

Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board

Annual Report 2009/2010



Te Rūnanga Whakauka o Kahurangi ki Kaikōura

NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION BOARD

Herea kia Kōtahi - Working Together

Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board Annual Report 2009/2010



***Presented to the New Zealand Conservation
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Cover photo: At the opening of the new Angelus Hut, Nelson Lakes National Park. From left: Hon Kate Wilkinson, Minister of Conservation; Kim Forbes, DOC; Judy Hellstrom, Chair, Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board; and Neil Clifton, DOC. Photo by John Wotherspoon.

Contents

Message from the Chair	5
Introduction	6
Highlights and key events for the year	7
Progress with plans	10
Board membership	11
Meetings	14
Board committees	16
Other Board work	18



Board members Tracey Osborne (left) and Judy Hellstrom get acquainted with the Marlborough Sounds weta at Maud Island. (Photo: Kay Swtizer).

Message from the Chair

Farewell from the Chair

It is with pleasure that I write these comments for the Annual Report – this will be my last responsibility before leaving the Board, a little later in the year.

It seems such a short time since I was first appointed to the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board, yet it was seven years ago. From the outset, my time on this Conservation Board has been an honour and a responsibility that I have taken seriously and have valued.

One of the tasks that I had hoped to have been able to be more involved in whilst on the Conservation Board was the review of the Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). A new model of CMS, to be put in place nationally, has been developed and has now been sent to all Boards for their comments. I hope that our Board will be able to get to work on the CMS review during the next year. I have a lot of confidence in the ability of this Conservation Board to get on with this big task. I have been proud to have been associated over the past two years with the review of the Abel Tasman National Park Management Plan, and especially for me, with the Board's approval of the management plan for Te Waikoropupū Springs. As I write this, the partial review of the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan is still in process, but I am proud of the commitment and care which our Board brought to the process of the review.

This Board has a very constructive and collegial working relationship with the Department of Conservation staff in Nelson/Marlborough. The relationship extends well beyond the Conservancy Office in Nelson: Board members are from all corners of this big Conservancy, and all Area Office staff are known to at least some of the Board. I particularly value the practice that we have had at Board meetings of a briefing, usually by the Area Manager, on issues which are important to, or even specific to, the area in which our meeting is being held. Board members are both respectful of, and very supportive of, the work that is done by Department staff, often on a tight budget.

In particular, I would like to thank Kay Switzer for her commitment to her position as Board Support Officer. I also wish to thank Jo Gould for the many tasks she does as Community Relations Manager, including supporting me in my role as Chair, always with good grace, and good humour too. I wish to thank Neil Clifton and his team for their attendance at many Board meetings and willingness to contribute to those meetings in a very positive way.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Board members, all of them who have been on the Board with me over the past seven years. I have valued the particular strengths and knowledge that all have brought with them to the role, and I have valued their friendship too.

Noho ora mai



Judy Hellstrom

Introduction

The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board is one of 13 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 Board to carry out those functions, are under 6(N) of the Act.

The Conservation Act specifies that the Board's role is to:

- recommend the approval of conservation management strategies;
- approve conservation management plans;
- advise on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice;
- advise on proposed changes to the status of land areas of national and international significance;
- advise on proposals for new walkways;
- liaise with Fish and Game Councils on conservation matters; and
- carry out other powers delegated to them by the Conservation Minister, the Conservation Act or any other Act.

The Board has a number of 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 such plans by the New Zealand Conservation Authority.

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires conservation boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority with an annual report as soon as practicable after the 30th June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board submits this, its 12th Annual Report.

Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy

The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy and the Kahurangi National Park situated in the West Coast Conservancy. In addition to Kahurangi National Park this includes Abel Tasman and Nelson Lakes National Parks, Mt Richmond Forest Park, Molesworth Station and important nature reserves such as Takapourewa (Stephens Island) and Farewell Spit.

The area provides for a wide range of recreational uses ranging from the Marlborough Sounds to the Kaikoura Ranges including the new Conservation Park, Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia. There are also four marine reserves in the region: Long Island, West Haven, Tonga Island and Horoirangi.

There are about 750 historic places both Maori and European. These include Maori archaeological sites, historic backcountry huts, a whaling station and cob cottages in South Marlborough.

Species protection programmes in the area cover tuatara, endemic frogs, *Powelliphanta* snails, great spotted kiwi, Hutton's shearwater, weka, kaka, black-fronted tern and blue duck.

The Board's area of jurisdiction covers some of New Zealand's best known visitor sites, including the Abel Tasman Coastal Track, and the Heaphy and Queen Charlotte Tracks. There are over 300 other walks and tracks totalling more than 1950 kilometres.

Highlights and key events for the year

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Kahurangi National Park Management Plan Partial Review

The current national park plan came into effect in 2001 and a partial review of the plan was needed due to changes in circumstances and policy since then. The partial review was designed to focus on issues related to the use of mountain bikes in the park, aircraft access, increased hunting access, guided horse trekking access in part of the park and the issue of private commercial accommodation on the Heaphy Track.

Members of the Board sub-committee and Departmental staff heard public submissions in Karamea, Motueka, Takaka and Nelson in November and December 2009. Overall, 645 public submissions were made and 40 submitters appeared before the hearings panel. The panel's conclusions were discussed with the full Board in March 2010 and the draft partially-reviewed Kahurangi National Park Management Plan was formally presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) in April 2010.

Most submissions (494) dealt with the question of whether mountain biking should be allowed for on specified tracks. There were strongly held positions on both sides of the debate. The proposed changes to the plan put forward to NZCA by the Board involved allowing mountain biking for a trial period on the Heaphy Track in winter and all year round on two other park tracks.

Philip Simpson chaired the hearing panel. Other Board members involved were Judy Hellstrom, Tracey Osborne and Ross Hall.

Most of the hearings panel visited the southern end of the Heaphy Track in November 2009 when hearings were in Karamea and Ross Hall walked the Heaphy during the time the panel was considering submissions.

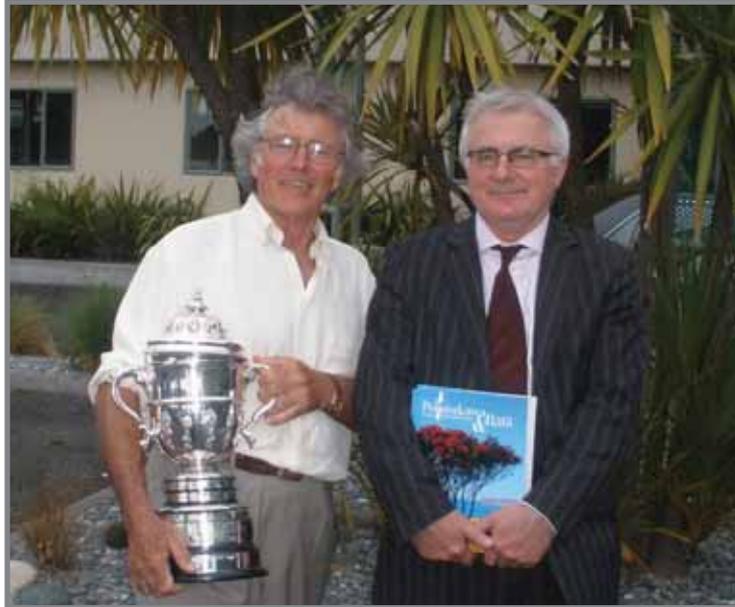
Loder Cup awarded to Philip Simpson

This year Board member Philip Simpson was awarded the 2009 Loder Cup, New Zealand's pre-eminent award for botanists. Philip had been nominated by the Board.

Conservation Minister Hon Tim Groser presented the award at a function in Nelson at which he said that the Loder Cup recognised Philip's dedication to conserving and promoting New Zealand's native plant life. The Minister described Philip's work as pioneering and visionary

and said that he was a worthy recipient of the prestigious award. He added that Philip has written award-winning books on New Zealand's native cabbage tree and on pohutakawa and rata and is currently researching a book on totara.

Judy Hellstrom spoke of Philip's many contributions to the Board and the esteem in which fellow Board members held him. Philip in turn gave a presentation about his family's involvement with plants from their earliest days in New Zealand.



Dr Philip Simpson with the Minister of Conservation Hon Tim Groser and the Loder Cup. Photo: Gavin Rodley.

Opening of new Angelus Hut

Judy Hellstrom attended the opening of the new Angelus Hut in Nelson Lakes National Park on 21 April 2010. The Board had seen plans for the replacement hut at its meeting in St Arnaud in August 2009 and been briefed on the problems associated with the old hut.

The hut is one of the few alpine huts in New Zealand that can be accessed in a relatively short time and is increasingly popular for weekend trips. The new hut is more spacious and warmer than the old hut it replaces and has the latest insulation and passive heating systems. It was formally opened by Hon Kate Wilkinson, Minister of Conservation, with a blessing of the hut and camping area on-site followed by a function in St Arnaud.

Transfer of kiwi

Joe Puketapu and Judy Hellstrom attended the release of three pairs of rowi – the world's rarest kiwi - onto Blumine Island in outer Queen Charlotte Sound. The rowi were moved from Okarito on the West Coast in the hope that the warmer, more fertile and predator-free environment would encourage them to breed. The plan is for the chicks to be returned to Okarito. The release of the kiwi was in part the result of a partnership between the DOC Nelson/Marlborough and West Coast conservancies, the BNZ Save the Kiwi Trust and the Untouched World Charitable Trust.

Joint meeting with Canterbury/Aoraki Conservation Board

The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board was pleased to accept the invitation of the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board to hold a joint meeting at Hanmer Springs in November 2009. A joint meeting session covered progress on the project on wild animal recovery operations and Bob McDowall of the New Zealand Conservation Authority gave a presentation on freshwater fauna of the North Canterbury, Nelson and Marlborough regions. Members found it useful to share views on board issues.

Members of both boards went on a field trip into the St James Conservation Area arranged by DOC's Waimakariri Area staff. The St James Conservation Area is adjacent to both Molesworth Station and Nelson Lakes National Park, both of which are in the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy. The Board appreciated seeing this area and hearing the Department's intentions for its management.



Members of Canterbury Aoraki and Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Boards and DOC staff at Lake Guyon
(Photo Kingsley Timpson)

Progress with plans

Kahurangi National Park Management Partial Review

As discussed earlier in this report the Board's major focus has been on completing the partial review of this plan and it has involved a substantial amount of work.

The partial review was of particular interest to many organisations and members of the public as the Department of Conservation proposed trialling mountain biking on the Heaphy Track in winter and other tracks all year round. Changes were also proposed to the aircraft access provisions in the plan. The partial review attracted many submissions with 645 submissions made and 40 submitters being heard in Nelson, Motueka, Takaka and Karamea.

Board members valued the opportunity to hear submissions, particularly from people who used the park and knew it intimately. In the process of considering the oral and written submissions, the Board sub-committee defined a set of values and principles that will be useful when the time comes to consider the full review of the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan.

Implementation of Conservation Management Strategy and conservation management plans

A comprehensive report on the implementation of the existing Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) was received from the Department at the May 2010 meeting. Members were impressed at the quality and range of work carried out by the Department, often in association with community groups. They considered that the report should be given wider distribution and it has been placed on the Board's part of the Department of Conservation website.

Work on the new CMS which had started in the previous financial year slowed down in response to the Authority's directive to wait until a new template was developed.

Additions to national parks

The Board supported a proposed land exchange to correct an encroachment by a private landowner into the Abel Tasman National Park at Anchorage Bay. The effect of the proposed exchange will be to increase the area of the park by 68 square metres. More significantly, the private land received in exchange will provide continuous intact forest along the shoreline and is considered to be of greater conservation value than the land to be exchanged for it.

The NZCA recommended the proposed exchange to the Minister of Conservation on 11 February 2010. This will require legislative action through the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Bill.

Molesworth

Gina, Véronique, Lynda, Maurice, Ian and Judy attended a workshop on the Molesworth Management Plan along with the Molesworth Steering Committee on 17 and 18 August 2009. At this workshop the draft management plan was considered in detail. Those attending were very positive about both the process and the direction of the plan. The plan reached its final draft stage before work was halted due to the need to agree upon wording in relation to iwi customary interests in the area.

National Park Management Plan implementation monitoring

The Board considered the Department's report monitoring the implementation of the Nelson Lakes National Park Management Plan at its meeting in August 2009. Members had a range of questions on didymo, eeling, grazing licences, control of Canada geese and iwi consultation processes which were responded to by Alison Rothschild, Area Manager for Nelson Lakes. Board members were particularly interested in planning for and management of visitor use of the park including the Department's proposal to monitor noise levels at boating events.

The prohibition of hovercraft use within the park was raised at this meeting and pursued further at the Board's November meeting.

Board membership

Farewells

During the year the membership of the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board reduced from 12 to 10 members appointed by the Minister for Conservation. Two members are on the nomination of Ngai Tahu. Gina Solomon was re-appointed for a further term and three members retired from the Board this year.

David Melville, Carl Elkington and Véronique Cornille were formally farewelled at the Board's August 2009 meeting. Neil Clifton, on behalf of the Department, thanked the retiring Board members for their contribution to conservation. He commented that being a member of a Board was part of a tradition of altruistic service that deserved respect. Judy thanked the departing members for their valuable contributions and their collegial friendship and promised that issues they raised would not be forgotten.

Carl Elkington served on the Board for six years, most recently on the marine conservation, and concession committees. He was the first of the second generation to serve on the Board following his father, Jim Elkington. He stated that the Board was an important institution and that it might need to fight for its position in future. His parting message was that it was important that the Treaty partnership strengthens and blooms and that iwi representation continues to be an important issue in the Board's work.

David Melville served six years on the Board, most recently as convenor of the concessions committee. He also served on the management planning committee.

David commented that he was pleased to have been involved in helping staff take a more strategic approach to decision-making on concessions. He paid tribute to colleagues on the concessions committee and Departmental staff, in particular, Paul Thornton. David said there had been a large amount of good work done to get an improved concession regime in place. He noted that in his "retirement" he would now have time to progress Ramsar and Farewell Spit issues.

Véronique served one term on the Board and was on the management planning committee, the Kahurangi planning sub-committee and the Molesworth Management Plan sub-committee. She was also the liaison person for the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board. Véronique said that she had enjoyed her time on the Board particularly her involvement with Molesworth. Véronique thanked Departmental staff whom she had always found very willing to clarify and discuss any matters. She reminded the Board members that they are kaitiaki for future generations. She hoped to see a charge imposed on tourists to compensate for some of the environmental and other costs associated with their visits.

Marama Tākao, who was appointed to the Board in August 2008, resigned in November 2009 due to work commitments and a move out of the district.

Members' profiles



Judy Hellstrom who is Chair of the Board was re-appointed for a further one year term on the Board in August 2009. She is an active advocate for conservation in the Marlborough Sounds, both land and marine-based, and has considerable personal experience in plant pest eradication and bush restoration. She lives in outer Queen Charlotte Sound and has been a Board member since 2003.



Ross Hall is from Dovedale, Tasman district. He has tramped in or up most of the region covered by the Board. He also has experience in the horticultural field, a background in outdoor recreation and interests in ecology and ornithology. He joined the Board in October 2007 for a year and was re-appointed for a three year term in 2008. Ross represents the Board on the Abel Tasman Foreshore Advisory Forum.



Maurice Manawatu was first appointed on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu in 1998 and has continued to be a Board member since then. He is affiliated to Ngati Kuri and Ngai Tahu. He owns and operates a Maori tourism venture in Kaikoura.



Ian Mitchell is a viticulturalist from Marlborough's Wairau Plain with extensive experience in public land administration and management, including as a former Commissioner of Crown Lands. Ian joined the Board in 2005. Ian also convenes the Marlborough Committee and represents the Board on the Molesworth Steering Committee.



Lynda Neame lives in Blenheim and joined the Board in 2007. She is experienced in air quality and water quality issues, with an interest in waste treatment systems and the impact of discharges on the environment. She is involved with habitat maintenance and restoration projects, particularly Te Whanau Hou project at Grovetown Lagoon. Lynda is also involved with Forest & Bird. She represents the Board on the Horoirangi Marine Reserve Committee.



Dr Tracey Osborne is a marine biologist living in Onekaka, Golden Bay who first joined the Board in 2004. She is convenor of the Marine Committee of the Board providing expertise in marine science and use of the marine environment.



Joe Puketapu who joined the Board in September 2009 lives in Blenheim. He has experience in providing an iwi perspective on conservation issues. He is the chair of Waikawa Marae at Picton and a director of the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board, Trustee Te Atiawa Manawhenua Trust, Trustee Kimi Hauora PHO and Chair - Iwi Health Board. He is affiliated to Te Atiawa Nui Tonu.



Dr Philip Simpson is an ecological consultant, wine grower, and author. He has twice won the Environment section of the Montana Book Awards and is currently carrying out research for a book on totara. He represents the Board on the Tasman Environmental Trust.



Gina Solomon was appointed in 2006 on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu. She is affiliated to Ngai Tahu, Kurahaupo, Ngati Koata, Te Atiawa, and Ngati Toa. She follows in the tradition of her mother, Darcia Solomon, a Board member for many years and her late father John, a passionate conservationist.

Meetings

Only four Board meetings were held during the financial year 2009/10 as the usual June meeting was moved to 1 July 2010. Meetings were held on:

- 20 August 2009 at St Arnaud
- 26 November 2009 at Hanmer Springs
- 3 March 2010 at Havelock
- 6 May 2010 at Blenheim

At the Board's August 2009 meeting there was a brief field trip to the Black Valley Stream Restoration Project in St Arnaud. The aim of the project is to re-establish native vegetation adjacent to the stream. The project involves local school, tourist, council and resident representatives along with Department of Conservation staff.

The November 2009 meeting at Hanmer Springs was held jointly with the Canterbury/Aoraki Conservation Board. Topics of common interest were a presentation by Department of Conservation staff on the project reviewing wild animal recovery operations and a presentation by Bob McDowall of the Conservation Authority on the freshwater fauna of the North Canterbury, Nelson and Marlborough regions, the distribution of particular species and the threats to their survival. Members of both boards were also briefed about the purchase of the St James Station and plans for its operation and management in future.

The following day both Boards enjoyed a day-long field trip into the hills of the St James Station observing the remnants of the station's colonial heritage, its dramatic landscape of steep scree slopes, snow-covered gullies and mountain rivers, and the renowned St James horses.

The botanists among the two Boards identified some interesting plants including several species of totara and were able to point out the damaging effect on plants of past grazing.

Nelson/Marlborough Board members were very grateful to Waimakariri Area Office staff particularly Kingsley Timpson who lead the field trip and Brenda Preston, support officer for the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board, who did the hard work of organising and supporting a joint meeting and field trip for two Boards.

At the Board's March 2010 meeting in Havelock Neil Clifton, Conservator for Nelson/Marlborough, led a discussion on DOC's new vision and Conservancy business planning for 2010- 2011.

The Sounds Area Manager, Roy Grose, and Board member, Ian Mitchell, took members and staff on the DOC boat from Havelock to Maud Island and then on to Nydia Bay in Pelorus Sound. First, members experienced the quarantine procedures at the DOC field office in Havelock and on the island. Then, Leigh Joyce, a ranger on Maud Island, told members about the species protection and other work on the island.

The Board also visited the DOC-managed lodge and cabins at Nydia Bay. Board members noted that these provide good facilities for groups of all kinds or walkers from the nearby tramping and biking tracks, but are in need of some refurbishment.



Gina Solomon hands a giant Marlborough Sounds weta to Ross Hall. Roy Grose, Area Manager for the Sounds, looks on. Photo: Kay Switzer.

The May 2010 meeting was a one-day meeting at the DOC South Marlborough Office. An audio visual presentation on the Department's new vision built on the discussion at the previous meeting. Members were generally very supportive of the Department's direction and vision and the way in which it incorporated community involvement.

Attendance at meetings

Meeting attendance at full Board meeting is shown below. In addition, members attended other meetings and events in their role as Board members.

MEMBER	HOME	ATTENDED
Judy Hellstrom	Marlborough Sounds	4/4
Maurice Manawatu	Kaikoura	2/4
Gina Solomon	Kaikoura	4/4
Carl Elkington	Picton	1/1 (Left Board August)
Ian Mitchell	Blenheim	3/4
Lynda Neame	Blenheim	3/4
Ross Hall	Dovedale	4/4
David Melville	Dovedale	1/1 (Left Board August)
Tracey Osborne	Golden Bay	1/4
Véronique Cornille	Nelson	1/1 (Left Board August)
Philip Simpson	Takaka	4/4
Marama Tākao	Motueka	0/1 (Resigned November)
Joe Puketapu	Blenheim	2/3 (Appointed September)

Board committees

Membership of Board committees was reviewed in 2009 as new members joined the Board. Key issues from the year's work are identified below.

Marine Conservation

This purpose of this committee is to provide a link between communities of interest, the Board and the Department in relation to issues associated with marine conservation. At a policy level, the committee provides advice to the Board and the Department in relation to management and relationship issues associated with conservation and use of the marine environment.

Members for 2009/10 were: Tracey Osborne (convenor), Carl Elkington, Gina Solomon, Lynda Neame, Joe Puketapu.

It was a quiet year for the Marine Conservation Committee with the Board's contribution largely made through representation on the Marine Reserves Committees for Long Island-Kokomohua Marine Reserve and Horoirangi Marine Reserve.

Board members Gina Solomon and Maurice Manawatu are actively involved in Te Korowai o te Tai o Marokura, an initiative originally started by the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board.

Management Planning

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Department in relation to strategic direction and planning for the management of conservation land, in particular national parks. By agreement with members, smaller committees are constituted from the overall management planning committee to work on individual management plans as the need arises, which includes working with Department staff on the preparation of draft plans.

Members for 2009/10 were: Judy Hellstrom (convenor), Philip Simpson, David Melville, Tracey Osborne, Véronique Cornille and Ross Hall.

Sub-committees included:

- Kahurangi National Park Management Plan Partial Review: Members were Tracey Osborne, Judy Hellstrom, Ross Hall and Philip Simpson.
- CMS Review: All members are currently members of this committee.

Marlborough

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Conservancy on issues associated with conservation in Marlborough. Marlborough has a high concentration of endemic flora and fauna and to date much of the conservation effort there has been focused on private land.

Board representatives provide an important link to local communities, particularly landowners and local decision-makers.

Members: Ian Mitchell (convenor), Judy Hellstrom, Maurice Manawatu, Philip Simpson, Véronique Cornille, Gina Solomon, and Lynda Neame. Members are also involved in the management planning process for Molesworth.

South Marlborough highlights

A major highlight of the year has been the significant progress made in the Hutton's shearwater recovery programme. The Board inspected the new concrete bird burrows on the peninsula in December 2007. Many volunteers and local businesses have been actively involved in the programme since the beginning and this year the Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust was successful in securing funding from many sources to enable the new predator-proof fence to be constructed. Tracking has shown that birds are returning to the new burrows and after three poor breeding seasons results have now trebled and the future of these birds is looking more secure.

Te Korowai o te Tai o Marokura (Kaikoura Coastal Guardians) grew from an initiative of a previous Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board and it continues to prosper. It has carried out extensive consultation with local groups during the year and is now at the stage of formulating strategies around the key issues.

Concessions

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Department on policy matters associated with concession management and also to advise on specific concession applications where appropriate.

Members were David Melville (convenor), Carl Elkington, Judy Hellstrom, Gina Solomon, Joe Puketapu and Ross Hall (who replaced David as convenor during the year).

The committee supported the Department's new policy of having conforming track schedules and Ross, Gina and Maurice made a significant input to the final schedules based on their knowledge of particular areas and tracks.

At its May meeting, the Board was advised of the outcomes of the Department's Concession Review and the changes that will be put into place by 1 July 2010.

There have been a number of concessions applications concerning viewing and swimming with marine mammals in the Kaikoura area. Following research into the effects of this activity, no new permits will be issued for five years and there have been changes to existing permits to provide greater protection for the dolphins, including increasing the number of swimmers while reducing the number of times the swimming takes place.

It was pleasing to see a number of concessions applications this year from organizations running educational and development programmes.

The most significant application to involve the committee was an application for heli hunting.

Liaison with other groups

All Board members have responsibility for liaising with other groups, when opportunities arise. Specific responsibilities are:

- **West Coast Liaison:** Véronique and Tracey shared this role during this year. Minutes were exchanged.
- **Fish and Game Liaison:** Ian Mitchell and David Melville. Minutes were exchanged.
- **Tasman Environmental Trust:** The Board nominates one trustee. During the year Tracey Osborne passed this role to Philip Simpson. The Trust was established as an independent organisation to assist in the protection and maintenance of Tasman and Nelson natural areas. The Trust administers the Cobb Dam Mitigation Fund which funds community-based restoration projects in Golden Bay.
- **Molesworth Steering Committee:** The Department of Conservation manages Molesworth Station as a Recreation Reserve under a lease to Landcorp Farming. The lease provides for a Steering Committee appointed by the Minister of Conservation with an independent chair and representation from Landcorp Farming, Ngai Tahu, the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board, the Department of Conservation and conservation, and recreation interests. Ian Mitchell represents the Board on this committee.
- **Abel Tasman Foreshore Advisory Forum:** Ross Hall represents the Board on this advisory forum.

Other Board work

Input into West Coast Tai Poutini CMS Review

The Board responded to NZCA's request for comments on proposed changes to the West Coast Tai Poutini CMS.

Hybridisation of Grey Duck

The Board was concerned that grey duck, while classified as an endangered species, were still able to be hunted. There was correspondence with the Nelson Marlborough branch of Fish and Game which highlighted the difficulties of distinguishing grey duck from mallards. The Board called for a briefing from the Department which concluded that hybridization was unstoppable.

Submissions

Five submissions or formal comments were made during the year.

1. Walking Access Standard and Outdoor Access Code

The Board's submission in December 2009 generally supported the draft national standard and outdoor access code as being both practical and constructive and commended its section on Tikanga Maori. One concern raised was that unformed legal roads could be used as walkways and this could impinge unreasonably on the rights of private landowners.

2. Proposed establishment of a Game Animal Council

The Board in its November 2009 submission to the Game Animal Establishment Committee on the discussion paper "Options for Establishment of the New Zealand Game Animal Council" put forward its serious reservations about both the proposals in the discussion document and the process followed. The concluding comment in the Board's submission was that the proposed Game Animal Council was both unnecessary and unworkable.

3. St James discussion paper

Ross Hall provided comments on a Department of Conservation paper which outlined options for the management of the newly purchased St James Station. The Board generally supported management of the area to cover a wide range of recreation uses and protection of historic farming relics.

4. Review of Schedule 4: Crown Minerals Act

The Board received a background paper from the Department on the review of Schedule 4 of the Crown Minerals Act and letters from several other boards. In December 2009, the Board raised its concerns with the Ministers of Energy and Conservation about the proposed review of land protected under Section 4 of the Crown Minerals Act to allow mining. A further discussion paper was issued by the Ministry of Economic Development in March 2010 and the Board responded in a submission in May 2010, strongly objecting to the removal of any land from Schedule 4 for mining purposes.

The Board remains of the view that long-term conservation of land in the national interest for biodiversity, cultural or historic significance, scientific or landscape quality must outweigh any short-term commercial gains, particularly when short-term economic gains may threaten or destroy the very qualities that the lands are currently being protected for.

5. Nelson City Council draft conservation and landscape reserve management plan

The Board made a submission on this draft plan commending the Council for the support given to the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary and highlighting the need to consider private land as well as public when considering landscape policy. The submission also flagged that active monitoring and enforcement of logging and replanting was needed.

Community involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. Meetings are held in different parts of the Nelson/Marlborough area and the public can attend. Members of the public attended three of the four meetings, a range of issues were raised and Board members appreciated the input. The Board responded to members of the public in response to questions or concerns asked. Topics included:

- use of hovercraft on Lake Rotoiti
- protection of natural values at Molesworth
- threats to wild rivers and biodiversity
- the proposed Big Game Hunting Council
- impacts of mountain biking in Kahurangi National Park
- protection of Waimea Inlet
- goats
- impact of mountain biking on *Powelliphantia* snails; and
- aviation regulations as they affect National Parks.

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend Conservation Board meetings. If you would like more information on the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board please see the website www.conservationboards.org.nz or contact the Community Relations Officer - Board Support, at the Department of Conservation in Nelson, phone (03) 546 3143 or email: nelsonmarlboroughboard@doc.govt.nz.