trust	Hon Nicky Wagner, Ruawahia 2B Trustees, DOC
9 May 2016	Mt Manganui	Tauranga Harbour Entrance	BOPRC
10 May 2016	Kaituna River	Kaituna River habitat/wetlands restoration project, Borrow pits, Ongatoro/Maketu Estuary at Te Tumu Cut	BOPRC, Waikato University Marine Science Dept., Maketu Ongatoro Wetlands Society, Borrow Pits habitat restoration - Community Volunteers

4.3 SPECIAL EVENTS



In October 2015, after a Whakatau and Board meeting with Ngati Whare at the Murupara Office, the Board went on a guided walk in the Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park with Ngati Whare representatives and Department staff. The combined meeting field trip day, provided a sound foundation for everyone to build on in preparation for the drafting of the Whirinaki Conservation Management Plan. The Board relished the opportunity to see first-hand this iconic podocarp forest park in NZ.

Photo: Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne
Photographer Murupara DOC staff

In March, it was with great pleasure that the Board hosted a visit from the Hon. Nicky Wagner (Associate Minister of Conservation). With the meeting scheduled in Rotorua, the Board took the opportunity to show case the extensive wildling pine project being undertaken on Mt Tarawera. After the Board meeting, the Associate Minister accompanied the Board, members of Ruawahia 2B Trust and Department staff on a trip to the top of Mt Tarawera

to see first-hand what can be accomplished through a well-designed and committed partnership programme for the removal of wildling pines in difficult terrain (see accompanying photograph).



Photo: Mt Tarawera areas where removal of wildling pines has begun natural restoration of the iconic volcanic landscapes.
Photographer Peter Shepherd, 11 March 2016

5.0 ADVOCACY AND STATUTORY WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THE BOARD

5.1 STATUTORY PROCESSES

Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

The Board has been in a holding position this year pending the availability of Department planning staff time to begin the CMS process. We have also been awaiting the confirmation and approval of NZCA for the new CMS template.

The CMS sub-committee met several times during the year with a focus on developing an understanding of the CMS approach that would best suit the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board area as well as some initial thinking around defining our places. The 'Place' based model incorporating the diversity of ecological habitats appears to well suit the region with some changes to be recommended. Further work on identifying strategic partners including iwi and community groups had been initiated.

Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Management Plan (CMP)

The Board subcommittee has worked closely with the planning team from the Department throughout these 12 months. They have attended several meetings to seek clarity on the development of the CMP in particular addressing feedback from Ngati Whare on their level of comfort of the joint plan as it evolved.

The Board subcommittee met in Rotorua in September where key issues were highlighted that Ngati Whare were especially interested in discussing. The strong communication channels between the Board, Ngati Whare and the planning team have culminated in a draft CMP document. The Board provided feedback to the Department on this document and it was publicly notified on 15th June 2016. Hearings were planned for September 2016.

Te Tāpui Tokotoru Conservation Management Plan

The Board continued to have a representative on the Te Tapatoru-ā-Toi (Joint Management Committee) who attended the meetings of this committee. Te Tapatoru-ā-Toi (a partnership of Ngati Awa, the community and the Department of Conservation) oversees the management of Moutohora (Whale Island) Wildlife Reserve, and the Ohope and Tauwhare Pa reserves.

Eastern Fish and Game

Two Board members ensure the Board has representation at the Eastern NZ Fish and Game Council meetings. This is considered an essential role of the Board given the fresh water ecosystems, coastal estuaries and margins that dominate the BOP Board area. Concerns over the increasing numbers of geese and swans has been highlighted and the Board is continuing to investigate the extent of this issue.

Concessions

A short workshop on concessions, triggers and fee structure assisted the Board in understanding its role in advising on concessions and gave clarity and a reference for the future. The Board reconfirmed the Board's concession triggers document with the Department at its December Meeting. Throughout the year, the Board has provided advice to the Department as required when specific concessions have been presented for their consideration.

5.2 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Stewardship land

At the Board's request, a workshop meeting was held (28 October 2015) to seek a Department briefing on Stewardship Land within the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board area. From an extensive list, the Department presented a short list of 21 areas deemed to have significant conservation benefits that may warrant additional protection through re-classification. The Board discussed various aspects concerning the qualities of particular land parcels, covering location, risks, uniqueness of the quality highlighted and the positive aspects of elevating specific areas to a different classification in order to capture and protect unrealised conservation benefits. This resulted in a list of priority areas being nominated and these were subsequently endorsed by the Board. The Board requested further action at a national level, and requested an opportunity to review the final list as priorities might change when put in a national context. Specifically, in regards to the risk of small blocks being overlooked in the national process, the upcoming revision of the Bay of Plenty CMS and taking into account conservation values changing in the future.

The Board's overview on the large number of Stewardship land parcels (both large and small) plays a key supporting role in the development of the Bay of Plenty CMS. e.g. the merit in combining several adjacent land parcels into a single designated conservation area, might redefine 'Place' categories in the CMS review.

Section 4, Conservation Act 1987

The Conservation Department's local Pou Tairangahau provided a training session with the Board on the Treaty of Waitangi Principles under section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 to enable the Board to better understand their obligations and the Department's relationship with the Crown Treaty partners.

5.3 POLICY

Conservation Streamlining Bill

The board received the initial pre-consultation material and look forward to the subsequent drafts. The board has no major concerns at this stage due to a lack of details thus far, but provided feedback to the Department on some of the key issues that should be taken into account in the further development of this legislation.

6.0 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY THE BOARD

The Board has continued to build relationships and advocacy with district and regional councils, various NGO's and community groups with activities ranging from meetings, attendance at community field events or through representation at invited meetings.

A Board representative attended the Federated Mountain Club workshop "*Pathways to Adventure – Back country recreation north of Taupo*" in May 2016 at Waitawheta. This was an opportunity for the outdoor community to meet together and around 90 people attended with good representation from Kaimai Coromandel forums.

The *Virtually on Track* project has been a joint DOC and Sport BOP three year initiative focused on increasing engagement at eight locations across the Bay of Plenty by developing virtual sports clubs based on adventure sport-type activities. This year the project was a finalist in the innovation section

of the Sport New Zealand Excellence and one of our Board members, Heidi Litchwark, attended this event as part of her Sport BOP role along with Kay Booth, Deputy Director General, Partnerships.

7.0 SPECIFIC LIAISON ROLES

East Coast/Hawkes Bay Conservation Board

No meetings were attended in this reporting year but the Board liaison is scheduled to attend meetings in the upcoming year. Given the development of the CMS for East Coast/Hawkes Bay Conservation Board has been progressing, the Board requested that the Department provide an update on how the large conservation areas straddling the Bay of Plenty/East Coast boundary are being described within the East Coast/Hawkes Bay CMS, so that a consistent approach is adopted for the Bay of Plenty CMS revision.

Waikato Conservation Board

The Board liaison continued to meet annually with the Waikato Board and receive meeting minutes. There are a number of common issues for both Boards with the Kauri dieback threat of particular concern given the proximity of the Coromandel Forest Park and other areas of PCL to the Bay of Plenty.

Community Conservation Partnership Fund – Pūtea Tautaki Hapori

A Board member was invited to participate as a panel member for the Community Conservation Partnership Fund – Pūtea Tautaki Hapori application selection process for the Central North Island region. The Board members found the experience rewarding and look forward to the next application round with enthusiasm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Retiring members:

Jim Doherty

Phillip Simpson QSM

Rob Franklin