

TARANAKI -WHANGANUI CONSERVATION BOARD

TE TAI HAU-Ā-URU

Annual Report 2017-2018



Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board Te Tai Hau-Ā-Uru

Annual Report 2017 - 2018

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

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Front Cover: Mount Taranaki (photo courtesy Vicky Dombroski – Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board member)

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1. Chairperson's report – 1 July 2018 – 30 September 2019

Tupua a nuku, tupua a rangi, tupua ki te whei ao ki te ao mārama, turuturu o whiti whakamaua kia tina, haumi e, hui e, taiki e. Rurukuhia kia rongohia e Tane ki uta, ko Tangaroa ki tai, ko Tawhirimatea ki awhiowhio, ko Ruamoko ki kōpu, ā, ko te ahua o ngā tamariki katoa o matua nuku, a, ko matua rangi. Ai ra kia aro matua ki a rangi tuwhera e tu nei, ki a papa tupu ora e takoto ake nei, kia putaina ki ao mārama, nau mai kia piri, nau mai kia tata, whano, hara mai te toki, haumi e, hui e, taiki e.

In 2017-18, the Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board focused on water quality, habitat and species wellbeing and the Treaty of Waitangi. Board members contributed to local conservation issues and activities ranging from concession applications to wild animal recovery operations. The Board wrote to various organisations regarding conservation matters including letters to Wild for Taranaki in support of their activities, the New Zealand Conservation Authority regarding the Treaty Settlement proposals for Mounga Taranaki, and participation with the Hector's and Maui Dolphin Threat Management Review. As matters arose throughout the year, the board raised issues and questions about the implementation of policy and plans with the Department of Conservation. These included the drone operational policy at one end of the spectrum to renewal of the conservation management strategy at the other. Board members also visited various conservation sites and participated with a range of conservation activities during the year.

Although we received regular reports of Department of Conservation activities in the Taranaki – Whanganui Conservation Board region, the board were concerned with the department's capacity to more speedily make progress with the implementation of national park plans and treaty settlement obligations and responsibilities affecting marine reserves and Te Awa Tupua. Further to this, the pending land settlements in Whanganui, Taranaki, the Rangitikei and Waimarino have encouraged the board to keep a watching brief and to receive regular updates.

In addition to the regular engagements and activities during this annual period, the board was confronted with a steady stream of information and readings in order to familiarise ourselves with the full extent of the Trans-Tasman Resources application to the Environmental Protection Agency. My sincere thanks to all board members for your diligence, prudence and willingness to commit significant time and effort toward this undertaking more so than we may have initially expected.

After due consideration to the role of the board, its functions and responsibilities, we decided to oppose the application from Trans-Tasman Resources to the Environmental Protection Agency. The board was aware of the unease amongst local communities and conservation groups. Care and protection for the sea, the seabed and coastal areas were central to the concerns of local communities and leaders. The board understood the often tense relationship between commercial, cultural, social and conservation interests. However, the board chose to ensure its decisions and actions were consistent with its statutory obligations and responsibilities. Having thoughtfully considered these pre-conditions, the board lined up with other appellants to question whether the application from Trans-Tasman Resources to conduct sea-bed mining on the West Coast of the North Island between Taranaki – Manawatu should have been approved. We know the High Court decision was favourable. However, we are aware that the decision may be appealed.

With the benefit of this experience, the board is clearer about its role and functions in terms of what it can and cannot do, what it should do and why, and what it must carefully consider when deciding a course of action. As a consequence, our board deliberates with particular attention to due process, timely advice and guidance, and good practice when deciding what to do, how, why and with whom. This may seem obvious to many. However, being confronted with the full extent of this issue tested our resolve and robust discussions with questions about what, how, why and who. I look forward to sharing this experience at the 2018 Conservation Chairs' Conference.

Dr Brendon Te Tiwha Puketapu
Chair -2018

2. Introduction

This is the Taranaki- Whanganui Conservation Board Annual Report as required under Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987.

The Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board had nine members for the 2017-2018 year appointed by the Minister of Conservation under the terms of the Conservation Act 1987. There was one new appointment to the Board, Mr Mathew Vujcich, Norfolk, Taranaki, and one reappointment, Mr Donald (Don) Robinson from Whanganui. Dr. Brendon (Te Tiwha) was elected Chairperson.

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

The Board has several statutory roles under various Acts including:

- Advising the Department of Conservation and the NZCA on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice
- Reporting on the implementation of the CMS
- The approval of Conservation Management Plans
- The recommendation of National Park Management Plans to the NZCA for approval
- Advising the Department of Conservation and NZCA on conservation matters, and proposed changes to status of land of national and international significance
- Liaising with Fish and Game Council on conservation matters

Carrying out other powers delegated by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act or any other Act

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act requires conservation Boards to provide the NZCA with an annual report as soon as practical after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board submits this annual report.

The Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board is 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;
- 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 these plans by the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA).

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires conservation Boards to provide the NZCA with an annual report as soon as practicable after the 30th June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Taranaki/ Whanganui Conservation Board submits this annual report.

3. Conservation Board Region

The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction encompasses some 15,000 sq. km of land extending from the Mokau River in the north to the Turakina River in the south and inland to Ohura and Taumarunui. Approximately 298,000 ha of public conservation land is administered by DOC which represents almost 20% of the total area of the Board's district.

In addition to a number of scenic, historic and recreational reserves, the district includes both the Egmont National Park and its associated array of recreation opportunities, and the Whanganui National Park with its unique history and strong cultural connections.

The coastal boundary that extends along the Board's district includes the Tapuae and Paraninihi marine reserves as well as the long-established Nga Motu/Sugar Loaf Islands Protected Area.

Volcanoes, wild and scenic rivers, huge tracts of forest, rugged mountain ranges and a dynamic coastline provide for a great diversity of landscapes, habitats, plants and animals.

The area also 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.

Conservation features of the Area

Main features of Public Conservation Land and Waters within the Board's boundaries are:

- Wetlands, lakes and rivers
Waverley Lake network
- Island sanctuaries off the coast of New Plymouth
Sugar loaf Islands Conservation Sanctuaries
- North Island West Coast dunes and estuaries
Whitiau Scientific and Scenic Reserves, Tapuarau Conservation Area, Patea harbour
- Vast area of intact lowland forest
Whanganui National Park, Waitotara Conservation Area, Tangarakau Conservation and Scenic Reserves and North Taranaki Conservation Areas
- Marine reserves
Paraninihi and Tapuae Marine Reserve
- Marine mammals
West Coast North Island Marine Mammal Sanctuary, Maui Dolphin, Proposed Blue Whale Sanctuary and New Zealand Fur Seals
- Whanganui River
Te Awa Tupua Settlement
- Taranaki Mouna

The Whanganui National Park

The extensive forest of the Park is at the heart of a vast area of intact native forest, the second largest on the North Island. It holds the largest remaining Kiwi population in the North Island. Covering a total area of 74'231 hectares.

The large number of issues which are of interest to the Board include:

- Taranaki Mouna
- Wetlands, lakes and rivers
- Island sanctuaries off the coast of New Plymouth
- North Island West Coast dunes and estuaries
- Vast area of intact lowland forest
- Marine reserves
- Marine mammal
- Whanganui River
- Large scale pest control
- Intensive management of endangered species
- Consents
- Recreational Activities and Tourism
- Bio-security

4. Board Functioning

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 Conservation 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 Conservation Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for the area within the jurisdiction of the Board
- 4) To advise the Conservation 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

4.2. Powers of the Board under Section 6n of the Conservation Act 1987

- 1) Every 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 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. Responsibilities under other Sections of the Conservation Act 1987

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 states “This Act shall be so interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi”. As a Board established under the Conservation Act 1987, section 4 applies to the Board in the discharge of its functions. During the year, the significant movement within the Treaty Settlement space has engaged the Board’s attention. With two statutory member appointments and other members with Iwi roles, the Board is well abreast of the treaty landscape and advises the Department of key tangata whenua issues when relevant.

4.4. Board Functions under the National Parks Act 1980

There are two national parks within the Board’s region: Mt Egmont National Park and Whanganui National Park. Both National Parks will be subject to Treaty Settlement Negotiations in the coming years.

4.5 Board Membership

There were nine Board members for the reporting year appointed by the Minister of Conservation.

Donald Robinson’s term of office expired on the 30th June 2017. Don was reappointed for a further 3-year term. Mathew Vujcich was appointed as a new member to the Board for the period 2017-2020.

Dr. Brendon (Te Tiwha) was elected as Chairperson at the Board meeting held 23 November 2017.

The following table lists the membership of the Board between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018 and their term of office.

Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board: Membership

Board member	Area	Term start	Term end	Term served
Dombroski, Vicky	Waitara	01/05/2014	30/06/2019	4
Fouhy, Stephen (Steve)	Whanganui	01/05/2014	30/06/2019	4
McGuckin, Novena	Whanganui	01/05/2014	30/06/2018	4
Poutu, Liana	New Plymouth	01/07/2015	30/06/2019	3
Puketapu, Dr. Brendon (Te Tiwha)	Whanganui	21/11/2013	30/06/2019	5
Robinson, Donald (Don)	Whanganui	01/07/2015	30/06/2017	3
Shaw, Dr. Robert	Stratford	01/07/2016	30/06/2019	2
Tamarapa, Samuel (Sam)	Waitara	01/05/2014	30/06/2018	4
Vujcich, Mathew	Inglewood	01/07/2017	30/07/2020	1

4.6. Members Profiles

Dr Brendon (Te Tiwha) Puketapu of Featherston

Appointment term: 21 November 2013 to 30 June 2019

Dr Puketapu is involved with hapū and iwi matters relating to conversation lands and national park areas in the Whanganui region. He has experience in management and governance roles with not-for-profit, private sector and public sector organisations. He has a working background in public policy, Treaty claim negotiations, organisational change, governance and management. He is currently a member of the board for Te Atihau Whanganui Incorporation and he is the chair for Te Atihau Charitable Trust. He is of Whanganui Te Atihaunui a Paparangi, Ngāti Rangī, Ngā Rauru, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngā Ruahinerangi, Taranaki nui tonu, Te Atiawa descent.

Mathew Vujcich of Inglewood

Appointment term: 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020

Mr Vujcich has over 30 years involvement in local and regional government. He has experience in parks and recreation management and has expertise in biodiversity restoration and pest eradication projects. He has a strong personal interest in integrating farming and sustainability issues and currently farms in Inglewood.

Vicky Dombroski of Waitara

Appointment term: 1 May 2014 to 30 June 2019

Ms Dombroski has over 20 years' experience in management and leadership. She has an extensive background working with boards, councils and committees in the local community. Her career in economic, community, tourism and environmental development along with her extensive networks and passion for Taranaki and its people, give her an ideal background for a role on the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board. Her outdoor recreation interests are monitoring the health of the sea and local reefs, kayak fishing, horse riding, and tramping. She is of mixed indigenous South American, English, Cornish and German.

Steve Fouhy of Whanganui

Appointment term: 1 May 2014 to 30 June 2019

Mr Fouhy is a top dressing pilot, environmentally conscious farmer and contractor. He has knowledge of government processes and boards having been a Rangitikei District Councillor. His outdoor recreation interests are farming, fishing and planting.

Novena McGuckin of Whanganui

Appointment term: 1 May 2014 to 30 June 2018

Novena McGuckin has over 15 years of Governance and Management experience and works for Te Tumu Paeroa, who administer over 2000 Land Blocks. Novena travels extensively, meeting with owners supporting them to achieve their aspirations for their land.

Novena is a Trustee on the Whanganui Lands Settlement Trust and is a member of other various land trusts in the Whanganui Region.

She actively supports conservation and is an advocate of protecting indigenous ecosystems on Māori land and encouraging private land owners in New Zealand to protect special natural and cultural features on their land with open space covenants particularly with Ngā Whenua Rāhui.

Novena enjoys outdoor recreation and walking. Annually canoeing all the Whanganui River, researching and visiting historical sites.

She is of Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi, Ngāti Patutokotoko, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Maniapoto Iwi.

Liana Poutu of New Plymouth

Appointment term: 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2019

Ms Poutu has a legal background with a strong focus on Treaty of Waitangi, Treaty Settlement negotiations, Māori land and Māori governance issues. She has represented iwi groups before the Māori Land Court and Waitangi Tribunal, specifically in the Wai 262 Flora and Fauna, Aquaculture, Foreshore & Seabed, Management of Petroleum, and National Park inquiries. She is currently the Chair of Te Kotahitanga o Te Atiawa Trust (the post settlement governance entity responsible for managing Te Atiawa's Treaty Settlement). Ms Poutu also holds a number of other governance roles including National Science Challenge Sustainable Seas Kāhui Advisory Group Chair. She is of Te Atiawa, Taranaki, Whanganui and Maniapoto descent.

Donald (Don) Robinson of Whanganui

Appointment term: 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020

Don Robinson is a director on the Atihau Whanganui Incorporation, chair of the Pipiriki Incorporation and Ngā Poro Waimarino Forest Trust. Don has sound experience in governance, leadership, environmental management and has an understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi relating to conservation outcomes. He has a personal passion for the conservation and preservation of flora and fauna on both conservation and private lands; including involvement with Ngā Whenua Rahui, DOC, regional and district councils to ensure positive outcomes in these areas. He is of Ngati Uenuku, Ngati Kurawhatia, Ngati Rangi o te Manganui o te Ao, Atihaunui a Paparangi, Nga Rauru descent.

Dr Robert Shaw of Opunake

Appointment term: 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019

Dr Shaw is an experienced member of city and regional councils. He was a civil servant for 18 years in Wellington in several ministries, including the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology. He was a professor in the School of Business at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies and at present he works as a mediator and counsellor at Family Works Taranaki. His current research draws upon continental philosophy and relates to social and environmental issues. He is active in conservation issues in South Taranaki and is a member of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand and the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Sam Tamarapa of Waitara

Appointment term: 1 May 2014 to 30 June 2018

Mr Tamarapa is an iwi communications officer for the Taranaki Regional Council. He has a broad knowledge of public policy, legislation, the Treaty of Waitangi, and Board governance. He has experience in environmental management and has a strong personal interest in native freshwater species protection. His outdoor recreation interests are fishing, diving, hunting and sport. He is of Ngati Ruanui, Nga Rauru, Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi, Ngati Maru, Te Atiawa, Taranaki Iwi and Te Arawa iwi.

4.7. Board Meetings

The Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board held four meetings during the reporting period. Venues for the Board meetings are varied each year to ensure a wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board.

Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Meetings, Field Trips/Workshops/Location

Board meetings/ workshop/field trips	Meeting location and venue
21 July 2017	Department of Conservation

(Board induction and Planning Workshop)	34-36 Taupo Quay Whanganui
24 August 2017 (Board Meeting)	Department of Conservation, 34-36 Taupo Quay, Whanganui
23 November 2017 (Board Meeting)	Department of Conservation, 34-36 Taupo Quay, Whanganui
23 February 2018 (Board Meeting)	Department of Conservation, 34-36 Taupo Quay, Whanganui
31 May 2018 (Board Meeting)	Taranaki Regional Council, 37 Cloten Road, Stratford
31 May 2018 (Site Visit)	Kaupokonui Beach

Site Inspection – Kaupokonui Beach (31 May 2018)

At the conclusion of the Board’s meeting on the 31st May 2018 (Stratford), the Board were humbled to be invited to Kaupokonui Beach to watch and korero (talk) with local Hapū (Ngati Tu and invited Hapū from Northland Ngatiwai) along with Department staff about the process and Tikanga around the recovery of beached whales- especially given that it has been years (1974) since sperm whales have stranded, let alone 12 of them in the same place!

When members arrived the Kaitiaki from both Hapū were well on their way to recovering the third whale and had expected to finish the rest, if they were able to get to them before the tides, within the next three days. The image shows one of the jawbones from a Sperm Whale washed up on Kaupokonui Beach (near Opunake in Taranaki) it has been recovered from one of the twelve Whales.



Photo courtesy of Vicky Dombroski (TWCB) Member

The gentleman pictured below with the high vis gear on is Hori Parata from Ngatiwai in Northland and is an expert on whale recovery, in the image he is explaining some details of the recovery to the Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board members.

Local Hapū, Ngati Tu, were grateful to their skilled whanau from the North but also acknowledged the support from the Department of Conservation and were grateful for the learning and teaching that has been shared between all parties.



Photo courtesy of Vicky Dombroski (TWCB) member

Workshops (21 July 2017)

- The full Board undertook an Induction Workshop in Whanganui on Friday 21st July 2017, which provided background information on the region, the role of the New Zealand Conservation Authority, the role of Conservation Boards, and local issues.

4.8. 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.

Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board: Attendance at Board Meetings

Board member	Board Meetings Attended No.
Dombroski, Vicky	4 / 4
Fouhy, Stephen (Steve) Fouhy	3 / 4
McGuckin, Novena	3 / 4
Poutu, Liana	2 / 4
Puketapu, Dr. Brendon (Te Tiwha)	4 / 4
Robinson, Donald (Don)	3 / 4
Shaw, Dr. Robert	4 / 4
Tamarapa, Samuel (Sam)	4 / 4
Vujcich, Mathew	3 / 4

4.9. Board Committees and Representation

Sam Tamarapa	Maui and Hector's Dolphin Stakeholders Threat Management Plan
Sam Tamarapa	Ngati Tama Joint Advisory Committee
Vicky Dombroski/Dr Robert Shaw	Review of DOC regarding internal processes for the TTRL Application

4.10 Training for members

31 May 2018

- The Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board were humbled to be invited to watch and korero (talk) with local Hapū (Ngati Tu and invited Hapū from Northland Ngatiwai) along with Department staff about the process and Tikanga around the recovery of beached whales- especially given that it has been years (1974) since sperm whales have stranded, let alone 12 of them in the same place!

4.11. The Board received presentations from external groups as follows:

The Board is interested in what is happening in conservation in communities and so has a practice of inviting representatives from community organisations to present at each meeting. Speakers this year have represented:

Presenter	Topic	Meeting
Kirsten Foley - Operations Manager Wild for Taranaki	Wild for Taranaki	31 May 2018
Office of Treaty Settlements Team	Egmont National Park (Taranaki Maunga) Treaty Negotiations	24 August 2017
	Taranaki Maunga Record of Understanding	23 February 2018
Mt Messenger Alliance Peter Roan (Planning and Consenting Manager) and Rob Napier (Project Manager)	Mount Messenger Bypass	23 November 2017
Steve Ellis - Environment Services Manager Taranaki Regional Council	Towards a Predator Free Taranaki	31 May 2018

24 August 2017

Staff from the Office of Treaty Settlements Team, the Department of Conservation and Negotiators representing Ngā Iwi o Taranaki met with the Board on 24 August 2017:

- give a brief overview of the Treaty Settlement process including in the Taranaki region,
- outlining Iwi negotiators' aspirations regarding the future governance and management of the Egmont National Park.

23 November 2017

Peter Roan, Planning and Consenting Manager for the Mt Messenger Alliance presented an update of the Mt Messenger Bypass project.

23 February 2018

Staff from the Office of Treaty Settlements Team, Department of Conservation and Negotiator representing Ngā Iwi o Taranaki met with the Board to discuss the Taranaki Maunga Record of Understanding (Te Anga Pūtakerongo, which was signed on the 20th December 2017 between Ngā Iwi o Taranaki and the Crown.

31 May 2018

Kirsten Foley, Operations Manager, Wild for Taranaki presented to Board Member updating on a number of projects including the restoration of freshwater, consideration to invasive freshwater species and control, aquatic pests/plants.

Predator control, translocations and the return of native species to the region.

Restoring the Cloak – plantings, restoring corridors, riparian plantings.

The TWCB is a member of Wild for Taranaki and resolved to write a letter to Wild for Taranaki in support of their funding application (meeting 23 February 2018).

31 May 2018

Steve Ellis, Environment Services Manager, Taranaki Regional Council presented to the Board on 31 May 2018 and spoke of the aim/objectives/goals of 'Towards a Predator Free Taranaki'.

5. Statutory Activity

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 states "This Act shall be so interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi". As a board established under the Conservation Act 1987, section 4 applies to the Board in the discharge of its functions.

The Board received presentations throughout the reporting year as follows:

Presenter	Briefing	Date
Office of Treaty Settlements Team	Treaty Settlements Process	24 August 2017
	Taranaki Maunga Record of Understanding	23 February 2018
Department of Conservation Gemma White, Statutory Manager, (Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki)	Ngati Tuwharetoa Settlement Bill	23 February 2018

Conservation Board Appeal Seabed Mining Decision

On 10 August 2017 the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) granted approval for Trans-Tasman Resources Limited to undertake seabed mining off the South Taranaki Bight. The Conservation Board had previously submitted against and appeared before the EPA Decision Making Committee outlining their opposition to the application.

Following the announcement of the consent being granted the Board sought independent legal advice which advised that it had genuine and reasonable questions of law upon which to base an appeal.

The Board in focusing on fulfilling its legal and statutory responsibilities as relevant to the Conservation Board's functions defined under the Conservation Act 1987, the Board considered it appropriate to obtain appeal the decision to the High Court in order to seek guidance on the appropriate legal tests. The Board focused its appeal on points of law focused on:

- Exclusive Economic Zone Act purpose to protect from pollution
- Application of the precautionary approach
- Use of best available information and reasons
- Application of the adaptive management approach
- Resource Management Act and New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement interface with Exclusive Economic Zone Act

The Board lodged their appeal on 30 August 2017, the Appeal was subsequently heard by the High Court over a four day hearing 16-19 April 2018, and the High Court released their findings on 28 August 2018.

The High Court decision was that it found there to be errors of law in regard to the interpretation of the concept of adaptive management approach and therefore quashed the original decision returning it to the EPA Decision Making Committee for reconsideration and applying the correct legal test in relation to the concept of adaptive management.

As an independent Statutory Body, it was important for the Board to seek the Court's findings. It is great to have the High Court clarify the expectations in relation to the concept of adaptive management approaches under the EEZ Act.

The Board is hopeful that the High Court's decision will bring an end to Trans-Tasman Resources seabed mining proposal. The community has had to fight against it to protect the environment for far too long.

Of course, an appeal by Trans-Tasman Resources to the Court of Appeal against the High Court's decision cannot be discounted.

5.1 Statutory Board Representation

Ngati Tama Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)

In accordance with the Ngati Tama Claim Settlement Act 2003, the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) was established under the Act to advise on the management of Whitecliff's and other nearby conservation area, including Parininihi Marine Reserve. JAC committee members include representatives from Ngati Tama, the Department of Conservation and the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board.

Following the gazettal of Parininihi Marine Reserve in September 2006, the JAC was delegated the Board's powers to approve, review or amend any conservation management plans for the reserve, in accordance with section 6N (2) (b) of the Conservation Act 1987. In its August 2007 meeting, the Board resolved that the JAC be the governing body for the Parininihi Marine Reserve (a preferred choice of Ngati Tama), rather than establishing a separate marine reserve committee.

Board Member Sam Tamarapa was appointed by the Minister of Conservation as the Taranaki Whanganui Board representative in 2017.

5.2. Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

Conservation Boards have a critical role in the operational Management Strategies and with preparation, review, amendment and approval of statutory planning documents (Conservation Management Strategies (CMS's) and Conservation Management Plans (CMP's) and National Park Management Plans (NPMP's).

The functions of Boards are set out in Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987 and in the National Parks and Reserves Acts.

The operative Whanganui Conservation Management Strategy, 1997, is currently due for review.

5.3 Management Plans

The operative Management Plans, within the jurisdiction of the Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board are the Whanganui National Park Management Plan, 2012, and the Egmont National Park Management Plan, 2002.

5.4 Concessions

Throughout the reporting period the Board have received quarterly Concession updates from the Department.

6. Advice and Advocacy

The Board have provided advice to the Department and other agencies on number of matters ranging from Treaty Settlement negotiations, Drones, the Freedom Camping Act Review 2018 through to DOC Community Fund applications etc.

Board members in their respective roles have been proactive in liaising with other groups and individuals in the community when opportunities arise.

6.1. Other Conservation Boards Liaison

Liaison person	Group, agency or organisation
Novena Mc Guckin	Tongaririo Taupo Conservation Board
Vicky Dombroski	Waikato Conservation Board
Steve Fouhy	Wellington Conservation Board

6.2 New Zealand Conservation Authority Liaison

Agenda's, meeting minutes and the bi-monthly letter from the New Zealand Conservation Authority are forwarded to members electronically as they arrive.

It is a privilege to have Mark Brough as the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) liaison to the

Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board. The Board acknowledges the importance of this link between the NZCA .

Mark regularly brings the Board up to speed with activities and issues the NZCA is engaged in and most importantly takes back to the NZCA issues and concerns facing the Taranaki Whanganui Conservation Board.

The Chair attended the New Zealand Conservation Authority Conservation Board Chairs Conference in Wellington on the 7th and 8th August 2017. This annual event provides an opportunity for Board Chairs to share their regions areas of focus and experience with national Issues.

6.3 Community and DOC involvement in Board Meetings

At each Board meeting standing agenda items include briefings on:

- Annual Work-plan Quarterly Monitoring
- Budget (Financial Tracking)
- Operation Director’s Report
- RMA & Management Planning Report
- Conservation Board E-Newsletter – Board Contributions
- Members Environmental Scan

Throughout the year the Board received discussion papers on:

- Local Authorities Long Term Plans (2018-2018),
- E-Bikes, on Public Conservation Land (including National Parks)
- Freedom Camping Act Review
- Conservation Board – Communications – Raising the Board’s Profile
- Territorial Authorities Long Term Plans 2018-2028
- Drones – Operational Policy
- Treaty Settlement Updates
- Resource Legislation Amendment Act 2017 (RLAA) Changes to the Conservation Act 1987
- Maui and Hector’s Dolphin Threat Management Plan Review
- Wild Animal Recovery Operations (WARO) National Permit 2013-2021
- Future Statutory Management Planning requirements

External presentations included:

Presenter	Topic	Meeting
Office of Treaty Settlements Team	Treaty Settlements Process	24 August 2017
	Taranaki Maunga Record of Understanding	23 February 2018

Mt Messenger Alliance Peter Roan (Planning and Consenting Manager) and Rob Napier (Project Manager)	Mount Messenger Bypass	23 November 2017
Steve Ellis - Environment Services Manager Taranaki Regional Council	Towards a Predator Free Taranaki	31 May 2018

6.4. Community advocacy and involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. Meetings were held in different parts of the Taranaki-Whanganui region and opportunities for the public to attend Board meetings were advertised.

Members of the public attended the Public Forum at several of the year's meetings and a range of issues were raised. The Board appreciated their input and efforts made to attend the meetings.

Public forum issues/questions raised included:

- 1080 drops and the impact on forests/waterways/environment/health for future sustainability
- Kauri Dieback and Myrtle Rust
- Trans-Tasman Resource Limited –sea-bed mining and the extraction of iron ore over a 35 year period, the impact on fish, kaimoana, survival of species in the waterways and resources for future generations?
- Concerns highlighted over there being no representative on the Whanganui District Council at iwi level that can represent/speak for the people and query as to whether a cultural impact report had been completed in respect to the TTRL application?
- Potential impact on birdlife and ancestral grounds as a result of proposed ferry operating between Motueka and Whanganui,
- Seismic Activity –impact on marine life including the Maui dolphin and Blue whales?
- Water Quality/Water allocation?
- The role of the Department and Conservation Board with respect to the Trans- Tasman Resource Limited submission process?
- The bottling and exportation of NZ water to overseas markets
- Treaty Principles – two different wavelengths re principles of conservation and relationships with Hapu, written letters go unanswered, constantly referred by the Ministry to the Commissioners 2011 report.

6.5. Community visibility

The Board maintains a presence on the Department's website.

Throughout the reporting period Board members have liaised with a number of individuals, groups and organisations, attended various community activities and Department of Conservation special events. This liaison is a very important way of providing an interface with the Community.

6.6. Iwi liaison and advocacy

The Board has two statutory appointments based on recommendations from the Taranaki Maori Trust and the former Whanganui Maori Trust Board (now the trustees of Nga Tangata Tiake o Whanganui. (Conservation Act S6P).

In addition, there are other Board members filling public vacancies that have iwi affiliations. These connections play a vital role in improving the Boards understanding of iwi perspectives.

6.7 DOC Community Funds

This is a fund set up by the Department to help fund community groups to do conservation work. Novena McGuckin and Dr Robert Shaw were part of the panel that reviewed and provided recommendations for successful recipients.

7. Acknowledgements

In conclusion I would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the many amazing contributors to Conservation that I have met during my time with the Conservation Board. The dedication and commitment of volunteers and Department staff members is admirable and appreciated.