

Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board
Te Runanga Papa Atawhai O Te Upoko O Te Ika me Te Matau a Maui

**Annual Report to the
New Zealand Conservation Authority
1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010**



**Serviced by
Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy, Department of Conservation
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Cover Photo: *Lake Tutira, Hawke's Bay (Photo: Pat Sheridan)*

1. Introduction

The Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board has prepared this Annual Report for the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by Section 6O of the Conservation Act 1987. The Board also intends to distribute copies to many other individuals and organisations that may have an interest in the Board's role and activities.

This is the first report of the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board. The Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board was created in July 2009 following disestablishment of the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board.

1.1 *Members of the Board*

In May 2009 the Minister of Conservation reduced the number of members on all boards. The Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board reduced from twelve to ten members, with the expectation that two places might be filled by people from Hawke's Bay. Rob McColl and Nicky Nelson each completed an initial three year term in August 2009. They continued as members, pending reappointment or replacement by the Minister, maintaining Board membership at eight.

The following table summarises the Board's membership at 30 June 2010.

Name	Area	Date first appointed	Term ends/ended	Years of service
Helen Algar, Chair	Wellington	01/09/2004	31/08/2010	6
Geoff Doring	Wairarapa	01/09/2004	31/08/2010	6
Andrew Foster	Wellington	01/09/2004	31/08/2010	6
Nicky Nelson, Deputy Chair	Wellington	16/10/2006	31/08/2009	4
Rob McColl	Wellington	16/10/2006	31/08/2009	4
John Hancock	Wairarapa	01/09/2007	31/08/2010	3
Margaret Shields	Kapiti	01/09/2007	31/08/2010	3
Ra Pomare	Kapiti	01/09/2008	31/08/2011	2



Board Members at Pukaha Mount Bruce – from left: Ra Pomare, Nicky Nelson, John Hancock, Helen Algar, Geoff Doring, Margaret Shields, Rob McColl. (Andy Foster is absent.)

Photo: Bronwyn Bell

2. Functions and powers

The functions and powers of the Board are set out formally in sections 6M and 6N of the Conservation Act 1987. Key roles include:

- providing advice to the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA)
- recommending that the NZCA approve the next Draft Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)
- advocating for conservation in statutory processes and public forums.

Conservation management strategies are statutory documents which show how general policies will be implemented. They also establish objectives for the integrated management of natural and historic resources and for recreation, tourism and other conservation purposes.

3. Coverage

The Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board's coverage extends from the bottom of the North Island to the mouth of the Manawatu River in the west, and across to the east coast where it extends to the Mahia Peninsula. It is the same area as the Department of Conservation's Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy excluding the Chatham Islands.



Figure 1: Map of the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board's area

3.1 Key places

Some of the key places managed by DOC in the Board's area are:

Lake Wairarapa Wetlands	Puketitiri Reserves	Rimutaka Forest Park
Ahuriri Estuary	Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve	Kaweka Forest Park
Castlepoint Scenic Reserve	Papaitonga Scenic Reserve	Tararua Forest Park
Cape Palliser	Tora Scenic Reserve	Aorangi Forest Park
Pukerua Bay Scientific Reserve	Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve	Government Buildings
Otatara Pa Historic Reserve	Carter Scenic Reserve	Turnbull House
Snail Reserves, Horowhenua	Lake's Opouahi & Tutira	Dominion Observatory
Matiu/Somes Island	Colonial Knob	Taputeranga Marine Reserve
Mana Island	Makara Coast	Te Angiangi Marine Reserve
Kapiti Island Nature Reserve	Kapiti Island North Reserve	Kapiti Marine Reserve
National Wildlife Centre (Pukaha Mount Bruce)	Boundary Stream Mainland Island	Cape Kidnappers Gannet Colony
Waikanae Estuary	Pencarrow Lakes	Eastern Ruahine Forest Park
Putangirua Pinnacles Scenic Reserve	Turakirae Head Scientific Reserve	Pauatahanui Inlet, Porirua Harbour

4. Meetings, visits and workshops

During the 2009/10 financial year, the Board's formal programme comprised four meetings and two field trips.

4.1 Meetings

The Board scheduled four full-day meetings:

- 4 September 2009 in Wellington at the Conservancy Office
- 21 November 2009 in Napier at the Napier Area Office in the historic Court House building
- 26 February 2010 in Wellington at the Conservancy Office
- 8 May 2010 in Wellington at the historic Turnbull House.

4.2 Field trips

Visits to specific locations provide opportunities for the Board to:

- become more familiar with the conservation values of key places
- discuss management challenges and approaches with DOC staff and stakeholders
- monitor progress towards the objectives in the current CMS
- identify issues that may need to be addressed during the review of the CMS.

4.3 Field trip in the Hawke's Bay Area

In November 2009 the Board visited the Hawke's Bay Area for the first time following amalgamation. The Board visited the Hawke's Bay Area Office, and was briefed on the Te Angiangi Marine Reserve. A field trip included three key conservation places in the Area – the Boundary Stream Mainland Island, the predator-proof kiwi crèche at Lake Opouahi, and Lake Tutira.

Members of the former East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board met with the new Wellington Hawke's Bay Board to brief members on conservation issues in the Hawke's Bay Area. In the absence of Board members from Hawke's Bay, former members and others active in conservation in the Area have provided written and oral advice during the 2009/10 year. The Board is grateful for this assistance.

4.4 Field trip in the Kapiti Area

In May 2010 the Board visited three key conservation locations in the Kapiti Area—the Porirua Harbour, Pauatahanui and Onepoto Inlets, and the Pauatahanui Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Board recognised that Porirua Harbour's health is continuing to decline while human pressures are increasing, often as a result of increasingly harmful land development methods which reduce or eliminate natural stream channels. The Board was pleased to be advised that Porirua City Council has appointed a strategic planner charged with co-ordinating a multi-agency response to the Harbour's environmental problems. The Board noted that key tasks for DOC were to identify important natural areas for protection in the Porirua Harbour catchment and to identify key indicators that should be monitored to detect change in the natural values of the Harbour and its catchment and help ensure mitigation measures are effective.

The Board was pleased to see the work being done by groups such as the Royal Forest & Bird Society to maintain and develop for nature conservation important habitat and wildlife areas around the harbour.

4.5 Participation and fees

Individual Board members' participation in Board activities during 2009/10 is shown in Appendix 1.

For approved Board activities, Board members are paid \$140 per day and the Board Chair \$190 per day.

5. Public involvement

The Board informs and interacts with the public through forums, correspondence, its annual report and the DOC website. The Board's formal relationships with specific organisations are described in section 13.

5.1 Public Forum

During 2009/10, the Board welcomed individuals to the Public Forum, a session scheduled at each meeting to enable people to speak to the Board about agenda items or other conservation issues. The Board regards the Forum as an important opportunity to hear from the community and hopes to see more people take up this opportunity in 2010/11.

Matters raised by speakers who participated in these forums focussed on two main items - conservation issues and highlights in the Hawke's Bay Area, and progress on the development of a new CMS for the Conservancy.

5.2 Correspondence

The Board values receiving information from people who have specific interests and/or a long-term association with specific areas within the Conservancy.

5.3 Distribution of the Board's Annual Report

Although the NZCA is the primary audience for the Board's annual reports, the Board circulates its Annual Report more widely to increase awareness of the Board's role and conservation issues in the Conservancy. The distribution list includes public libraries, local members of Parliament, local media and a wide range of conservation and recreation groups.

5.4 The Board's website

The Board posts on its pages of DOC's website, the agendas for and minutes of its meetings, all submissions made by the Board, a document setting out its Strategies and Directions and its annual reports.

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/nz-conservation-authority-and-boards/conservation-boards-by-region/wellington-hawkes-bay/>

6. Advising on implementation of the CMS
(Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987)

6.1 Current CMS

Wellington's current CMS was approved in April 1996. Under the Conservation Act 1987, the Director-General is required to review each CMS as a whole not later than 10 years after the date of its approval. The Minister first approved an extension to June 2008, and more recently, a further extension to June 2010.

The Board is responsible for monitoring the performance of the Conservancy in managing the conservation estate in the Conservancy, including holding DOC accountable for achieving the objectives/milestones in the current CMS and for providing a mechanism for the public/community to input to, comment on, or 'enquire' about the performance of DOC in the Wellington Conservancy.

6.2 Conservation Action Plans

The Board has strongly supported the development of Conservation Action Plans (CAPs) which identify and prioritise conservation priorities in each Area and are an integral part of business planning for the Conservancy. A mechanism to rank the merit of conservation projects was developed in the Conservancy with Board input and is used in developing the CAPs.

The Wairarapa, Poneke and Kapiti Area CAPS were prepared in parallel with, and are consistent with, the Preliminary Non-statutory Draft of the Wellington CMS. The Hawke's Bay CAP was developed in the same format.

In the absence of a relevant current CMS, the Board received regular reports from the Conservator, Area Managers and key technical specialists on activities, priorities and challenges in implementing current strategies and plans. This included priorities and progress in relation to one Area's CAP at each meeting. The CAPS will inform the new Wellington Hawke's Bay CMS.

7. Review of the CMS by the Director-General
(Section 7H (4) of the Conservation Act 1987)

7.1 Preliminary Non-statutory Draft of the Wellington CMS

Work on a review of the Wellington CMS (excluding the Chatham Islands Area which has its own CMS) began in earnest in 2008/09. This review was undertaken by DOC people from across the Conservancy working together with the Conservation Board to develop a document that sets priorities, direction and forward aspirations for conservation in the greater Wellington region.

A working draft of the CMS was developed through 2009 with the intention of completing and releasing the statutory draft in late 2009. The working draft represents a great deal of thought and effort from many people and is the most comprehensive and up to date assessment of the key conservation issues, values and priorities in the Wellington Conservancy. It sets out aspirations for conservation and outlines the Conservancy's intended future direction, whilst not documenting detailed work tasks.

When the new Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy was formed and the conservation boards were realigned to form a Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board, the Board and Conservator decided that the new CMS should reflect the new geographic area. At the same time the Department was required to identify savings for the financial year 2009/10. The Department suggested that it would be sensible to defer CMS development given the amount of work required to create a new Conservancy and the need to bring the Hawke's Bay Area into a new Wellington Hawke's Bay CMS. As a result, and with the agreement of the Wellington Conservation Board, the Conservator decided to make savings by putting the next stage of the review of the Wellington CMS on hold until 2010/11.

Given the interest of key partners, groups, clubs and some individuals in progress with the draft CMS, and the value of the work done so far, the Conservator and the Conservation Board felt that it was important to provide an opportunity for people to view the draft. We decided to release the Preliminary Non-statutory Draft of the Wellington CMS. This is not a formal draft as described in the Conservation Act; it does not have any statutory status. The document was released in April 2010 on the DOC website to avoid incurring additional cost at that stage.

The draft will change as it goes through further testing and editing, once DOC and the Board recommence work on it in 2010/11. It does though provide an opportunity for the public to make any comments to assist with future drafting.

The Hawke's Bay CMS 2008 was also due for review. A draft East Coast Hawke's Bay CMS was being developed until early 2009. The sections relating to Hawke's Bay will be reviewed for incorporation in the new CMS.

When work resumes on the new Wellington Hawke's Bay CMS all interested groups and the public will be able to comment via formal submission and hearing processes as required for the review and development of a CMS.

7.2 New guidance on the content of the future CMS

DOC and the New Zealand Conservation Authority have been working on new guidance on the content of future Conservation Management Strategies. The Board was consulted on proposals, including at the Conservation Board Chairs' meeting in June 2010.

The Board looks forward to continuing with development of the new Conservation Management Strategy for Wellington and Hawke's Bay during 2010/11.

8. Advocating for conservation within the Conservancy (Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987)

The Board considers at each meeting the opportunities and priorities for statutory advocacy and the availability of members to prepare submissions. Submissions are progressed by email between meetings and ratified at the following meeting.

8.1 Local government plans and policies

The Board responded to comments on its submission on the Greater Wellington Regional Policy Statement (RPS) during the first half of 2009. Rob McColl spoke at the hearing, proposing that the RPS identify the potential ties between DOC and Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on matters such as pest management.

There has been ongoing discussion as to whether local government planning and consultation processes and the processes relating to CMS development and consultation could be combined and streamlined.

The Board made fewer submissions on local government documents in 2009/10 than in previous years. This was partly due to the fewer number of plans and policies to consider, and partly because fewer Board members were available to analyse documents and prepare submissions.

8.2 Other Statutory Advocacy

The Board made a submission to Greater Wellington in April 2009 on an application for waste water discharge to the Waingawa Swamp. The Board is concerned about the application given the closeness of the site to a protected wetland. The Board is not opposed to gravel extraction from the site per se but is concerned to ensure that sufficient information is provided and conditions are imposed to ensure that there is no adverse impact of the gravel operation on the hydrology of the wider area and specifically the protected wetland. The Board suggested that an ecological restoration plan be prepared for the gravel extraction site and that this be required to demonstrate that it will at a minimum not create any adverse environmental impacts and preferably have a net positive impact on the ecology of the site and adjacent wetland.

Hearings were delayed until May 2010 and have been ongoing since. The Board continues to monitor this issue.

9. Advocating for conservation at the national level (Section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987)

9.1 Game Animal Council

The Board submitted in November 2009 on the discussion paper on the establishment of a Game Animal Council, as issued by the New Zealand Big Game Hunting Council Establishment Committee. The Board opposed the establishment of a Game Animal Council in the form stated. The Board said that it would be likely to support the establishment of a game body with reduced functions, the purpose of which is to co-ordinate hunting and game groups, resolve internal conflicts, liaise with external agencies and promote hunting and its role in conservation and the economy. The final report of the Establishment Committee has since been released. The Board was disappointed that no full analysis of the submissions was publicly released.

9.2 Bovine TB Strategy

The Board made a submission in November 2009 on the Bovine TB Strategy issued by the Ministry of Agriculture. The Board submitted that there would be significant conservation benefits arising from the strategy and that these benefits would far outweigh any adverse affects which might arise from the use of 1080 poison. The Board encouraged the Animal Health Board to seek synergies in areas where DOC-funded pest management and Animal Health Board management overlap, especially if timing and intensity of control can be co-ordinated. The Board said that it would welcome the negotiation of such synergies in the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy.

9.3 Mining

The Board wrote in February 2010 to the Minister of Energy and Resources about the prospect of the government allowing mineral prospecting on land on schedule 4 of the Crown Minerals Act 1991.

The Board also made a submission in May 2010 on the discussion paper on this subject. The key point of the Board's submission was concern that the Government planned to allow prospecting and mining on some public conservation lands that are currently protected from mining.

9.4 Honey Hive concessions

The Board wrote in March 2010 to support the Auckland Conservation Board, endorsing their concerns over introducing honey bee hives to the conservation estate, especially to areas important for their weed or pest-free status, and supporting monitoring and research to find out more about the impacts of honey bees on native species and ecosystems.

10. Advice to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987)

Waana Davis, the NZCA liaison person for the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board, attended the Board's May 2010 meeting and has maintained contact with the Chair.

The Board responded in November 2009 to an invitation from the NZCA to provide feedback on the proposed revised content and format of CMSs. The Chair participated in a workshop on the proposed new approach to CMS development at the Conservation Board Chairs' Conference in June 2010.

11. Advice to the Director-General of Conservation and the Conservator

11.1 Concessions in the Conservancy

The Board reviewed applications for and progress with concessions at each meeting and provided advice to the Conservator in accordance with an agreed trigger process. The Board continued to take a particular interest in applications to regularise arrangements for existing activities which did not have a concession in place.

11.2 Governance and Planning for Wairarapa Moana

The Conservator briefed the Board regularly on progress with formation of a governance body for the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Park Project. The Board wrote to the Conservator and the Chair of Greater Wellington seeking to ensure that the goals for the project reflected an appropriate balance between conservation, recreational, and commercial values in relation to Wairarapa Moana. The Chair represented the Board at the launch of the project at Kohunui Marae in June 2010.

11.3 Project Kaka

Rob McColl represented the Board on the steering committee established in August 2009 to plan for the Project Kaka: Tararua Nature Recovery. The Board considered a progress report at each meeting. The Project involves intensive possum and predator control over 22,000 ha in the centre of Tararua Forest Park and is co-ordinated with an adjacent Animal Health Board bovine TB possum control operations. The Project includes a rigorous 'before and after' monitoring programme to ascertain conservation benefits and is supported by research studies conducted by Landcare Research Ltd. The first control operation is scheduled for Spring 2010.

11.4 Te Araroa Trail; The Long Pathway

The Board has a statutory obligation to advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on proposals for new walkways in any area within the Board's jurisdiction.

The Board had received in 2008 representatives of the Te Araroa Trust to discuss the route of a walkway through Tararua Forest Park. The Conservator presented a report in November 2009 following public submissions. The Board had mixed views on the proposal to create a new track, but on balance considered that a new track was not required. The Board was pleased that the Conservator intended to convene a meeting of interested parties to seek a way forward that was acceptable to all.

12. Conservation Awards

The Board held discussions over the present format of the Conservation Awards. The Board and DOC agreed to investigate whether Greater Wellington was interested in combining awards for the Wellington region. No conservation awards were held in 2009. A new joint awards structure is in place for November 2010 for the Wellington region hosted by the Conservation Board, DOC and Greater Wellington. The Board will discuss the conservation awards for Hawke's Bay when new members from that area are appointed.

13. Liaison

13.1 Fish and Game Council

John Hancock represented the Board in liaising with the Fish and Game Council's Wellington Region, and made contact with the Hawke's Bay Region.

13.2 Kapiti Marine Reserve Committee

The Board has delegated its role in relation to the Kapiti Marine Reserve Management Plan to the Kapiti Marine Reserve Committee. Nicky Nelson represented the Board on the Reserve Committee, relinquishing the role to Ra Pomare in May 2010. The reserve strategy will be included in the CMS and actions are included in the Kapiti Area Action Plan.

13.3 National Wildlife Centre Trust

Geoff Doring represents the Board on the National Wildlife Centre Trust. The Board will review in 2010/11 the need to be represented on the Trust in future.

The Chair represented the Board at the official release of 30 translocated kiwi at Pukaha Mount Bruce in May 2010.

13.4 Friends of the Taputeranga Marine Reserve

The Board does not have a specific statutory role in relation to the Taputeranga Marine Reserve. The Friends of Taputeranga Marine Reserve attended the May Board meeting seeking ongoing contact and support for their objectives.

13.5 Te Angiangi Marine Reserve Committee

The Chair of the *Te Angiangi Marine Reserve Committee* sent a report to each Board meeting. The Board will appoint a representative on the Committee once any people from the Hawke's Bay are appointed to the Board.

14. Chairperson's Comment

The 2009/10 year has been one of challenges and change for the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board established in July 2009. With a reduced number of members and none from Hawke's Bay, we have been grateful to former members of the disestablished East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board for information and advice.

The Board takes seriously its statutory roles of recommending that the NZCA approve the next Draft Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) for the Conservancy and advocating for conservation in statutory processes and public forums.

Board members had worked with Conservancy people from 2008/09, intending to release the statutory draft of the new CMS in late 2009. The working draft represents a great deal of thought and effort from many people and is the most comprehensive and up to date assessment of the key conservation issues, values and priorities in the Wellington Conservancy. Given the geographic realignment, the Board and Conservator decided to reflect the new geographic area in a CMS to be developed in 2010/11. Given the interest of key partners in our progress, we released the Preliminary Non-statutory Draft of the Wellington CMS in April 2010. When work resumes on the new Wellington Hawke's Bay CMS, all interested groups and the public will be given opportunity for comment. We look forward to the new process starting.

The Board has strongly supported the development of Conservation Action Plans (CAPs) which identify and prioritise conservation priorities in each Area, and link closely to the draft CMS. In the absence of a relevant current CMS, the Board received regular reports from Area Managers on progress against the CAPs and found these very useful.

The Board made fewer submissions on local government documents in 2009/10 than in previous years. There has been ongoing discussion as to whether local government planning and consultation processes, and the processes relating to CMS development and consultation could be combined and streamlined.

The Board was pleased to attend in June 2010 at Kohunui Marae the launch of a governance group to establish and manage the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Park. The Board convened a hui at the Marae in 2008 involving the local people, DOC and Greater Wellington to give an impetus a partnership to reverse the wetland degradation and preserve and enhance the remaining values associated with the moana.

The Board has valued the regular flow of information from the NZCA, and an opportunity to input to the development of the new CMS process, and we look forward to opportunities to engage with the Authority during 2010/11.

I would like to thank all those Board members who have served during 2009/10, along with Conservator Alan McKenzie, Board Secretary Bronwyn Bell, and all the people in the Conservancy for their work on behalf of the Board and for conservation.

I look forward to our ongoing efforts and impacts as a Conservation Board, working across the Wellington Hawke's bay Conservancy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Algar', written in a cursive style.

Helen Algar
Chair

This report was adopted by the Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservation Board on 08 October 2010.

Appendix 1: Board members' attendance at Board activities

Individual Board members' attendance at Wellington Conservation Board activities during 2009/10 is displayed in the table below:

✓ present

✗ apologies

	Algar	Nelson	Foster	Doring	McColl	Hancock	Shields	Pomare
Meeting 4 September 2009	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Field Trip 20 November 2009	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Meeting 21 November 2009	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Meeting 26 February 2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Field Trip 7 May 2010	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Meeting 8 May 2010	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Total Meetings (4)	4	4	3	4	4	4	1	3
Total Field Trips (2)	2	1	1	2	2	2	0	1

Appendix 2: Conservancy achievements in 2009/10

<p>Department of Conservation Strategic Direction</p> <p><i>Conserving and managing New Zealand's natural, historic and cultural heritage provides increasing benefit to New Zealanders</i></p>	
Intermediate outcomes	Activities in 2009/10 which advanced the department's strategic direction
<p>Intermediate Outcome 1: The ecological integrity of managed sites is maintained or restored</p>	<p>The Conservancy continues to work with Friends of Waikanae Estuary, Greater Wellington and the Kapiti Coast District Council on restoring Waikanae Estuary.</p> <p>Staff have also been taking action to try and prevent didymo entering our waterways, including cleaning bikes at cycle events and raising awareness among participants.</p> <p>Rodent and bird surveys were undertaken in the park over summer by the Conservancy and Greater Wellington staff and volunteers, to establish baseline data for the Project Kaka – Tararua nature recovery programme, which begins in spring this year. The programme aims to restore biodiversity values, including birds, insects and plants, through simultaneously controlling rats, stoats and possums on a three year cycle over 22,000 ha of the Tararua Forest Park. Project Kaka and the Animal Health Board's Woodside-Holdsworth Crown aerial operation on adjoining land will be run in spring 2010 as a single co-ordinated operation, covering around 30,000 ha.</p>
<p>Intermediate Outcome 2: The security of threatened species unique to New Zealand, and most at risk of extinction, is improved</p>	<p>A survey of estuaries in the Conservancy now includes 33 in the Hawke's Bay area. To date 90 estuary action plans have been completed throughout the Conservancy. They will help to shape future policies about the region's estuarine environments.</p> <p>Integrated weed and pest control operations have been undertaken successfully at more than 30 sites throughout the Conservancy, and a number of weed surveys have been completed including on the Kapiti Island Nature Reserve.</p> <p>The Conservancy has engaged with both recreational hunters (Dec) and commercial operations in an attempt to resolve competing demands for animals. Whilst some progress has been made, there is room for more progress. This subject creates a fair amount of friction.</p> <p>Threatened plant data for Hawke's Bay has been updated (460 entries, 116 species) in Bio Web covering the period 1840 to 2010. Also 5807 Bio Web entries were made for birds (3897 for Hawke's Bay).</p> <p>There were 21 species translocations undertaken during the year. All bar three were community led, including: takahe from</p>

	<p>Kapiti and Mana Islands to Fiordland National Park; hihi to Kapiti Island from Tiritiri Matangi Island; little spotted kiwi from Kapiti Island to Motuihe Island in the Hauraki Gulf; Cook Strait giant weta from Mana Island to ZEALANDIA - Karori Sanctuary; and captive-reared shore plover onto Mana Island. North Island brown kiwi were also transferred to Pukaha/Mt Bruce from Little Barrier Island (Hauturu).</p> <p>A management plan for Hawke's Bay mistletoe has been completed along with a survey of weed distribution on Kapiti Island.</p> <p>The Conservancy joined with Nelson Marlborough Conservancy to undertake the four week annual Cook Strait Whale Survey. This year counted 43 humpback, 2 sperm and 3 minke whales. An additional feature this year was a virtual field trip on the LEARNZ Internet-based educational website, watched by more than 3500 school students. There was also the first reported sighting of a humpback mother and new born calf in New Zealand waters. The survey assesses the recovery in humpback numbers since commercial whaling ceased in New Zealand in 1964, and takes place around the peak period for whales migrating north from Antarctic waters to South Pacific breeding grounds. Seven former whalers have supported the survey since it began in 2004.</p>
<p>Intermediate Outcome 3: Examples of the full range of New Zealand's ecosystems are conserved</p>	<p>We have been working with other agencies involved with the management of fire-ravaged Whitireia Park to develop a long term restoration plan. We are also supporting the Onehunga Bay Restoration Group in its efforts to revegetate the area. Approximately 7,500 plants have been planted.</p> <p>The Conservancy (and Nature Heritage Fund) helped Greater Wellington secure the purchase of Baring Head, a 284 hectare block of coastal farmland close to the East Harbour Regional Park in Wellington. This iconic landscape with significant biodiversity values will be managed by Greater Wellington as part of the East Harbour regional park. It is a great acquisition for the greater conservation of New Zealand.</p> <p>We collaborated with Victoria University's Centre for Marine Environmental and Economic Research (CMEER) scientists to survey the biological diversity of the Taputeranga Marine Reserve, established in 2008. The data collected by divers from the Conservancy and CMEER will be used to measure future changes within the reserve.</p> <p>A partnership between the Conservancy and the Palliser Bay Station is protecting the Te Humenga dunes along the Wairarapa south coast through a land protection covenant. The dunes are among the 10 most important dunes in the lower North Island. This 21.1 hectare section of dunes contains many native coastal plants including the rare sand tussock (<i>Austrofestuca littoralis</i>) and animals such as katipo spiders, lizards and the threatened <i>Notoreas</i> Wellington moth.</p>

	<p>We compiled a CD of information about Wellington's marine environment spanning more than a century. The interactive CD will help guide decision makers. It features more than 150 maps and 1350 references on Wellington's marine environment, and it is intended for everyone with an interest in the Wellington Coastal Marine Area , particularly those involved in coastal and marine conservation, planning, management and research.</p> <p>A new ford has been built across the Catchpool Stream in the Rimutaka Forest Park, improving access and safety for visitors, and unrestricted passage for spawning native fish.</p> <p>Significant support was provided for Biodiversity Condition Fund applications including assistance with preparation and assessment and implementation of work. Projects to receive funding this year included; dune restoration on Wellington's south coast, protection of wetlands in Mahia, Waikanae, and Otaki, and restoration of forests on the Wairarapa plains.</p> <p>Mainland estuarine wetlands in the Conservancy have been ranked by biodiversity value and restoration potential – Ahuriri, Whakaki, Porangahau, Wairoa and Maungawhio.</p>
<p>Intermediate Outcome 4: A representative range of historic and cultural heritage is conserved and interpreted</p>	<p>We opened old Government Buildings (OGB) to the public each Saturday from February to April 2010. More than 1000 people attended the talks and tours, which covered such topics as the recent restoration and origin of Government Buildings and its clock, and Pipitea Pā and Māori in early Wellington. Information gathered from visitor questionnaires will help future event and interpretation planning at Government Buildings, and may lead to Saturday openings becoming a regular occurrence in the future. A video of the OGB clock being wound was produced for the website.</p> <p>New under floor insulation, heaters, thermal curtains, and a heat pump have been installed in the historic Dominion Observatory in Wellington to provide a comfortable working space for its tenants – mapping company Geographx. The leaky roof had also been repaired and the whole building cleaned. An open day was held there in conjunction with Carter Observatory.</p> <p>In partnership with Taranaki Whanui the history of Matiu/Somes Island is being revived through six new interpretation panels, and a self guided tour of the animal quarantine station. The self guided tour will eventually feature the oral history of the station, which was recorded at a reunion of former participants during summer. The history of both the degaussing and maximum quarantine stations is told in interpretation at these sites. Remedial work has been undertaken at the barracks building.</p>

Intermediate Outcome 5: New Zealanders increasingly engage in conservation

Conservancy staff supported the Experiencing Marine Reserves programme for Wellington and Kapiti school children. This year's focus was on comparing unprotected areas near the Taputeranga and Kapiti Marine Reserves to the protected area. The end goal was to present their conclusions about the benefits of marine reserves to the wider community. Island Bay and Houghton Valley Schools, which have been involved in the previous year's programme, expanded their participation by conducting species monitoring at Taputeranga in conjunction with Victoria University and DOC.

We have developed Conservation Action Plans (CAP) in all five Areas to identify the conservation outcomes we want to achieve in a number of zones, and prioritise this work. They set out a five-year plan of action for integrated conservation including to prevent decline of ecosystems and species throughout the region. Each CAP will be used to both underpin the CMS and to outreach into communities to engage people more in our work.

The 7th annual Cook Strait humpback whale survey featured as a LEARNZ virtual field trip which enabled 3800 school children to participate in a real time research project. They saw footage of live humpback whales and learnt about research skills and equipment and how research protects these animals. This programme was available due to a partnership with LEARNZ, DOC and OMV NZ Ltd.

Conservancy volunteers provided 3636 days of work, equivalent to the work of 14 Rangers over the past year. Around 170 Wellington region conservation volunteers attended the annual Restoration Day conference in Upper Hutt on 22 May. The event was co-hosted by DOC and Greater Wellington, with support from the New Zealand Ecological Restoration Network (NZERN) and local councils. *Looking back, going forward* was the theme for this year's event, which coincided with the International Day of Biodiversity. It was a timely opportunity for volunteers and professionals to learn from the past to gain momentum in their drive to protect and enhance Wellington's natural environment.

We joined with the Wellington City and Wellington Regional Councils, and QEII National Trust, to host a workshop in Rimutaka Forest Park in October to upskill members of ecological restoration groups from throughout the region. They learned such techniques as monitoring vegetation growth, measuring stream health, counting and identifying birds, and tracking pest mammals.

An empty house removed from a contaminated site at Ongaonga in Hawke's Bay was relocated to Boundary Stream and upgraded over winter to provide much-needed accommodation for volunteers who undertake pest control and species monitoring in the reserve.

	<p>Plans for a major upgrade of the kiwi nocturnal house at Pukaha Mount Bruce received a major boost with approval by the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board of a \$300,000 grant towards the project. The grant by the Lottery Environment and Heritage Committee grant is the largest made by that committee to Wairarapa in many years and will assist the \$1.5 million upgrade and extension to the nocturnal house and other outdoor facilities at the National Wildlife Centre.</p> <p>Greater Wellington, the Wellington Hawke’s Bay Conservation Board and DOC launched a new awards programme to honour people demonstrating a commitment to the Wellington region’s environment. The Encore Awards are open to groups, individuals, businesses and schools improving and restoring our region’s rivers, lakes, wetlands, dunes and coasts and conserving natural, cultural and historic sites, and to businesses and resource consent holders reducing the impact of their activities on our region’s environment.</p> <p>The Conservancy hosted three Teacher Fellows who undertook such tasks as monitoring in the Tararua Forest Park and field work on Matiu/Somes Island. This gave them the opportunity to learn more about the nature of science from a conservation, biodiversity and sustainability perspective.</p> <p>We have increasingly developed partnership approaches with territorial local authorities on RMA matters. For example in regard to the Hawke’s Bay regional storm water strategy, Tukituki River Liaison Group, review of biodiversity rules with Horowhenua and Kapiti District Councils, Napier/Featherston/Carterton sewage schemes. We made 39 submissions to Councils.</p>
<p>Intermediate Outcome 6: New Zealanders have increased opportunities for recreation and outdoor activities</p>	<p>The Conservancy invested \$1.8 million in capital works to upgrade recreation facilities. This included building two new bridges on the Mangaone walkway and one at the start of the Waitewaewae track in the Kapiti Area and upgrading Mangatutu Hot Springs in the Kaweka Forest Park. The Te Arapiki o Tawhaki walking track at Pukaha Mount Bruce has been extended by 2.2km, to loop through the forest and return to the visitor centre. Holdsworth Lodge has been extended and renovated. A new visitor hide has been built at Boggy Pond so people can enjoy Wairarapa Moana.</p> <p>Wairarapa and Hawke’s Bay’s wealth of outdoor attractions and activities is highlighted in new brochures produced by the Conservancy. These can be accessed on the website. These Areas ran a summer program for local communities.</p> <p>The new Haurangi and Papatahi Huts have been built in the Orongorongo valley, replacing the eight bed Haurangi and Shamrock Huts, which had reached the end of their serviceable lives. The new huts are constructed from more sustainable materials, are warmer and better insulated with</p>

	<p>bigger, lighter, living spaces. Papatahi Hut has four extra bunks than planned thanks to a \$30,000 donation - \$26,000 from the Gilbert McCaul Bequest administered by the Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ, and \$4000 from the Hutt Valley Tramping Club.</p> <p>New interpretation panels highlighting Kapiti Island's flora and fauna are now in place in the Rangatira shelter. This is the start of improved interpretation that will be installed on the island over the next couple of years, featuring a range of topics, including the island's colourful history.</p> <p>The Conservancy, Greater Wellington and South Wairarapa District Councils, hapu, Rangitane o Wairarapa, Kahungunu ki Wairarapa formed a governance group to establish and manage the Wairarapa Moana Wetlands Park. The largest wetland complex in the southern North Island, covering over 9000 ha, it supports native plants and animals of national and international importance. The partnership aims to restore the mana of the lake—reversing the wetland degradation and preserving and enhancing the remaining values associated with the moana.</p> <p>More facilities can be booked using the online booking system on DOC's website, including: accommodation and a historic meeting venue (historic caretaker's cottage) on Matiu/Somes Island; and new for the Wairarapa—Te Kopi Cottage near the Pinnacles campground at Palliser Bay, Waikuku Lodge at the end of the Ruakokopatuna Road and Holdsworth Lodge.</p> <p>A draft recreation strategy has been developed that will enhance our planning and decisions on supply and demand for recreation opportunities.</p>
<p>Intermediate Outcome 7: Business opportunities consistent with conservation outcomes are enabled</p>	<p>The Conservancy worked with tourism consultants, Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) and Tourism Industry Association New Zealand (TIANZ) to develop processes and plans for increasing tourism on public conservation land</p> <p>The Conservancy is liaising with stakeholders and iwi to consider ways of enhancing the visitor experience on Kapiti Island without compromising the island's conservation goals. A report produced for DOC by Wellington-based Tourism Resource Consultants (TRC), recommends a strengthened concession document, more active visitor management, new programmes, (including half-day guided trips and greater use of the historic Whare for small corporate groups/retreats and ceremonies) a new mainland reception centre (which would also improve biosecurity), lower elevation tracks around Rangatira Flats, and a track connecting Rangatira and the north end.</p> <p>The Conservancy processed 25 concessions and during the year engaged with 11 tangata whenua groups to discuss their involvement with concessions. One concession was suspended and later re-instated due to concessionaire conduct.</p>

Working with iwi

As reported last year the Conservancy continues to work increasingly more closely with iwi as partners, especially as the treaty settlement process is worked through.

Matiu Somes and other harbour islands are now owned by the Port Nicholson Treaty Settlement Trust and managed by DOC. A new Kaitiaki Board has been established to oversee the management of the islands.

The Ngati Toa settlement is progressing and covers elements of redress in respect of Kapiti Island, Mana Island and other significant sites.

Ngati Puhauwera are close to settlement with a number of Hawke's Bay reserves to be transferred to iwi. Other mandated iwi groups in the Hawke's Bay are beginning negotiations with the Crown and DOC local staff are fully engaged in helping everyone identify conservation values and aspirations.

Alan McKenzie
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20 September 2010