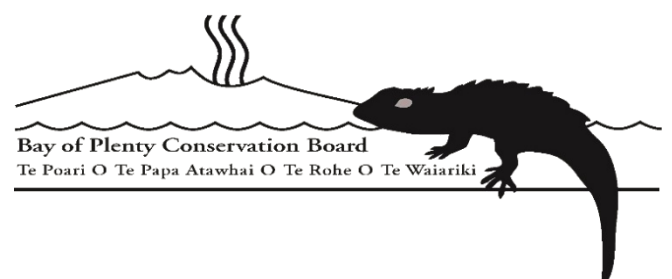


BAY OF PLENTY CONSERVATION BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



Bay of Plenty Conservation Board
Te Poari O Te Papa Atawhai O Te Rohe O Te Waiariki

Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

Annual Report

2021/22

Presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority
pursuant to Section 6 (O) of the Conservation Act 1987

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Cover Photo: Photo taken by Jim Robinson of Motu Trails showing a section of the Motu Trail which runs through the Tirohanga Dunes Restoration Area. A significant amount of this area is also Stewardship Land. The photo also captures Moutohorā in the distance.

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1 Introduction

This is the 2021-22 Bay of Plenty Conservation Board Annual Report. Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act requires Conservation Boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority) with an Annual Report as soon as practical after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board (the Board) submits this Annual Report.

Conservation Boards are appointed by the Minister of Conservation under section 6(P) of the Conservation Act 1987. Board functions are outlined in section 6(M) and the powers which enable the Conservation Boards to carry out those functions are under 6(N) of the Act.

Conservation Boards are independent advisory bodies, established by statute. They represent the community and offer interaction between communities and the Department of Conservation (the Department), within their area of jurisdiction.

Conservation Boards have several statutory roles under various Acts including:

- the recommendation of the Bay of Plenty Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to the Authority for approval
- advising the Department and the Authority on how the CMS and Conservation Management Plans (CMP) will be put into practice
- reporting on the implementation of the CMS
- the approval of CMP
- the recommendation of National Park Management Plans to the Authority for approval
- advising the Department and the Authority on conservation matters, and proposed changes to status of land of national and international significance
- liaising with the Regional Fish and Game Council on conservation matters
- carrying out other powers delegated by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act or any other Act.

Conservation Boards also have several functions under section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980. These functions include recommending the review or amendment of National Park Management Plans and recommending approval of these plans by the Authority.

2 Conservation Board Region

The Board area is complex, diverse, and extensive in its land, marine and ecological morphology, and rich in history. The richness and values of the Public Conservation Land(PCL) 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. The Board's area of jurisdiction covers the area from Orokawa Bay in the west to Cape Runaway in the east and inland to the forests of Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne, Raukumara and Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Parks. 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.

Whilst the boundary lines drawn on the map show the Board's area is quite stencilled in takiwā, rohe boundaries for iwi are a bit more complex. So, through an iwi generic landscape viewfinder, the broader area is defined as Mai Ngā Kuri a Whārei ki Tihirau, from Waihi/Bowentown/ Western Bay of Plenty, to Cape Runaway, tae atu ki a Tūwatawata, Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne, through to Tūwatawata and the Whirinaki, mai Maketū ki Tongariro, from Maketū to parts of the Tūwharetoa, tae atu ki te Pare Hauraki, and stretching over to Tokoroa, Matamata, Waharoa and Paeroa generally.

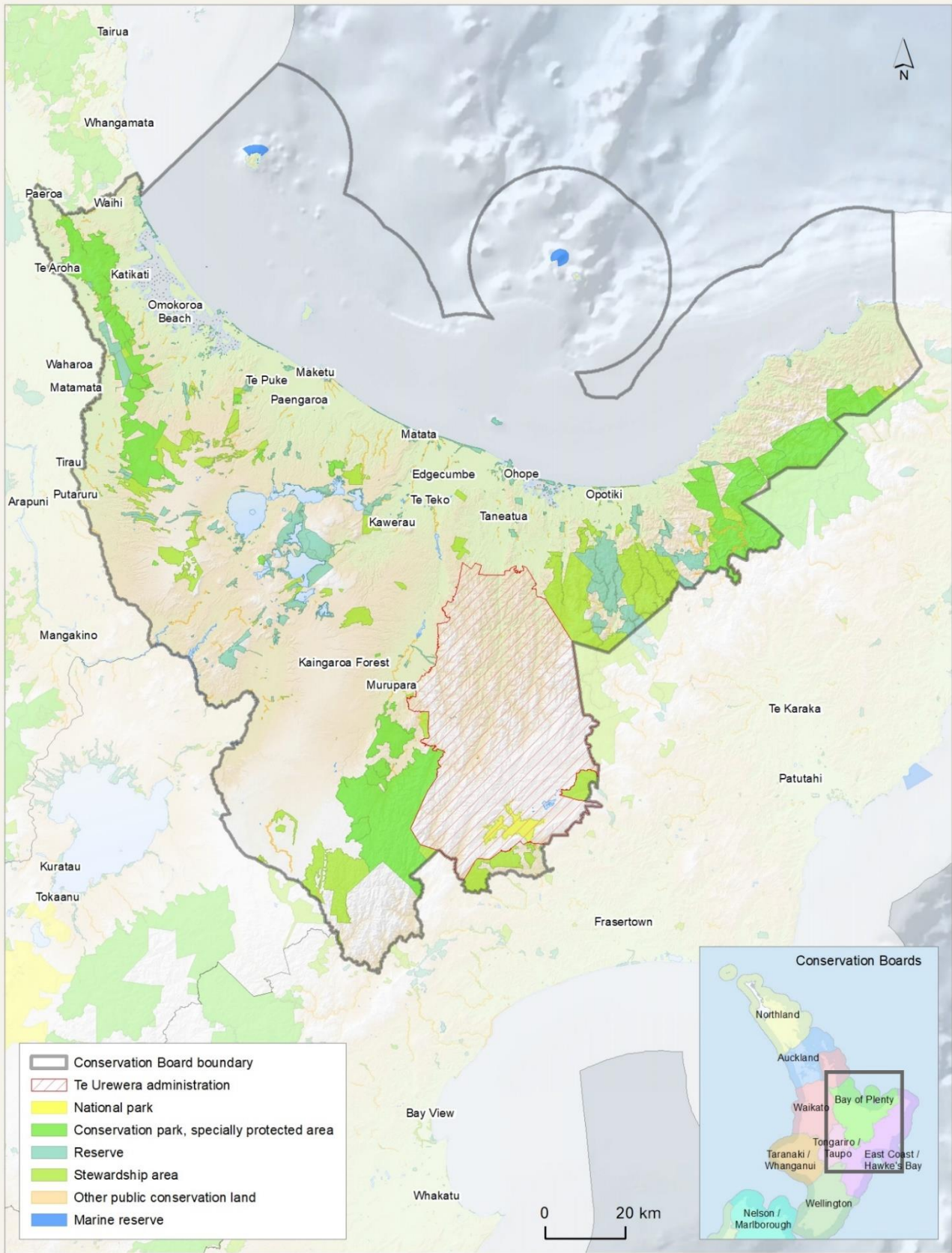
This physical location represents our ongoing responsibility to iwi under the Treaty of Waitangi as the Board's area is homeland to the whānau, hapū and iwi of Pare Hauraki, Tauranga Moana, Te Arawa and Mataatua Waka. Within the region Treaty Settlements are at varying stages of pre-treaty settlement to post-treaty settlement. Department staff and iwi have been initiating discussions around co-governance of a number of significant areas of PCL in anticipation of these arrangements following settlement.

Two marine reserves are located within the Board's rohe being Tūhua and Te Paepae o Aotea Marine Reserves. The area extends out to the 12-nautical mile limit with respect to coastal and marine issues, and out to the 200-nautical mile limit with respect to protected species.

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. 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 Board's area.

The Bay of Plenty 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 Raukūmara Ranges.

There are over 50 active community groups within the region who work alongside the Department and the Board, which adds an interesting complexity given the number of people contributing positively to conservation. Right across the Bay of Plenty, hundreds of volunteers gave up their time, during 2021/22, to support conservation efforts. These volunteers undertook more than the equivalent of around 2000 workdays of mahi during the year. We have been fortunate to have continued support from the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, who also help much of the effort of our conservation groups.



Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

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 DOC, Geospatial Services | 16/11/2020

New Zealand Government

Map 1 – Bay of Plenty Conservation Board

2.1 Conservation Features of the Area

The total area of the Bay of Plenty Region comprises **2,602,857** ha. Of this total, approximately **319,501** ha is contained within the boundary of the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction.

The main features of PCL and Waters within the Board's boundaries are:

- Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park – 40,000 ha
- Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne – 56,000 ha
- Raukūmara Conservation Park – 59,312 ha
- Scenic Reserves – 47,381 ha
- Historic Reserves – 70 ha
- Recreation Reserves – 420 ha
- Ecological Areas – 312 ha
- Stewardship Areas – 108,413 ha
- Marine Reserves – 2,330 ha

2.2 Conservation Issues

The Bay of Plenty has a range of significant issues of relevance throughout the rohe that the Board maintains a keen interest in and monitors progress. In the absence of an up-to-date CMS which would provide a formal reporting mechanism, the Board's work programme has focused on progressing these priority areas:

- Progressing the reclassification of Stewardship Land in the Bay of Plenty rohe
- Effective engagement with the significant number of iwi/hapū/whānau in the Bay of Plenty rohe
- Progressing the protection of significant marine ecosystems throughout the Bay of Plenty rohe
- Management of pest species:
 - Deer, possums, pigs, goats
 - Dama Wallaby
 - Wilding pines
- Biodiversity and Biosecurity
 - Protection of Kauri from dieback
 - Ecosystem management
 - Threatened species management e.g. Kōkako, Kiwi, Whio
- Impacts of Covid-19 on tourism, employment and the resetting of tourism pressures that have impacted the environment.

3 Board Functioning

3.1 Board Functions under Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987

The functions of the Board are:

- 1) To recommend the approval by the Authority of the CMS, and the review and amendment of such strategies, under the relevant enactments
- 2) To approve CMP, and the review an amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments
- 3) To advise the Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of CMS and CMP for the area within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 4) To advise the Authority or the Director-General
 - a) On any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance; and
 - b) On any other conservation matter relating to any area with the jurisdiction of the Board
- 5) To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matter within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 6) To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act.

3.2 Powers of the Board under Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987

- 1) Every conservation board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions.
- 2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), each conservation board may –
 - a) Advocate its interests at any public forum or in any statutory planning process; and
 - b) Appoint committees of members and other suitable persons, and delegate to them functions and powers.
- 3) The power conferred by subsection (2)(a) shall include the right to appear before courts and tribunals in New Zealand and be heard on matters affecting or relating to the Board's functions.

3.3 Board Functions under Section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980

There are no national parks within the Board's region.

3.4 Board Membership (Profiles Appendix I)

There were 10 Board members for the reporting year 2021/22 appointed by the Minister of Conservation. Anne Mackersey was confirmed as Chairperson for a period of 6 months and Dayle Takitimu was confirmed as Deputy Chairperson for 6 months. In February 2022, Dr Paul Kayes was confirmed as Chairperson for a period of 12 months and Dayle Takitimu was confirmed as Deputy Chairperson for 12 months.

The terms of office for two members expired on 30 June 2021; Phil Ross and Hugh Sayers. In addition, co-opted member Ken Raureti stepped down from his co-opted position in October 2021. There were two empty seats at the beginning of the 2021/22 year due to the resignation of Zane Jensen and Mark Copeland late in the 2020/21 year. Two new board members were appointed in July 2021; Dr Paul Kayes and Dayle Takitimu. Phil Ross was reappointed to the Board for a period of 19 months and new member Michelle Ngamoki was appointed for a period of seven months, to fill the positions made available due to the resignations.

The following table lists the membership of the Board between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022 and their term of office.

Board member	Area	Term start	Term end
Julian Lee	Ōpōtiki	1/7/2014	30/6/2023
Anne Mackersey	Whakamarama	1/5/2014	30/6/2022
Phillip Ross	Tauranga	1/12/2021	25/8/2022
Dayle Hunia	Whakātane	15/8/2017	30/6/2023
Rachel Pinn	Tauranga	1/8/2018	30/6/2022 (1 + 3 yr)
Gina Mohi	Rotorua	1/7/2019	30/6/2022
Sara Carley	Tauranga	1/7/2020	30/6/2023
Dr Paul Kayes	Tauranga	1/7/2021	30/6/2024
Dayle Takitimu	Whakatāne	1/7/2021	30/6/2024
Michelle Ngamoki	Whakatāne	1/12/2021	30/6/2022

Table 1: Board Membership

3.5 Board Meetings

The Board held seven meetings during the reporting period. Covid-19 meant most of these meetings were held virtually via MS Teams. Covid-19 also caused the cancellation of a planned joint Field Trip and meeting with the New Zealand Conservation Authority which had been scheduled for April 2022.

Board meeting date	Meeting location and venue
26 August 2021	Held online via MS Teams due to Covid-19
15 October 2021	Held online via MS Teams due to Covid-19
10 December 2021	Held online via MS Teams due to Covid-19
17 February 2021	Held online via MS Teams due to Covid-19
5 April 2022	Rotorua DOC Office and via MS Teams
29 June 2022	Field Trip lead by Tauranga District staff
30 June 2022	Tauranga DOC Office and via MS Teams

Table 2: Board meeting dates and location

The only field trip undertaken by the Board this year was in Tauranga. We visited Tapuika, Kaituna Wetland Restoration Project, Ngāti Whakaue ki Maketū Jobs for Nature Project sites, and also the Waihi Estuary Wildlife Management Reserve. This involved updates on the various Jobs for Nature projects in the communities, we also enjoyed looking for bittern, seeing the Pongakawa fish ponds, and having a collaborative kōrero with iwi.

During the online and office based meetings, the Board were provided with several updates and presentations throughout the year, including:

Wallaby Programme update

Greg Corbett Biosecurity Manager for Bay of Plenty Regional Council, presented to the Board on the current status of Dama Wallabies in the Central North Island. This covered the National Wallaby Programme as well as current operational priorities and a summary of the 2020-21 and 2021-22 work programme.

Motu Trails Trust update

Jim Robinson gave a presentation to the Board about the Motu Trails, their history, coverage, and ongoing work. This was an interesting session. Special note was made of the positive conservation benefits (pest control) accruing from the Trust's trail work. The Board thanked Jim for the information provided and commended him and the Motu Trails Trust on the incredible work they are doing.

NZ AutoTraps presentation

Rob Franklin, a former Board member, presented a promotion for his product and business NZ AutoTraps. The unique mechanisms of this product enable it to carry out 100 kills, rebait after each kill and switch on and off for operation overnight only. Changes and upgrades are being made to the traps all the time.

Manaaki Kaimai Mamaku Trust update

Louise Saunders updated the Board on the Jobs for Nature Project, which included formation of the Forum, the steps taken to get to where they are today, as well as their plans for the future beyond the conclusion of the Jobs for Nature programme in 2024.

DOC's Mahi Moana presentation

Kirstie Knowles updated the board on DOC's Mahi Moana. She reflected on marine biodiversity state, trends, and pressures. She looked at legislative reform. She shared how the marine environment fits in DOC's strategy 'Te Mana o te Taiao.' Key mahi for the Bay of Plenty includes:

- Monitoring of Tūhua (Mayor Island) and Te Paepae O Aotea (Volkner Rocks) marine reserves
- Marine compliance and law enforcement
- Marine mammal and wildlife management and emergency response
- Administering the NZ Coastal Policy Statement (including COVID recovery fast track consenting) and permissions
- 360-degree underwater camera communication material
- Where we can, supporting BOPRC in monitoring Motiti Protection Areas (e.g. sharing monitoring equipment, peer-reviewing monitoring reports)

Pest control and Predator Free 2050 presentation

Madeleine Morgenstern provided the board with detail about Pest Control and Predator Free 2050. There is a collaborative approach Nationally and Regionally. Focus is currently on ensuring it will be involved, researched, enabled, and resourced with new and appropriate tools and technology. Biodiversity outcomes will be measured in short periods of time. There will be focus on collaboration, increasing public awareness and engagement.

Environmental Defence Society presentation

Greg Severinsen and Raewyn Peart of EDS, presented on Oceans reform in Aotearoa New Zealand. This was based on their publication "The Breaking Wave," which highlighted the key challenges faced by the oceans / marine environment and explored options for a future system to support this environment. They suggest four starting points for systematic reform; improving and expanding the toolkit through legislative and policy reform, deep structural change, adding a Te Tiriti lens, and identifying the ocean as a person in its own right.

Raukumara Pae Maunga update

Rangitahi Wharepapa and George Cooper, provided a presentation on the Raukumara Pae Maunga Restoration Project. They shared a video of Kaumātua Danny entering the Raukumara Pae Maunga and viewing the devastation. This is a significant project with allocation of \$34million. A working group had been formed and were carrying out engagement.

3.6 Attendance

The table below summarises the number of Board meetings attended by members out of the total number of meetings held during the year. Members attended other meetings and events in their role as Board members, including subcommittee meetings and representative roles.

Board member	Attendance
Julian Lee	Aug/Oct/Dec/Feb/Apr/June
Anne Mackersey	Aug/Oct/Dec/Feb/Apr/June
Phillip Ross	Dec/Feb/Apr
Dayle Hunia	Aug/Oct/Feb/Apr
Rachel Pinn	Aug/Oct/Dec/Feb/Apr
Gina Mohi	Aug/Dec
Sara Carley	Aug/Oct/Dec/Feb/Apr/June
Dr Paul Kayes	Aug/Oct/Dec/Feb/Apr/June
Dayle Takitimu	Aug/Oct/Dec/Feb/June
Michelle Ngamoki	Dec

Table 3: Board Attendance

3.7 Conservation Board Liaison

Board member	Board
Julian Lee / Dayle Hunia	East Coast Hawkes Bay Conservation Board
Dayle Takitimu	Tongariro Taupō Conservation Board
Dr Paul Kayes	Waikato Conservation Board

Table 4: Board liaisons and representatives

East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board

Julian Lee: Respective Board's liaison representatives and the interchange of meeting agendas and meeting minutes continues to be a useful vehicle for information sharing and discussion across many common issues for both of our Boards. Specifically, in the case of East Coast Hawkes Bay Board region the role and experiences of Board members in guiding the development (and hopefully the future role in monitoring delivery of Outcomes) of our respective CMS's, working with Treaty partners; processes defining classification of Stewardship Land, management of pests (especially deer); community engagement; concessions; and other matters common to both Board regions and our shared boundary. Other common ground covered included discussion on Jobs for Nature, a re-think and recalibration required for Marine Reserves ACT 1977 - a wider suite of considerations as they apply to Marine protected areas in both regions - and the impacts of climate change, especially on Coastal areas.

Tongariro Taupō Conservation Board

Dayle Takitimu was the liaison for the Tongariro Taupō Conservation Board.

Waikato Conservation Board

Paul Kayes: The Waikato Board is well chaired by long serving member and Chair, Alan Cockle. I attended several meetings, mostly via Teams. One I attended in person was linked to a field trip to OceanaGold in Waihi and a presentation by Coromandel watchdog. The challenge posed by OceanaGold's resource consent application for underground mining on conservation estate is a significant matter for the Waikato Board to consider. The Waikato Board often debate issues that echo our discussions - CMS, pest and predator control, stewardship land, climate change, Jobs4Nature, and more. I would like to thank the Waikato Board for allowing me to attend their meetings.

Board member	Group/agency/organisation
Sara Carley	Eastern Fish and Game Council
Dayle Hunia	Te Tapatoru ā Toi
Anne Mackersey	Wallaby Action Group

Table 5: Group/Agency/Organisation liaisons and representatives

Eastern Fish and Game Council

Regular liaison with the Eastern Region Fish & Game Council was maintained on issues of mutual interest including the sharing of meeting agendas, minutes, and reports. The Council consulted BOPCB on proposed amendments to regional sports fishing regulations (Anglers Notice) and on their draft operational workplan priorities for 2022-23, and the Board provided regular updates to the council on the board's priorities such as stewardship land and the CMS.

Te Tapatoru ā Toi Joint Management Committee

Tātai ngā whetu ki te rangi, mau tonu mau tonu, tātai te tangata ki te whenua, ngaro noa, ngaro noa, toi tū te mana o te whenua tū tonu, tū tonu. The starry hosts of heaven abide there forever, the hosts of men upon this earth will pass away into oblivion to be forgotten, whilst the authority, dignity and integrity of the land remains immutable.

Te Tapatoru ā Toi Joint Management Committee was established under the Ngāti Awa Claims Settlement Act 2005. The Committee provides leadership and governance in relation to the management of three key reserves, Te Tāpui Tokotoru:

- Moutohorā (Whale Island) Wildlife Management Reserve
- Ōhope Scenic Reserve
- Tauwhare Pā Scenic Reserve

The Committee is made up of the following members:

- Dr Te Kei Merito, Chair and Ngāti Awa Representative
- Dayle Hunia, Deputy Chair and Conservation Board Representative
- Vincent Copeland, Member and Ngāti Awa Representative
- Marama Cook, Member and Ngāti Awa Representative
- Nándor Táncoz, Member and Community/Board Representative
- Lanae Cable, Member and Community Representative

The Committee meets regularly in Whakatāne. The development of a revised Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is a key priority for Te Tapatoru ā Toi. The CMP will provide the framework for delivering the following strategic outcomes for Te Tāpui Tokotoru:

- Ngāti Awa whanau, hapū and iwi are creating and enjoying opportunities to express Kaitiakitanga and Rangatiratanga within Te Tāpui Tokotoru
- Communities are enriched through their connections with nature
- The mauri of ecosystems, indigenous, species and their habitats within Te Tāpui Tokotoru is thriving
- The cultural, historical, natural, and archaeological heritage of Te Tāpui Tokotoru is protected and enhanced
- Access to Te Tāpui Tokotoru is managed sustainably
- Supporting and enhancing integrated management within the wider Ngāti Awa rohe including Ngāti Awa Farm & Te Kete a Tairongo

Te Tapatoru ā Toi is grateful for the ongoing support provided by the operational teams within Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa and the Department of Conservation.

Wallaby Action Group

Anne Mackersey was the Board's liaison for the Wallaby Action Group to which she was invited to be a member of when it was in its infancy. Containment fencing continues to be the focus for Dama Wallaby control, however, the group acknowledged this is just one tool and discussion must be had to explore other pest control options. The Board agrees with this.

3.8 Authority Liaison

The Board welcomed Takurua Mutu as the new New Zealand Conservation Authority liaison and has valued the contribution Tak has made to the Board meetings.

3.9 Board Committees and Representation

Board sub committees and membership is reviewed annually, at the beginning of the reporting year.

The CMS sub committee continued this year given that the revocation and consultation of the Draft CMS continues.

The Stewardship Land sub committee is currently on hold, as the Board eagerly awaits the National Stewardship Land review coming to the Bay of Plenty Region.

Committee name	Date established	Members
Conservation Management Strategy	2015	Currently remains as the entire Board.
Stewardship Land Sub Committee	2017	Julian Lee, Anne Mackersey, Rachel Pinn.

Table 6: Committees

Conservation Management Strategy

Our CMS is over 20 years out of date. As reported in last year's annual report, the completed CMS for public consultation for this Board's region was finalized and published in November 2020. However, this issue was revoked in January 2021, the purpose being to undertake further engagement opportunities with Treaty partners, stakeholders, and the public. This work is still underway, but the Board remains optimistic the CMS will be available soon for re-release.

The current board, as with the area's Boards of preceding years, is frustrated with the time it takes to establish a fit-for-purpose, up-to-date CMS. The current format and legal requirements (along with a mix of background, strategy, policy, and operations material) results in a large and complex document which many stakeholders have found cumbersome and unresponsive to a rapidly changing landscape. The Region's CMS document needs to be visionary and flexible, and a process whereby a continuum of review through the 10-year life cycle of the CMS can be accommodated. And as previously emphasized, iwi/hapū/whānau seek certainty that they will be able to input their aspirations into the Strategy when they have resource and capacity to do so, and as aspirations evolve. Adequate resourcing is a key issue for iwi/hapū/whānau, and the Department, to enact effective engagement with each entity throughout the rohe.

Engagement is a challenge. If the CMS is to remain an important tool for the Department (and the Board), then a more dynamic approach is required to help the Department progress wider engagement fundamental to the CMS drafting process. By its very nature this is an ongoing process and must be adaptive to evolving viewpoints from the many hapū, iwi, or community group leadership groups. The challenge posed whereby engagement extends over a year or more, means that engagement becomes dated and not necessarily supported if new people have come on board.

The Board recognizes the challenges from changing systems and legislation, continually emerging new threats and opportunities. Nonetheless, the Board is steadfast in seeking solutions to halt and reverse current land and marine current biodiversity decline. The CMS is the mechanism the Board must do this through, ensuring governance agencies and co-governance partnerships effectively manage te taiao in our rohe.

Stewardship Land Sub-Committee

In keeping with the Government's commitment to protect, preserve and restore our natural heritage, the Board has an ardent and long-standing desire to seek greater clarity on protecting conservation benefits of both small and large land areas, categorised as Stewardship Land within the Board's Bay of Plenty rohe. This sub-committee provides oversight and champions protection for Stewardship Land - comprising some 120,000 ha. within the Bay of Plenty.

We have good information on the ecological merits of all our Stewardship Land areas, but more work needs to be undertaken across a broader base of criteria to ensure protection in perpetuity of conservation values, starting with those identified as having highest priority. Meaningful and deeper engagement with iwi/hapū/whānau and the wider community is also required.

The Board remains concerned about the threat posed to Stewardship Land from development and services directed to meet demands of the region's rapidly growing population. The Board welcomes the recent establishment of a national initiative to accelerate re-classification of Stewardship Land to ensure high conservation value is protected. The Board's push is consistent with the National Strategy', but the Board's concerns over threats and protection of Stewardship Land over many years has not seen any tangible progress. This Board has made a submission to a discussion document published by the Department (Stewardship Land in Aotearoa - Options to streamline processes for reclassification and disposal, November 2021).

The Board notes the priorities in the South Island (National Panel Review currently in progress) and looks forward to the process being accelerated to include the Bay of Plenty region. The Board and the Department have identified an initial five priority sites we regard as in need of urgent reclassification. These areas have differing attributes, are subject to threats and risks that continue to degrade their value and are distributed throughout the BOP rohe. The desired outcome is not just about reclassification, but to ensure the best possible protection of these areas of land, which will in turn acknowledge their wider value to community, iwi/hapū/whānau, and other agencies. As there do not appear to be any fundamental impediments to the process, the Board and Department propose to proceed with re-classification of the identified high priority areas.

The Board is mindful of the fact that some of this land, in time, will be protected through the Treaty Settlement process. This consideration has also informed the identification of the five priority sites to initially proceed with the reclassification process. With suggested land parcels identified, descriptors fully populated, the next stage is to undertake engagement and consultation with relevant iwi/hapū/whānau, and with those community groups closely involved with the Department in their on-going maintenance and protection.

4 Chairperson's Report

On behalf of the Board, it is our pleasure to present the Chair's Report and this Annual Report for the year 2021/2022.

COVID-19 continued to affect the Board. Meetings were mostly held via Teams in 2021. For the year ahead, we have made the decision that every second meeting will be held in person, the alternate hui via Teams. The in-person hui will rotate between the three offices, those being Tauranga, Whakatāne and Rotorua.

A significant development this year has been the subdivision of the Central North Island region (CNI) and the establishment of a separate DOC region, Eastern North Island (ENI). The Board welcomed Jade King-Hazel into her role as the inaugural Director for the BOP region and extend a huge thank you to Damian Coutts for the work he has undertaken as CNI Director over the past few years. This is a particularly significant development for the BOP.

We have had the pleasure of many fantastic presentations – by staff, by hapū/iwi, by representatives of community groups, and by other conservation organisations. These are always interesting, often challenging, and very welcome.

A field trip to wetland restoration areas in the lower Kaituna River catchment and at Maketū highlighted some of the outstanding mahi being undertaken by iwi/hapū, agencies and communities in these localities. One of these sites is a Jobs4Nature project. It is clear to the Board that Jobs4Nature is having a significant and positive effect on the partner organisations and the people being employed. Jobs4Nature is halfway through its 4-year funding. We are wondering what will happen at the end of that period. Some, if not all the projects, seem to sit outside the parameters of the Board's monitoring role, which has raised ongoing discussions around the role and original intent of Boards. The evolving conservation landscape which embraces Treaty Settlements, Jobs4Nature relationships, community funded projects and nationally led projects, provides for future opportunities in conservation previously unidentified. It seems timely for the Boards role to be redefined.

We welcomed two new Board members in 2021, Paul Kayes and Dayle Takitimu. The Board Chairperson, Anne Mackersey stepped down as Chair at the start of 2022 and Paul was appointed to replace Anne as chairperson. Anne's tenure on the Board finished in July 2022. Her skill and hard work as Chair, and on the Board for nine years, is already missed. The Board thanked Anne at its June meeting – big shoes to fill indeed. Dayle Takitimu continues as Deputy Chair.

We note the comments made by the Chair in the 2020 /21 report about Board membership. Attendance is an issue for the BOP CB, and we will be seeking guidance from the department and NZCA around this. Continuity of staff and board members is important to the effective running of any board.

We would like to thank Board members – those whose tenure has finished or who have resigned. These roles are paid a small meeting fee and the commitment expected from members significantly exceeds this. Therefore – our thanks for making time in-between your jobs, whānau, and other commitments.

We welcome Fisher Wang, Laura Crossan and Erin Green to the Board. Your appointments and enthusiasm are great to see. We note the recent resignation of Dr Phil Ross. Phil was re-appointed in late 2021 after an earlier stint on the Board. Phil led discussions around coastal and marine issues and brought a sharp mind to the board. Thanks, Phil, for your contributions.

A special acknowledgement is extended to the iwi/hapū/whānau that we have connected with throughout the year. Our kōrero has been interesting and informative. We look forward to strengthening our relationships and to building further relationships with the substantial number of other iwi/hapū/whānau undertaking exciting conservation projects on their whenua. Kaitiakitanga, being kaitiaki, is evolving as part of a 'new' Aotearoa. The word co-governance is a challenge for some. Not for those of us in conservation. It will shape the New Zealand the Treaty intended for Aotearoa.

Finalising the CMS continues to be a challenge. A CMS is a large and complex planning tool; more than a strategy – it has been part policy document, part operational plan. Frequent staff and board member changes have not

helped its progress. Neither has the length of time taken to complete the process. The Board has allocated considerable time to debate and investigate improvements and further planning options appropriate for the BOP CMS. Key points were the need for the document to be aspirational, agile, adaptable to changes (e.g., input from iwi/hapū/whānau following Treaty settlements) and to utilise CMP's more widely for operational aspects currently embedded in CMS's. The lack of any agreed strategic direction for the Department in the BOP continues to be a frustration for the Board.

The Board is encouraged by steps being taken by the department in the marine and coastal space. However, the overlapping roles (and possibly conflicting actions) of regional councils, MPI (Fisheries) and the Department continues to suggest there is a need for clarity in managing marine and coastal environments. The Board has socialised the concept of a Ministry for Oceans, taking over all the fisheries, conservation and recreation functions currently overseen by regional councils, MPI and the department.

There remains a collective desire on the Board to unearth the values of some significant Stewardship Land areas in the Bay of Plenty and work through their reclassification. Six (initial) sites have been identified to be progressed for reclassification.

Pest control remains a significant and ongoing concern in the BOP. In the absence of a CMS, the Board remains limited in their ability to satisfactorily measure and monitor progress of biodiversity. Community groups contribute some of the most active pest control in the BOP and are demonstrating the environmental benefits from their persistent work. Some Jobs 4 Nature programmes are consolidating and undertaking significant mahi. The enormity of the problem is still not being acted upon. The biodiversity decline is of constant concern.

The Board supports the National Wallaby programme and actively supports the Dama Wallaby Coordination Group in the BOP. Whilst containment alongside research and development control options are the current focus, the Board will continue to advocate for Wallaby eradication in the BOP on behalf of their communities. Ongoing funding for this programme is critical as the risk of further spread will create a biodiversity catastrophe.

The Board extends their gratitude and thanks to all the Department staff we have worked with throughout the year operating in the Whakatāne, Tauranga and Rotorua offices. Also, to staff based in other centres, who have presented at meetings or with whom we have had interactions. Special thanks to our Board Support Officers, Karen, and Catherine, for your ongoing commitment to our Board.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is 'Anne Mackersey' and the second is 'Paul Kayes'. Both signatures are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anne Mackersey and Paul Kayes - Chairpersons
BOP Conservation Board

5 Operation's Report

This is a summary of the Operations Reports presented to the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board which captures a summary of the key operational mahi carried out during the 2021-2022 period.

Tauranga District

The Tauranga team have heavily invested time and technical support into community and iwi/hapū projects, including but not limited to the following:

- The Kaimai Mamaku Restoration Project. This project was formally handed over to the Manaaki Kaimai Mamaku Trust for administration in June 2022. This is a great milestone to have a co-governed (iwi/hapū and community) charitable trust run this programme.
- Te Rangī Koi Ora Holiday Programme. The team has supported the holiday programme for many years now, which aims to teach youth about environmental issues in their rohe such as Tūāhu Kauri on kauri dieback, as well as providing health and exercise and opportunity for reconnection to Ngai Te Rangī heritage.
- Ngā Kaitiaki ō Omanawa; a JFN project with Ngāti Hangarau Hapū Trust which involves clearing introduced trees and pest animals as well as establishing native trees and others of the children of Tāne (plants) in the Omanawa Falls area. As well as training, it involves capability building in a variety of areas – from administration, pest management, biodiversity to traditional medicines, Mātauranga Māori.
- Maungaruahine Pā Restoration Project (Waitaha). Maungaruahine Heritage Pā historical site was returned to Waitaha Iwi under Treaty settlement and holds strong cultural significance to the iwi. This project is making great progress training employees and delivering cultural and outdoor skills to employees including pest management, and eradication.

The Team have continued to focus on Kauri Protection mahi, working closely with Kaimai Kauri to create a track monitoring tool and do some on the ground track mitigation around the Kaimai, enabling training opportunities and working hands on alongside the DOC team.

Maintenance mahi has included improving and/or continuing maintenance on tracks around the rohe like Wairere Falls, Rapurapu Track and Waitawheta Tramway, as well as our high use visitor sites like Karangahake Gorge, Victoria Battery, Waiorongomai and Tuahu East Track.

A highlight for the Team was an internal regional hui focusing on whakawhanaungatanga, bringing together our heritage and visitor kaimahi from our three BOP Districts (Tauranga, Whakatāne, Rotorua) in Rotorua. This was a great investment in our people – bringing us together tighter and stronger as our new BOP Region.

Rotorua District

Pest control mahi continues to be a strong focus. The team have supported four community groups to carry out bait station pest control the winter to protect, kōkako, mistletoe, and forest ecosystems. Community groups carrying out this control are Kaharoa Kōkako Trust, Rotoehu Ecological Trust, Mokaihaha Kōkako Trust and Tikitapu Forest and Bird Group. Goat control also continued at Kaharoa and Mangorewa Gorge. A kōkako survey at Mokaihaha found 71 pairs and 10 singles, this is an increase from 44 pairs and eight singles. The map showing bird follows shows that the birds are dispersing out of the core area and becoming more widespread throughout the block. The Mokaihaha Kōkako Trust have been installing bait stations into this area to increase protection in the years in between DOC's aerial 1080 operations. This will provide increased protection to the expanding population and some of the new bait stations will be used this year. Pine control on Tarawera Maunga was completed for the season. Two of the crew were retained to continue other district wilding pine projects. The district will work with iwi to determine the next steps in the project. Other weed control has been complete where possible using contractors due to vacancies.

The District have seen huge milestones in the iwi relationships space. The Ngāti Rangitihi settlement was passed as law and because of this settlement, the team put together a report for the iwi which outlined the state of all land that has been transferred back because of the settlement. Relationships with Ngāti Rangiwewehi have strengthened, and there is a lot of work to do together to complete reserve plan and cultural materials plan as well as projects of mutual interest. The Tuhourangi Tribal Authority hosted a hīkoi to bring together the board and district staff to visit sites of significance and share kōrero.

In the RMA space, the Department publicly notified an application for an exclusive use structure in the Lake Ōkāreka Marginal Strip. The structure includes a boat-lifter attached to a jetty and a jet ski port. This is the first application for a boat lifter.

In the Permissions space, applications have been high. Staff are assisting with the disestablishment and rehoming of protected species from Rainbow Springs. Also, as a result of relaxed restrictions relating to COVID-19, event organisers and tourism operations are preparing for a busy summer and are applying for the appropriate permits to do so.

We saw the opening of Okere Adventures within the Okere Falls Scenic Reserve.

The Rotorua Team continues to maintain relationships with the Lake Rotoiti Scenic Reserve Board and Lake Ōkātina Scenic Reserve Board. The Lake Rotoiti Scenic Reserve Board are encouraged to produce a Reserve Management Plan which will guide future activity in the Reserves they have been appointed to control and manage, and to ensure cultural values are upheld. The board continues to express a desire to deviate from DOC's concessions process including the national fee schedule.

In the JFN space, there were two successful applications to the Jobs for Nature Private Land Biodiversity Fund, each to the value of just under \$1 Million over three years. Kapenga M Trust and Onuku Maori Lands Trust are the recipients and started their projects in October 2021. There is fantastic progress with great pest control numbers of possums consistently in Tumunui and already over 30,000 trees plants in the Kapenga wetland. Both projects are also working alongside Regional Council in wallaby control projects on the whenua.

SCION (NZ Forestry Research Institute) were also successful in their JFN application for \$3.7 million over three years to develop a surveillance system and a simple resistance breeding program for myrtle rust resistance, working alongside mana whenua. Kaimahi have been employed since April and have already completed a variety of training including cultural health and safety; herbarium; outdoor health and safety; identification of main myrtle species; 4WD; GPS; navigation training; mycodiplosis identification training, myrtle rust severity assessment. Maramataka and Rongoa training to come.

It has been business as usual for the Heritage and Visitor team with ongoing maintenance underway. Summer campsite reviews were completed with camp managers, with feedback of highlights, challenges, and recommendations for the future improvements of systems, support, and infrastructure. A temporary trench was put in place on the DOC track to prevent vehicle access to Lake Rotomā, from Manawahe Road. This is to allow time to work with the local community and iwi, Rotorua Lakes Council, Te Arawa Lakes Trust, and Bay of Plenty Regional Council on a longer-term solution to the unauthorised camping and fire's, littering and damage to the lake bed that have occurred over the summer by predominantly recreational 4-wheel drive users. Eastern Ōkātina Walkway was closed due to a significant slip. Detailed geotechnical reports were conducted and reviewed by key staff. The Waiotapu Mudpool track upgrade was completed.

Whakatāne Whirinaki Ōpōtikī District

The team continue to build their online presence with a local Facebook page (Department of Conservation – Eastern Bay of Plenty). The following and interaction online has increased significantly over the last few months. Moving into the new financial year the community team will be looking to plan the next 3-6 months over social media.

Whakatāne

Korehāhā Whakahau is a Jobs For Nature project under Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa. Most of the kaimahi are of Ngāti Awa descent. The Department are building and fostering strong relationships with Korehāhā Whakahau kaimahi to reconnect these kaimahi with their whenua. As an example, kaimahi have been brought into the offshore island biosecurity checks to attend, learn, and support the operations team to carry out the work. Korehāhā Whakahau have employed three researchers to better understand the integration of Mātauranga within the operations to eradicate possums. These roles have been funded externally as an extension to add onto the scope of Korehāhā Whakahau.

Omataroa Rangitāiki No2 are continuing to undergo training with their kaimahi on GIS.

Ōhiwa Headlands Sanctuary Trust have significantly extended their pest and weed control programme with the employment of a second trapping contractor and a weed control contractor whose previous employment ended with the arrival of Covid. Landowner permissions are progressing, and the project is well ahead of schedule.

Ongoing maintenance of the Tauranga, Ngā Tapuwae o Toi and Pakihi have occurred. The district is working through a review of the MOU between motu trails and the Department. This MOU will cover the Tirohanga dunes and Pakihi tracks, the aim is to have this MOU agreed and signed off before the end of the financial year.

The Tauwhare Pā slip has been removed and cleared, currently the team are working to establish an alternate track in the short term to re-open the scenic reserve. The long-term option will be to add in a potential structure to make entry onto Tauwhare easily accessible. This will be planned for the new financial year.

Whirinaki

In Whirinaki Te Pua ā Tane, mahi continues for biodiversity, treaty relationships and visitor and heritage teams. The biodiversity team ran a presentation / learning experience for jobs for nature kaimahi. This was focused on the predator control operations occurring and included showing them how to remove toxins from the bait stations.

The wilding conifer programme in the Whirinaki is complete with the three main contractors (Mahi Rakau, Heli Resources and BioVision) having covered areas in the Rangitāiki River Conservation Area, the Waione and Taahau Frost Flats, Otamatea River Marginal Strip. This mahi was achieved with both core DOC funding and an allocation through the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme, the MPI managed initiative against wildings all over the country, and the DOC Regional Pest Management funding in response to BOPRC wilding priorities.

While there are no goats 'actually' present in the Whirinaki, there are areas alongside that valuable tract of land that do have goats. Anything feral in those areas is targeted to ensure the Whirinaki remains goat-free. This work is done in conjunction and cooperation with the Gisborne District.

The Whirinaki recreation camp is now opened and has steadily welcomed back visitors to the conservation park. The visitor & heritage team supported the community/tiriti team to assist with the support of the Minginui village in response to covid. The visitor & heritage provided firewood households in dire need of warmth in the village to support the winter season and covid response.

The District is supporting Ngāti Manawa develop an operational plan for the final 12 months of their project. The operational plan will focus on the monitoring of bird species and GIS on the tracks and work that has occurred.

Ōpōtiki

The Raukumara Pae Maunga Project has been moving into the monitoring space and tracking well on the timelines required for the aerial 1080 operation. Ngāti Porou undertook a roadshow in May to engage with their hapū sharing the details of the operation. Te Whānau ā Apanui have continued to engage with private landowners and their own as we get closer to the operation.

The Whakatōhea team are fully staffed again, and the newly promoted supervisor has been working with the Whakatōhea Iwi Development Manager to complete an operational plan for the project. In the interim, kaimahi have cleared tracks and built and installed a trapping network in the Manganuku Valley in support of the whoio protection programme in the valley. The Whakatōhea team have continued their work in Manganuku and started to venture into the water monitoring on the waterways within the rohe.

Tokitoki midden is a seawall that requires a new resource consent. This is a high priority for the District to progress work to contribute to applying for a resource consent. This is high priority as it has been for some time. They are working with Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Ūpokorehe.

Appendix 1 – Board Member Profiles

Dr Paul Kayes (Chair)

Paul is a Professor at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and offers 30 years' experience in tertiary marine and environmental studies. In his academic roles, he has formed partnerships with Iwi and the Department of Conservation. He is also a Board member and Chair of numerous community and sporting governance boards.

Dayle Takitimu (Deputy Chair)

Dayle (Te Whānau ā Apanui, Ngāti Porou, and Te Aitanga a Māhaki) has a legal background and extensive experience working in iwi technical teams and working alongside Crown teams developing environmental and climate policy/ frameworks. She has skills in iwi environmental management, governance, indigenous rights advocacy, and environmental planning, monitoring, and research. Dayle provides strong community and iwi links in Waiariki/Tairāwhiti, and great understanding of indigenous knowledge systems and worldview.

Anne Mackersey

Mrs. Mackersey is a farm manager in Whakamārama. She has trained in landscape architecture and has a lifelong interest in land management and environmental practices. She is an active member of several local community groups.

Phil Ross

Dr Ross is a Senior Research Fellow and marine ecologist at Waikato University and has extensive knowledge of Bay of Plenty coastal and marine environments and ecology. His strengths lie in the interpretation of scientific information and conveying science and conservation issues to a diverse public audience.

Julian Lee

Dr Lee is now retired from a career in science with a biological chemistry background. A Massey University graduate, his career started with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. After the formation of the Crown Research Institutes, he had roles in AgResearch as a senior scientist and Group Leader, Chief Scientist at Crop and Food Research (2005-2007) and was a former Group Manager Strategy at Plant and Food Research (2007-2009). He has established university and CRI (Crown Research Institutes) science networks and wide experience in research leadership and governance, with skills in science in negotiation, consensus building and strategic thinking. His outdoor recreation interests are fishing, planting, gardening, and golf.

Dayle Hunia

Ko Pūtauaki te maunga, ko Ngāti Awa te iwi. Dayle Hunia runs an environmental consultancy and is based in Whakatāne. She currently serves on a range of boards including the Environmental Defence Society and Te Tapatoru ā Toi. Dayle is married to Hurricane, and they have three kids and one kiwi averted dog.

Rachel Pinn

Ms. Pinn is an independent director with skills in strategic planning and policy development. She has a passion for the New Zealand environment and holds a Bachelor of Resource Management and a Master of Applied Science in Transport Science.

Gina Mohi

Mrs Mohi has worked in the resource management and environmental planning for 15 years. Gina is employed by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council as Pūtaiao Mātauranga, Science and Strategy. She holds a master's degree with a double major in Environmental Planning and Earth Sciences. She has affiliations to Ngāti Rangiwewehi, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, NgāiTai, Te Whakatōhea and Te Arawa.

Sara Carley

Sara has a long background in public service as an International Development Manager with experience in the Pacific Islands and Asia. She has strong policy, planning, and analysis skills, with experience in programme planning, financial management, and cultural awareness.

Michelle Ngamoki

Michelle (Ngāti Te Runanga o te Whānau) undertakes community initiatives restoring birdlife to the Raukumara ranges, and hapū initiatives relating to conserving marine life. She has also been involved with policy negotiations on behalf of iwi to preserve traditional marine conservation practices.