



# **Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**

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



## **Annual Report**

**For the period 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025**

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For more information on the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board, please visit <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-boards/Canterbury-Aoraki/> or contact the Board Support Officer at the Department of Conservation in Christchurch [canterburyaorakiboard@doc.govt.nz](mailto:canterburyaorakiboard@doc.govt.nz)

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## FRONTISPIECE



*Kura Tāwhiti (Castle Hill) | Photo: C Bennett*



*Tasman Lake, Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park | Photo: R Suggate*

## 1)Chairperson's Report



Kia ora koutou

Once again, it has been a busy year for the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board / Te Rūnanga Papa Atawhai o Waitaha me Aoraki (the Board), with a lot going on in the conservation space, not just in our takiwā, but throughout the whole of the country.

First of all, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for the work and effort they have all put into the Board this year. We all have other commitments that require time and effort, so the additional mahi that is required from the Board members is greatly appreciated.

I would like to acknowledge Joseph Hullen who retired from the Board this year, a long-standing Board member of 18 years and 11 Conservation Ministers. Joseph was a rangatira of the Board, with a vast knowledge of Kāi Tahu whakapapa, Mātauranga Māori of traditional harvesting practices and conservation methods. His wisdom and knowledge will be missed, but he has assured us he is only a phone call away.

Key topics that have come across the Board's radar this year include:

- Department of Conservation (the Department) Preparedness Plan for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)
- Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park
  - Overflow of visitors at White Horse Hill carpark
  - Increased summer visitor numbers, placing significant pressure on infrastructure such as parking, traffic management, toilet facilities, and the hut booking system
  - Paid Parking Pilot
  - Review of the National Park Management Plan
- Milestone Reporting from the Department
  - Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park
  - Arthur's Pass National Park
  - Canterbury (Waitaha) Conservation Management Strategy



- Multiple applications for lease concessions - Lower Selwyn Huts, Greenpark Sands Conservation Area and Conservation Area Lower Selwyn Huts, Springston
- Proposed 1080 operations in the Wilberforce and Mathias Rivers and North Canterbury
- Environment Canterbury (ECan) Regional Policy Statement and Waitarakao Washdyke Lagoon Catchment Strategy
- Illegal structures at Loch Katrine, Lake Sumner Forest Park
- Proposal to modernise the conservation system, including charging for some public conservation land, streamlining of concessions and the planning process, and flexibility around land exchanges and disposals
- Management of gravel extraction on the Canterbury regions' rivers
- Rangitahi/Molesworth Recreation Reserve - review of Conservation Management Plan

All of these topics require discussion, agreement and recommendations to the Department from the Board, and with limited time and resources, this presents a lot of work, so I once again acknowledge the members of the Board for their efforts.

The Board has had a busy year providing submissions on a number of matters including:

- Afforestation on Crown Land
- Predator Free 2050 Strategy Review
- Action for Nature - Implementing New Zealand's Biodiversity Strategy 2025-2030
- Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill
- Exploring charging for access to some public conservation land

Once again, a lot of discussion, co-ordination, time and resources has been made by Board members.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge our Board Support Officer, Marie-Louise Grandiek. Her knowledge and support for the Board is immense and she is a key component for the continued function of the Board.

The future of Conservation Boards is unclear at present, and only time will tell if they continue on into the future.

Ka mihi



Michael McMillan  
Chairperson, Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board

## 2) Introduction

This is the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board (the Board). Section 6O of the Conservation Act 1987 (the Act), requires Conservation Boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) with an annual report as soon as practicable after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement, the Board submits this annual report.

Conservation Boards are appointed by the Minister of Conservation (the Minister), under Section 6 (P) of the Act. Board functions are outlined in Section 6M, and the powers which enable the Conservation Boards to carry out these functions are under Section 6N of the Act. The Board had 12 (twelve) members for the 2024/2025 year, appointed by the Minister under the terms of the Act.

Conservation Boards are independent advisory bodies, established by statute. The Board represents the community and offers interaction between communities and the Department, within their area of jurisdiction.

The Board has several statutory roles under various parliamentary Acts, including:

- The recommendation of the Canterbury (Waitaha) Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to the NZCA for approval
- Advising the Department and the NZCA on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice
- The approval of Conservation Management Plans
- The recommendations of National Park Management Plans to the NZCA for approval
- Advising the Department and the NZCA on conservation matters and proposed changes to the status of land of national and international significance
- Liaising with any Fish and Game Council on conservation matters
- Carrying out other powers delegated by the Minister, the Conservation Act 1987 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.

### 3) Rohe

The Board's area of jurisdiction covers an area of 5,201,723 hectares. This 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. Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park and Arthur's Pass National Park lie wholly within the Board's jurisdiction.

Public conservation areas and waters make up 23.76% of all of the Board's total district (*Figure 1*).

#### 3.1 Conservation features of the area

The main features of public conservation land and waters within the Board's boundaries are:

- Arthur's Pass National Park – 118,522 ha
- Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park – 72,148 ha
- Nelson Lakes National Park – 7 ha
- Lake Sumner (Hoka Kura) Forest Park – 105,029 ha
- Te Kahui Kaupeka Conservation Park – 93,090 ha
- Hakatere Conservation Park – 59,584 ha
- Ahuriri Conservation Park – 47,887 ha
- Craigieburn Forest Park – 44,683 ha
- Ruataniwha Conservation Park – 37,095 ha
- Oteake Conservation Park – 33,758 ha
- Korowai/Torlesse Tussocklands Park – 23,997 ha
- Hanmer Forest Park – 11,777 ha
- Hawea Conservation Park – 1,075 ha
- Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park – 42 ha
- 428 Stewardship Areas – 364,560 ha
- 643 Marginal Strips – 10,580 ha
- 106 Scenic Reserves – 23,001 ha
- 37 Recreation Reserves – 5,927 ha
- 8 Historic Reserves – 7 ha
- 299 Other Reserves – 8,287 ha
- 1 Wilderness Area – 7,171 ha
- 2 Marine Reserves – 746 ha
- 1 Sanctuary to Protect Marine Mammals – 74,085 ha
- 1 Specially Protected Area – 90,741 ha



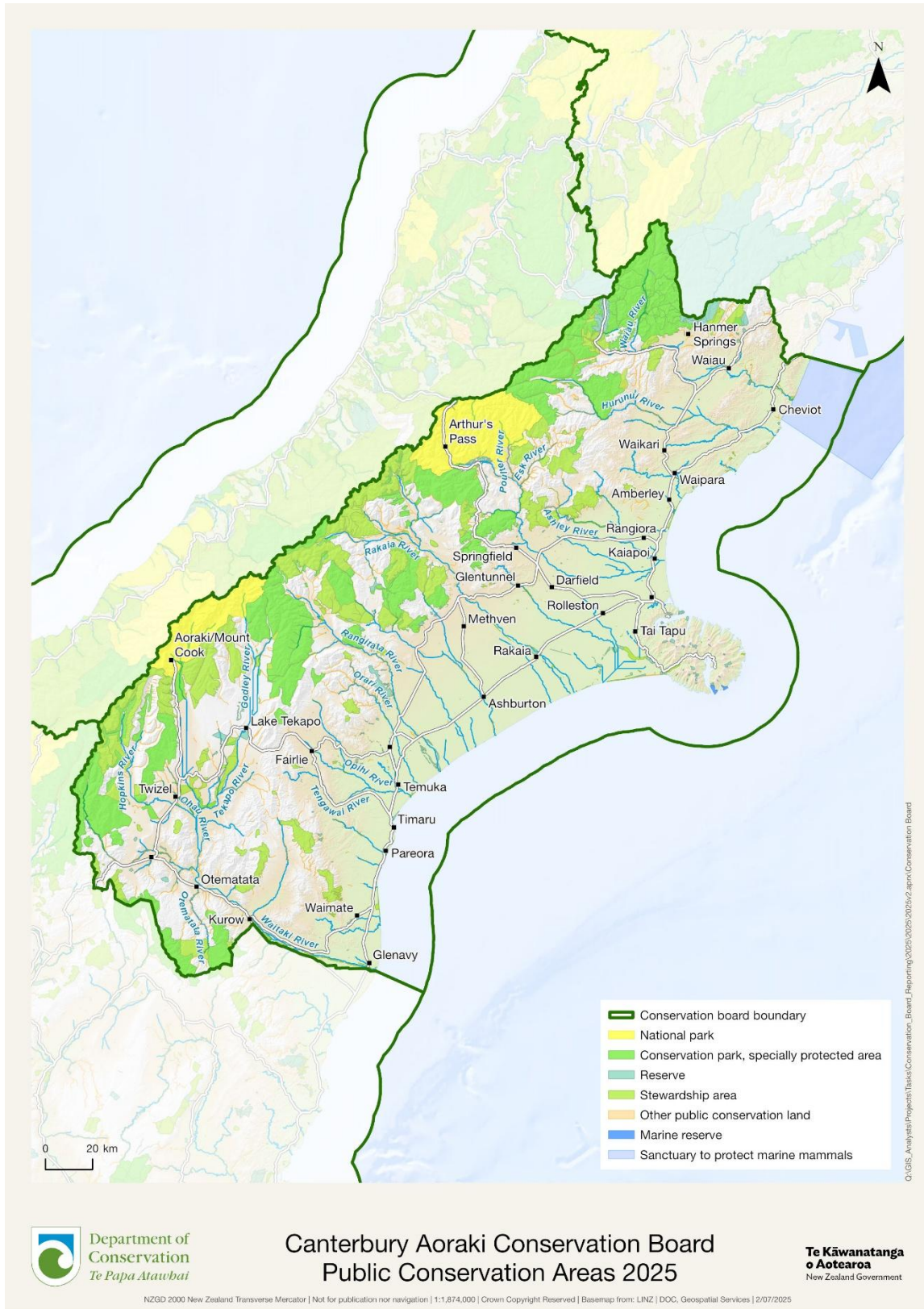


Figure 1: Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board Jurisdiction

## 4) Functions

### 4.1 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 conservation management strategies, and the review and amendment of such strategies, under the relevant enactments
- 2) To approve conservation management plans, and the review and amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments
- 3) To advise the Authority, and the Director-General of the Department, on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for the area within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 4) To advise the Authority or the Director General of the Department:
  - 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 within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 5) To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 6) To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under the Act or any other Act

### 4.2 Board powers under Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987

The powers of the Board are:

- 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

### 4.3 Board functions under Section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980

There are two national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board's region: Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, and Arthur's Pass National Park.

The functions of the Board are:

- 1) To recommend management plans, and the review or amendment of such plans, for national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board in accordance with sections 45 to 47
- 2) To consider and determine priorities for the implementation of management plans for national parks
- 3) To consider and determine priorities to the Minister for the appointment of honorary rangers under section 40

- 4) To review and report to the Director-General of the Department or to the Authority, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the administration of the general policies for national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 5) To give advice to the Director-General of the Department or to the Authority:
  - a) On the interpretation of any management plan for a national park, and
  - b) On any proposal for the addition of land to any national park or the establishment of a new national park, and
  - c) On any other matter relating to any national park, within the jurisdiction of the Board

## 5) Membership

The Minister appoints Board members under Section 6P of the Act. The process of appointment ensures that a range of perspectives, life-experiences, and knowledge contribute to the advice provided and decisions made by the Board.

Board members are appointed for 3 (three) years and may be reappointed, unless they are appointed in replacement of a prior member's term. There were 12 (twelve) Board members for the reporting year. Michael McMillan was elected Chairperson, and Courtney Bennett was elected Deputy Chairperson. Table 1 lists the membership of the Board between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025.

*Table 1: Board Membership*

Board Member	Area	Term Start	Term End
Courtney Bennett	Christchurch	01/07/22	30/06/25
Robert Brears	Christchurch	17/08/23	30/06/25
Rachael Evans	Christchurch	17/08/23	30/06/26
Joseph Hullen*	Kaipoi	01/09/07	30/06/25
Distinguished Professor Philip Hulme	Lincoln	01/07/21	30/06/27
Michael McMillan*	Temuka	01/07/20	30/06/26
Paul Milligan	Christchurch	17/08/23	30/06/26
Jana Newman	Christchurch	01/11/24	30/06/27
Rachel Robilliard*	Leeston	01/07/19	30/06/25
Sara Severinsen*	Christchurch	01/11/24	30/06/27
Richard Suggate	Diamond Harbour	01/07/22	30/06/25
Brenden Winder	Christchurch	17/08/23	30/06/27

*\*Denotes Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu appointee*

### 5.1 Member's Profiles

#### Michael McMillan of Temuka (Chairperson)

Michael (Rapuwaiti, Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Ngāi Tahu) is a nominee by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and is the current Chairperson of the Board. Notable kaupapa he has led on the Board include the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan review/consultation, commercial eeling in the Mackenzie country lakes through MPI quota, Rangitata conservation lands and encroachment on the awa, and developments at Kura Tāwhiti.

### **Courtney Bennett of Christchurch (Deputy Chairperson)**

Courtney's background is in environmental and strategic planning. She runs a planning consultancy that specialises in policy and plan-writing, community engagement and research, and has previously worked on national park related projects in a technical capacity. Courtney has also published several academic articles focusing on best practice mana whenua engagement methodologies and incorporating Māori worldviews and mātauranga into planning processes.

### **Robert Brears**

Robert has 12 years of experience in climate change and natural resources management, on topics including water resources management, climate change mitigation/adaptation and nature-based solutions.

### **Rachael Evans**

Rachael (Ngāti Tama and Ngāti Pamoana) is a lecturer in law and the University of Canterbury. She is a former practising lawyer specialising in Treaty rights and water resource management and government law. Rachael has considerable knowledge of Te Ao Māori and conservation, tikanga and the environment.

### **Joseph Hullen**

Joseph (Ngāi Tahu) was nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. He has skills in environmental management and advocacy, is a mahinga kai practitioner and provides strong cultural awareness. Joseph is currently a whakapapa researcher for Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

### **Distinguished Professor Philip Hulme**

Philip is an experienced biosecurity academic. He has served on Biosecurity Advisory Committees for the United Kingdom and New Zealand governments, as well as ECan. In 2023, the Minister appointed him as a Director of the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust. Philip has an excellent understanding of data and statistics, the ability to make evidence-based decisions, knowledge of the research landscape that supports conservation activities in New Zealand, and a sound understanding of governance best practice.

### **Paul Milligan**

Paul has a background in marine tourism, providing insights into both marine issues and the tourism industry.

### **Jana Newman**

Jana has a background in conservation, Antarctic science, policy and diplomacy, including leading New Zealand's engagement in the Antarctic Treaty System. She has broad experience as a senior leader in government agencies working with legislation, policy, strategy, and engagement.

### Rachel Robilliard

Rachel (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki, and Te Taumutu Rūnanga) was nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. She has a legal background with a focus on environmental, planning and natural resources law. Rachel has experience advising on legal and compliance requirements for a range of environmental and resource management matters. She is also a member of the Kaitiakitanga Portfolio for Te Taumutu Rūnanga.

### Sara Severinsen

Sara was nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and has experience in land, water, and species conservation, working between mana whenua and the Department. She also has resource management framework and crown pastoral lease administration experience.

### Richard Suggate

After a 30-year career working for the Department across Canterbury and other locations, Richard brings to the Board a wide understanding of biodiversity, recreation and conservation operations. During his career, he established relationships with Canterbury papatipu rūnaka and many local groups. Richard is currently a member of a number of conservation, recreation, and community organisations.

### Brenden Winder

Brenden (Ngāi Irakehu, Tūwharetoa) has a varied background in maritime matters, land and vegetation fire management, emergency management, and tourism. He provides an understanding of working with government, local government, and non-government agencies.

## 6) Meetings and Field Trips

### 6.1 Board Meetings

The Board held five meetings during the reporting period. Venues for the meetings vary each year, to ensure wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board.

*Table II: Board meeting dates and locations*

Date	Location
13 August 2024	Christchurch
15 October 2024	Christchurch
9 December 2024	Lyttelton
17 February 2025	Christchurch
4 April 2025	Mahaanui

### 6.2 Field Trips

Field trips are an excellent opportunity for Board members to become more aware of conservation issues within the region and meet members of local communities.



## 10 December 2024 – Lyttelton Harbour/Whakaraupō

The focus of the field trip was to gain perspective on the Department’s activities within the harbour. The Board visited key sites including:

- Horomaka Island. The Board learnt of the importance of the island to whanau, and the value of whanau members being involved in restoration work.
- Ripapa Island. The Board was briefed on the significance of the island to Ngāi Tahu hapū, a Tōpuni site. Additional context was provided on the musket warfare, the gun emplacements to protect New Zealand from the Russian invasion, and the prison on the island.
- Contextual backgrounds was also provided on:
  - Dolphin by-catch and marine tourism management (inside Port Levy)
  - Adderley Head future plans
  - Project longairo – Little Port Cooper
  - Macrocyst project (including biosecurity risks or port activities)
  - Whakaraupō Plan



*Figure 2: Board members being briefed on DOC activities on and around Lyttelton Harbour / Whakaraupō aboard Black Cat Cruises | Photo by J Sidery*



### 23 June 2025 – Ashley/Rakahuri River

The field trip to the Ashley/Rakahuri River was deferred at the request of the Department. The field trip will now be undertaken in August 2025.

### 6.3 Attendance

The table below summarises the Board's meetings and field trip attended by members during the year. Members attended additional meetings and events, including subcommittee meetings, representative and liaison roles.

Table III: Board Member Attendance

Board Member	Board Meetings	Field Trips
Courtney Bennett	4/5	1/1
Robert Brears	1/5	0/1
Rachael Evans**	3/5	0/1
Joseph Hullen	3/5	0/1
Distinguished Professor Philip Hulme	5/5	1/1
Michael McMillan	5/5	1/1
Paul Milligan	5/5	1/1
Jana Newman*	2/5	0/1
Rachel Robilliard	5/5	1/1
Sara Severinsen*	2/5	0/1
Richard Suggate	3/5	1/1
Brenden Winder	5/5	0/1

\*Official appointment to the Board was 1 November 2025

\*\*Leave of absence

### 6.4 Special Events

The Board's Conservation Awards are held annually to recognise and encourage conservation efforts and achievements in Canterbury. The Board awards the 'Te Waka o Aoraki' trophy to a person or group of people who have been nominated to be considered for the award.

The work undertaken by individuals and communities collectively is making an impact on improving the environment. The Conservation Awards acknowledges those who are making a positive contribution through their hard work and initiatives.

Owing to unexpected logistical challenges beyond their control, the Board made the decision to defer the Conservation Awards for 2024. The Board is fully committed to holding the Conservation Awards in 2025.

## 6.5 Community and DOC involvement in Board meetings

The Board welcomed presentations from members of the public and Department staff at meetings. During 2024-2024, presentations received included:

- Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy (ANZBS) Implementation Plan (*the Department*)
- University of Canterbury Aoraki, Arowhenua and Mountaineers Project (*Chris North and Toni Torepe*)
- Enhancement work on public conservation land, Osbornes Drain (*ECan, Selwyn District Council, Morphem Environmental, and the Department*)
- New approach for managing biking on public conservation land (*the Department*)
- Lyttelton Port Company Post Recovery Plan (post-earthquake) and Whaka-Ora Healthy Harbour Plan (*Lyttelton Port Company*)
- Loch Katrine, Lake Sumner Forest Park (*Loch Katrine Association*)
- Reclassification of stewardship land (*the Department*)
- Hurunui Biodiversity Trust
- Paid Parking Pilot, Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park (*the Department*)
- Integrated Regional Plan (*the Department*)
- Pastoral Lease Programme (*Toitū Te Whenua/Land Information New Zealand, and the Department*)

## 7) Statutory Activity

### 7.1 Annual Work Plan

The Minister did not send a Letter of Expectation for the 2024-2025 year. The Board set its work plan based on the Minister's priorities (*see Appendix I*).

The Board reviewed their work structure and sub-committees for the 2024-2025 year to ensure a more strategic approach to undertake their statutory responsibilities (*see Appendix II*).

### 7.2 Canterbury (Waitaha) 2016 Conservation Management Strategy

*Conservation General Policy requires the Department to report, at least annually, on the implementation of the Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)*

#### Implementation Monitoring

At its bi-monthly meetings, the Board received regular operations and planning reports from the Department, which included information on the wide-ranging work undertaken by Departmental staff. These reports included, and were aligned with, engagement with mana whenua and references to CMS milestones. The Board received an annual Departmental report on the implementation of the CMS at their meeting in December 2024.

NB: The Board has noted that the CMS does not contain a 'Canterbury Plains Place' and accordingly, are mindful that numerous sites throughout Canterbury/Waitaha are not incorporated within the CMS.

### **7.3 Management Plans**

There are 2 (two) National Parks within the Board's area of jurisdiction. Each National Park has a management plan which is intended to be reviewed at 10 (ten) year intervals.

#### **Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park**

The Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan was approved by the NZCA in 2004. The process for reviewing the management plan was paused while the Department and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu worked through the wider implications of the Supreme Court's decision on the Ngāi Taki ki Tamaki case. Agreement has been reached to progress a new review of the management plan, and this is currently being undertaken.

The Department presented an annual report to the Board on the existing management plan in December 2024. The Board's involvement in plan-making activities for the new management plan has been on hold since late 2022, until such time as the Board is confident that the Department is engaging fully with mana whenua. The Board has requested that a framework be put in place to enable the review process to comply with the Board's requirements that the new management plan is co-designed with Kaitiaki Rūnaka, and is reflective of the Department's responsibility to 'give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti'.

#### **Arthur's Pass National Park**

The Arthur's Pass National Park Management Plan was approved by the NZCA in December 2007. It was due for review in 2017, but this has yet to be commenced by the Department. The Department presented an annual report to the Board on the existing management plan in December 2024.

#### **Te Waihora Joint Management Plan/Mahere Tukutahi o Te Waihora**

The Te Waihora Joint Management Plan (2005) is the first statutory joint management plan between the Crown and Iwi, and results from the settlement of Ngāi Tahu claims against the Crown and in particular, the loss of access to places where the tribes produced or procured food and other resources.

There has been no annual reporting to the Board since the commencement of the Plan.

## **8) Advice and Advocacy**

### **8.1 Board Liaisons**

All Board members have responsibility for liaising with other groups when opportunities arise, and some members have specific roles in liaison. The Board appointed various members to liaise with other groups and agencies.

The Board's immediate neighbours are the Nelson Marlborough, West Coast Tai Poutini, and Otago Conservation Boards. The Board's respective liaisons monitor the minutes for issues of common interest and report back at each meeting.

Table IV: Board Liaisons and Representatives

Board Member	Group/Agency/Organisation
Joseph Hullen	Fish and Game (North Canterbury)
Michael McMillan	Fish and Game (Central South Island) Himalayan Tahr Control Plan Implementation Group National Wallaby Management Programme Department of Conservation Community Fund
Richard Suggate	West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board Department of Conservation (Stewardship Land Reclassification)
Courtney Bennett	Otago Conservation Board Conservation Awards Sponsors Social Media
Rachel Robilliard	Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board

## 8.2 Advice to the Department of Conservation

The Board provided advice and recommendations to the Department on several concession applications in relation to:

- Ruataniwha Conservation Park
- Arthur's Pass National Park
- Korowai Torlesse Tussocklands Park
- Tauhinukorokio/Mount Pleasant Reserve
- Braemar Conservation Area
- Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park
- Cave Stream Scenic Reserve
- Craigieburn Forest Park
- Hae Hae Te Moana River Conservation Reserve
- Mt Potts Conservation Area
- St James Conservation Area
- Greenpark Sands Conservation Area
- Conservation Area Lower Selwyn Huts
- Hakatere Conservation Park
- Mount Hutt Forest Conservation Area
- Ellangowan Scenic Reserve

### 8.3 Board Work

During the 2024-2025 year, the Board provided submissions/commented on the following:

- Clough Cableway, Arthur's Pass National Park (*Department of Conservation*)
- Exploring a biodiversity credit system for Aotearoa New Zealand, Discussion Document (*Ministry for the Environment*)
- Exploring charging for access to some public conservation land (*Department of Conservation*)
- Fast Track Approvals Bill (*Ministry for the Environment*)
- Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2025-2030 (*Department of Conservation*)
- Predator Free 2050 strategy review (*Department of Conservation*)
- Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill (*Justice Committee, Parliament*)
- Modernising conservation land management (*Department of Conservation*)
- Lower Selwyn Huts (*Department of Conservation*)

### 8.4 Community Visibility

The Board maintains a presence on the Department's website with updates provided throughout the year on activities undertaken. The Board also maintains a presence on social media via Facebook and Instagram.

### 8.5 Fees and Allowances

Fees and allowances are paid in accordance with the Fees and Travelling Allowances Act 1951. Fees for statutory boards are set in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework.



*Figure 3: Robust grasshopper (Sigaust robustus) | Photo: Department of Conservation*



# APPENDIX I – Minister of Conservation’s Priorities

## Hon Tama Potaka

Minister of Conservation  
Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti  
Minister for Māori Development  
Minister for Whānau Ora  
Associate Minister of Housing (Social Housing)



18 September 2024

Ref: 24-B-0318

Mr Edward Ellison  
New Zealand Conservation Authority  
[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe Edward

Thank you for your 5 July letter laying out the Authority’s position on several matters, and for hosting me at your August meeting. I found the kōrero valuable to further understand your views on the challenges facing conservation.

After reflecting on the discussion, I would like to take this opportunity to confirm my priorities for the conservation portfolio in writing and invite you to share this with the Conservation Boards.

My overarching priority is to protect high value conservation areas that deliver the best outcomes for biodiversity and recreation. This requires increasing available revenue and improving the performance of spending on conservation outcomes.

My vision is to encourage more visits by tourists and New Zealanders to our iconic landscapes, to activate more commercial opportunities on public conservation land, and by focussing on priority species and places, enable us to make the biggest difference for nature.

As discussed, please find below an outline of my priorities and focus areas to deliver on the Government’s priorities for conservation.

*Improve the performance and productivity of the conservation regulatory system*

*Make the conservation regulatory system (including the development of statutory plans and processing of permissions/concessions) simpler, faster, cheaper, and clearer for applicants while giving effect to s4. This will include process improvements, modernising systems, and pursuing legislative reform.*

*Target investment in high-value conservation outcomes*

*Target investment in high conservation value areas to restore key degraded habitats, support recovery of native species and maximise carbon storage on public conservation land.*

*Generate new revenue and set the system up to be more financially sustainable*

*Generate new revenue and build a more financially sustainable conservation system by 2026. Develop a plan to partner for investment in protecting high value conservation domains in 2025.*



## APPENDIX II – Work Structure

ITEM	DESCRIPTION/EXPLANATION
Statutory Responsibilities and Policy	<p>Oversee Conservation Management Strategy (CMS), statutory plans and advance stewardship land reclassification</p> <p>Influence legislation and infrastructure policies to ensure conservation protections</p>
Treaty Responsibilities	Strengthen Ngāi Tahu partnership
Biodiversity and Climate Action	Raise awareness and advocate for biodiversity outcomes and risks, pest control and climate adaptation
Recreation Management and Visitor Pressure	Respond and advocate for visitor recreation related issues including matters relating to tracks, huts and infrastructure (including back country)
Community and Partnership Engagement and Advocacy	<p>Advocacy, community engagement and awards, invitations to public members and groups to Board hui social media and media releases</p> <p>Conservation Boards' newsletter contributions</p>
Permissions	Co-ordinate response to permissions applications, streamline and optimise Board involvement in permissions, including reviewing triggers for Board priorities