

**Wellington Conservation Board**  
*Te Runanga Papa Atawhai*  
*O Te Upoko O Te Ika A Maui*

**Annual Report to the  
New Zealand Conservation Authority  
1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007**



**Serviced by  
Wellington Conservancy, Department of Conservation  
PO Box 5086, Wellington, New Zealand**

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Membership of the Board</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Board's Functions and Powers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Board's District</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Board Meetings and Inspections</b>	<b>3</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board Meetings</li><li>• Field Inspections<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Matiu/Somes Island</li><li>- Mana Island</li><li>- Lake Papaitonga Scenic Reserve</li><li>- Waikawa Beach and Estuary</li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Public Involvement</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Board Functions under section 6M of the Conservation Act – Monitoring Implementation of the CMS</b>	<b>5</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plant Pests</li><li>• Built and Cultural Heritage</li><li>• Lake Wairarapa</li><li>• Recreation</li><li>• New approaches to monitoring implementation of the CMS</li></ul>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Review of the CMS by the Director General</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Advice to the NZ Conservation Authority [Section 6M (1)(d)]</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Advice to the Director-General of Conservation and DOC – Wellington Conservancy</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Liaison with Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board [Section 6M(1)(f)]</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Powers of the Board under Section 6N of the Conservation Act</b>	<b>10</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocacy Role <i>1080, Eels</i></li><li>• Regional and District Planning<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Otari-Wilton's Bush Draft Management Plan</li><li>- Other Plans</li></ul></li><li>• Resource Consent Applications<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Marine Education Centre, Western wastewater treatment plant</i></li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>11</b>	<b>Liaison</b>	<b>12</b>
	<i>Lake Wairarapa Co-ordinating Committee, Puhaka/Mount Bruce</i>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Conservation Week 2006</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Marine Reserves</b>	<b>13</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kapiti Marine Reserve Committee</li><li>• Kupe-Kevin Smith Marine Reserve</li></ul>	
<b>14</b>	<b>Chairperson's Comment</b>	<b>14</b>

Cover photo: Freshwater longfin eel (*Anguilla dieffenbachii*). The Board advocated that sustainable management measures be introduced, to enable declining freshwater eel populations to re-establish. Photo: Chris Day.

## 1. Membership of the Board

Members are appointed to the Wellington Conservation Board by the Minister of Conservation. Appointments of any new members normally take effect from September each year but appointments may also be made, if required, at any time during the year. Board members represent a wide variety of interests and reside in communities across the Board's region.

During this year three members retired from the Board at the end of their terms and were replaced by Rob McColl, Nicky Nelson and Dennis Roberts. Andrew Cutler resigned on 22 February 2007.

Six Board meetings were held in the reported period. The Board membership and meeting attendances were as follows:

Bev Abbott Chair	Wellington		6
Helen Algar Deputy Chair	Wellington		6
Te Akapikirangi Arthur	Porirua		4
Geoff Doring	Carterton		6
Haami Te Whaiti	Featherston		2
Andrew Foster	Wellington		4
Ray Ahipene-Mercer	Wellington		4
Margaret Wassilieff	Wellington		6
Rob McColl	Wellington	Appointed 09/2006	5/5
Nicky Nelson	Wellington	Appointed 09/2006	3/5
Andrew Cutler	Wellington	Resigned 02/2007	2/4
Dennis Roberts	Wellington	Appointed 04/2007	2/2
Diane Anderson	Eketahuna	Term Ended 31/08/07	1/1
Bill Carter (former chairperson)	Paraparaumu	Term Ended 31/08/07	1/1
Robert Logan	Wellington	Term Ended 31/08/07	1/1



**Members of the Wellington Conservation Board at Lake Papaitonga Scenic Reserve: Back row from left: Rob McColl, Geoff Doring, Helen Algar Front row: Bev Abbott, Andy Foster, Dennis Roberts, Maggy Wassilieff, Ray Ahipene-Mercer Absent: Haami Te Whaiti, Aka Arthur and Nicky Nelson**

## 2. Board's Functions & Powers

The functions and powers of the Board are formally set out in section 6 M & N of the Conservation Act 1987. The Board's activities under these functions and powers are recorded in sections 5, 6 and 7 of this report.

## 3. Board's District

The Board's district, (as shown in figure one), is south of a line from the mouth of the Manawatu River, through the Manawatu Gorge south of Woodville and across to the east coast, south of Cape Turnagain. It is the same area as the Department of Conservation's Wellington Conservancy but excludes the Chatham Islands.

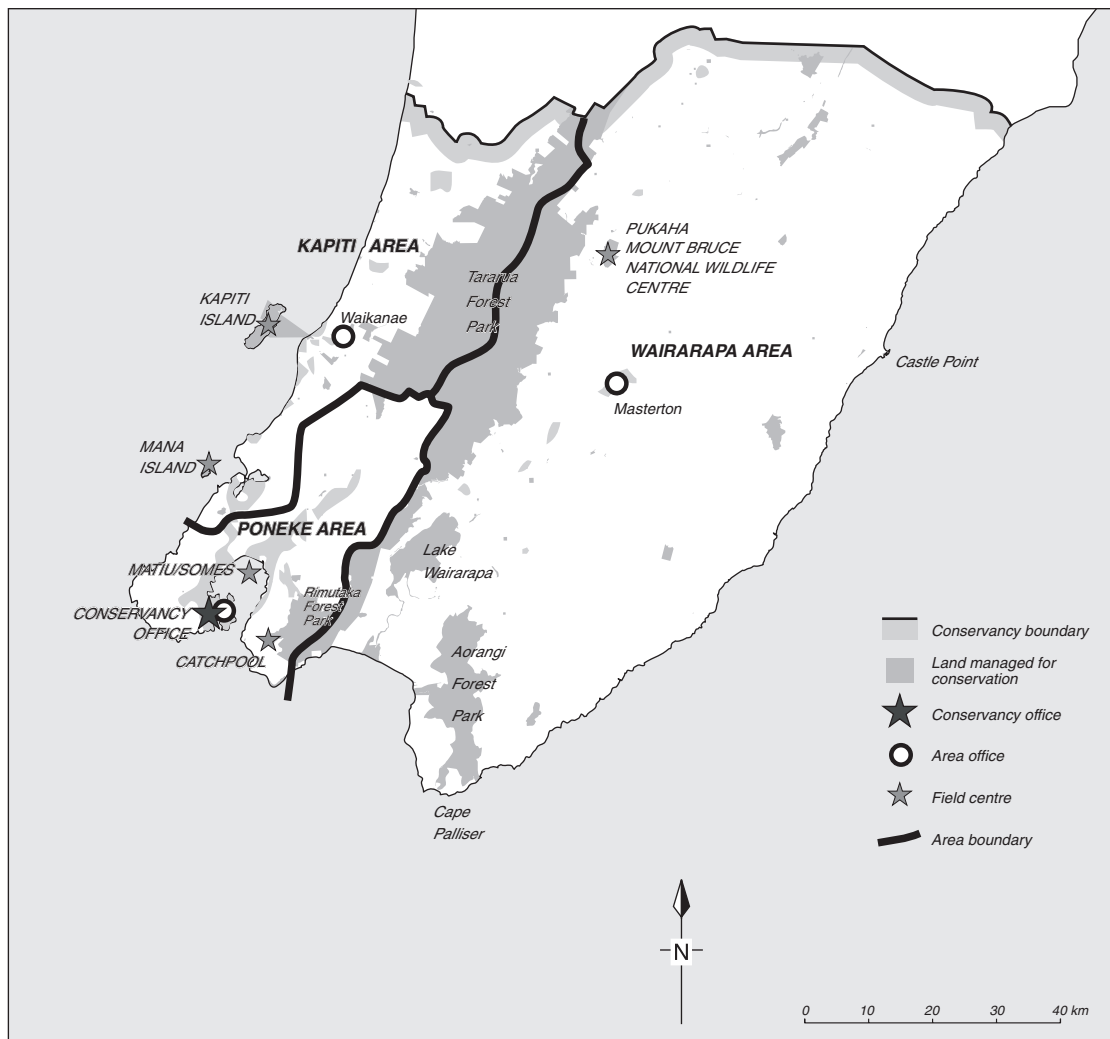


Figure 1: Map of the Wellington Conservation Board's district

The key places administered by the Department of Conservation in the Board's district are:

Lake Wairarapa Wetlands	Old Government Buildings
Carter Scenic Reserve	Turnbull House
Castlepoint Scenic Reserve	Pukerua Bay Scientific Reserve
National Wildlife Centre (Mount Bruce)	Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve
Putangirua Pinnacles Scenic Reserve	Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve
Cape Palliser	Waikanae Estuary
Rewa Bush Conservation Area	Papaitonga Scenic Reserve
Rocky Hills Sanctuary Area	Snail Reserves, Horowhenua
Tora Scenic Reserve	Tararua Forest Park
Colonial Knob	Aorangi (Haurangi) Forest Park
Makara Coast	Rimutaka Forest Park
Pauatahanui Inlet, Porirua Harbour	Kapiti Island Nature Reserve
Pencarrow Head, Kohunga Lakes	Mana Island
Turakirae Head Scientific Reserve	Matiu/Somes Island
Red Rocks Scientific Reserve	Kapiti Marine Reserve
Dominion Observatory	Kapiti Island North Reserve

#### **4.1 Board Meetings and Inspections**

##### **Board Meetings**

Full-day meetings were held on:

- 18 August 2006 in Wellington
- 27 October 2006 on Matiu/Somes Island
- 8 December 2006 in Wellington
- 16 February 2007 in Wellington
- 27 April 2007 in Wellington
- 22 June 2007 in Levin

##### **Field inspections**

Field trips were made to:

- Matiu/Somes Island (28 October)
- Mana Island (21 April)
- Lake Papaitonga (22 June)
- Waikawa Beach and Estuary (22 June)

Field inspections provided opportunities for the Board to:

- monitor progress towards achieving the objectives in the Wellington Conservation Management Strategy (CMS).
- become familiar with the conservation values of specific sites and the challenges faced by DOC staff
- discuss management approaches with DOC staff
- identify issues that may need to be addressed during the review of the CMS.

Key points noted during field inspections for follow-up action or consideration during the CMS review are summarised below.

##### **Matiu/Somes Island**

Key points:

- the dramatic change in the island's biota which has improved the quality of the visitor experience
- the importance of protecting the full range of human history
- opportunities for interpretation partnerships about the varied human and animal history
- restoration of the original ecosystems should be addressed in the longer term but is not warranted at this stage
- support for the eradication of karo and pohutukawa in the long term
- the absence of natural fresh water meaning toilets and irrigation of plantings depend on tank supplies
- the amount of time DOC staff have to spend maintaining old infrastructure instead of achieving conservation goals
- the real risk of rats arriving via private boats given the in-shore moorings and number of potential landing sites.

### **Mana Island**

Key points:

- Mana's future use for wider range of species recovery programmes
- the wahi tapu status of the entire island under Porirua City Council's district plan
- continuing restoration of forest ecosystems and cliff vegetation so they become more like that which probably existed before human habitation
- the challenge of managing visitors in order to achieve the island's potential for developing increased support for conservation
- the amount of mowing needed to maintain grasslands and paths
- the potential conflict between the restoration of forest cover and maintaining the sense of being on an island with its expansive views to Kapiti, the mainland, and the South Island.



**Wellington Conservation Board members on top of Mana Island; spotting Takahe, and enjoying the view back to the mainland and to the South Island in the distance.  
Lake Papaitonga Scenic Reserve**



Key points:

- the recent addition of three gullies that provide most of the surface water to the lake
- special values, including; two forms of *Powelliphanta traversii* (giant carnivorous land snails), the rich Maori history, and the site of some early conservation activities back in the 1800s
- pressures of adjacent land use changes – e.g., from pastoral farming and horticulture to rural subdivision.

### **Waikawa Beach and Estuary**

Key points:

- impacts of subdivision on the small estuary, the coastal dunes and ephemeral wetlands
- constriction of the coastal processes zone through development and residents' expectations that coastal properties will be protected
- effective working relationships between DOC and developers, for example, a developer's positive response to DOC's suggestion that an artificial wetland was contoured to create more diverse ecological niches.

## **4.2 Public Involvement**

Prior to each meeting, the agenda was put on the DOC website - except for the six months this facility was unavailable, and posted to organisations and members of the public. Meetings were advertised in the Public Notices section of the Dominion Post and the local Kapiti Observer and Wairarapa Times.

Each Board agenda included a public forum where members of the public could speak to the Board about agenda items or other conservation issues. The Board regards the forum as an important part of its involvement with the community. Issues raised at forums during the year included:

- TB status of cattle in Haurangi Forest Park
- concerns relating to the proposed subdivisions within Te Hapua dunes and wetlands
- concerns relating to a perceived threat to the dune country on the southern side of the Waikanae Estuary, presented by Forest and Bird
- a presentation on the concerns and work being done by Horowhenua branch of Forest and Bird, with particular focus on their efforts to protect wetlands and native bush on private land, coast and dune country, and rivers.

## **5. Board Functions under Section 6M of the Conservation Act - monitoring implementation of the CMS**

Between August 2006 and February 2007, the Board continued to use its traditional approach to monitoring the Department of Conservation's implementation of the Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). Key steps included:

- identifying a section of the CMS for consideration at a future meeting
- appointing a small and changing group of Board members to develop a list of written questions for the Department based on the objectives and implementation statements in the CMS and any previous reports on the relevant section

- submitting the questions to the Department
- considering the Department's written responses which were circulated with Board papers
- discussing the report with relevant DOC staff at a Board meeting
- recording and acting on any key concerns.

The Board believes that this process has generally provided an effective way of performing one of its major statutory functions. Board members also consider that the reports and discussions played an important role in increasing members' understanding of the management challenges faced by the Conservancy.

Sections of the CMS that were assessed using this process during 2006-07 are detailed below.

### **Plant Pests (August)**

The Board noted that:

- the conservancy's weed management activities are guided by the Department's national Strategic Plan for Managing Invasive Weeds, and the Conservancy has both site-led and weed-led programmes
- Area offices currently report on their weed control programmes in quite different ways, but the Conservancy intends to improve the alignment of reporting within the next 2-3 years
- the weed education programmes developed by Wellington conservancy were now being adopted by agencies in other parts of the country.

### **Built and Cultural Heritage (October)**

The Board noted that:

- the Conservancy was placing increased emphasis on the visitor experience in ranking sites for management with about 25% of the relevant historic budget now being spent on interpretation
- about 90 sites on public conservation land with historic heritage values are not being actively managed, but this may be the most appropriate management approach for some of these sites.

### **Lake Wairarapa (December)**

At the Board's October meeting, a Board working group set up to review the planning and management of Lake Wairarapa, tabled a report:

- summarising the lack of progress over several years
- proposing some outcomes, key indicators, measures/milestones
- setting out a list of questions for management agencies (DOC and Greater Wellington).

Some of these questions were responded to in December 2006 by the Area Manager (Wairarapa) and in April 2007 by Ian Buchanan, Chief Executive of Greater Wellington (GW).



In a recent development, GW has included the establishment of Lake Wairarapa as a Wetlands Regional Park in its Long Term Council Community Plan. GW initially proposed spending \$350,000 per annum on managing the park but has since reduced this to \$55,000 for 2007-08.

The Board has an interest in the governance arrangements currently under development by GW, the Conservancy and iwi as these may have implications for the next CMS. In particular, the Board identified the need to monitor the importance attached to the protection and restoration of the wetland's ecological values under any new governance structure given GW's wider responsibilities for economic and social, as well as environmental outcomes.

### **Recreation (February)**

The Board noted:

- the current CMS limited helicopter landing sites because of concerns in the early 1990s about noise impacts on "natural" quiet
- more flexibility in landing sites may be acceptable under the next CMS to enable recreational hunters to make a greater contribution to the control of deer in remote areas
- the lack of information about facility usage levels
- the potential for camping on Matiu/Somes and at Cross Creek
- the potential to generate additional revenue by promoting annual hut passes.

A discussion about other recreational matters, including access and opportunities for 4WDs, was held over to a future meeting.

### **New approaches to monitoring implementation of the CMS**

At its June 2007 meeting, the Board began to experiment with a different approach to this statutory responsibility with a view to "looking forward" as well as "looking back". The Board invited the DOC Area Manager (Kapiti/Horowhenua) to identify key successes and key disappointments over the last 10 years, and key activities planned for the next few years. Further development of this process is seen to have considerable potential for "conservation conversations" between the Board and the Department. These conversations may evolve into new systematic ways of ensuring that CMS objectives are integrated into the Conservancy's business planning and reporting processes.

Looking further ahead to when the next CMS is in place, the Board anticipates the approach to monitoring implementation will change again. Conservation General Policy (Section 13(f)) states:

*The Department will provide conservation boards with a report (at least annually) on the implementation of conservation management strategies and plans, and conservation management strategies should include major milestones for planned outcomes to facilitate implementation reporting.*

The Board sees identifying major milestones for monitoring progress towards each outcome/objective as one of the most important matters to be addressed in the development of the next CMS.

## 6. Review of the CMS by the Director-General

The Board has been concerned and frustrated by a series of delays to the review of the CMS in recent years.

The Wellington CMS was approved in April 1996. Under the Conservation Act 1987, [s. 17H (4) (b)], the Director General is to review the CMS as a whole not later than 10 years after the date of its approval. The Minister has already approved an extension to June 2008, but with drafting of the next CMS not yet underway, it seems likely that a further extension will be required.

Parliament, in passing the Conservation Act 1987, put in place provisions that would ensure the public had the opportunity to review each CMS every 10 years. Consultation on the current CMS took place between March and May 1994. Thirteen years have now passed.

The Board recognises that most of the delay can be attributed to national processes including:

- the development of the Conservation General Policy leading up to its approval in May 2005
- the preparation of the Structure and Content Guidance for CMSs which was released by the Acting Director-General in September 2006
- the omission of the Wellington CMS from the list of review start dates circulated in October 2006
- the preparation of the “CMS template” initially anticipated by December 2006 but still not available in June 2007.

The Board supports the Department in its desire for a more efficient process for developing conservation management strategies across the country, and for more consistency in their content. We recognise advantages in not being “first cab off the rank” in testing the new national thinking about the role of conservation management strategies and how they should be developed.

The Board’s concern goes to the contract implicit in conservation management strategies—the statutory requirement to work with the public every 10 years to identify conservation objectives for the next 10 years in the Conservancy’s area, and to give statutory status to those objectives.

Despite its concern about the CMS review, the Board considers that the current CMS still provides sound guidance and direction. There is close alignment between the objectives in the CMS, the Conservation General Policy and major Government policy directions such as the NZ Biodiversity Strategy 2000. A few sections of the CMS need updating, for example, aligning the sections on huts and tracks with the priorities identified through extensive public consultation in 2005. A small number of implementation statements have been overtaken by other events, for example, the honorary ranger system had to be dropped because of difficulties in meeting OSH requirements.

What is still to be clarified is the degree of alignment between the CMS objectives, Government directions such as the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy, and the strategic directions announced by the former Director-General of Conservation in May 2006. The present Director General has announced that the Department's Statement of Intent for 2008-2011 will be revised to implement the strategic directions. The Wellington Conservancy also intends to prepare a series of conservancy action plans to show how the strategic directions will be implemented in future conservancy business plans.

The CMS review process for Wellington received a pale green light in February 2007 when the Department's Operations Manager (Northern) gave her approval for the process to start. Since then, the Board, with support from the Conservancy, has:

- received a presentation by the Chair of the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board and Clint Cameron from DOC BOP outlining the process the BOP Conservancy is using to develop its draft CMS
- developed preliminary lists of possible values, outcomes, issues and objectives for Mana Island and the Horowhenua.

The financial year ended with the Board hoping that a timeline for the development of the draft CMS would be confirmed early in the new financial year.

#### **7. Advice to the NZ Conservation Authority [Section 6M (1) (d)]**

In June 2006, the Board received a very thorough report from staff on animal pest control in the Conservancy and reported on its concerns in last year's Annual Report. The key concern was that, as no routine monitoring was being done, it was impossible for the Board to determine whether the condition of most forests in the conservancy had improved or declined since the Department took over their management from the New Zealand Forest Service. Forest condition was thought to be deteriorating as the conservancy was not controlling deer or pigs anywhere in the conservancy, and possums were not being controlled in the Rimutakas.

The Board was aware that DOC had already done five years work on the development of a Natural Heritage Management System (NHMS), which would eventually enable systematic monitoring of the condition of forests and other ecosystems. In October, the Board wrote to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) alerting them to the Board's dilemma and urging them to do what they could to speed up the development and implementation of NHMS. The letter resulted in an invitation to attend the NZCA meeting in December for a briefing on NHMS by the Department and several members attended this informative session.

The Board welcomed Government's decision to increase funding for NHMS.

**8. Advice to the Director-General of Conservation and Department of Conservation – Wellington Conservancy**

During the report period, the Board received briefings from Department of Conservation staff on a variety of topics and provided oral comment on matters including:

- concession applications
- Kapiti Island short-tailed bat transfer

The Board prepared a detailed submission on the Issues and Options paper prepared by the Department as part of the processes leading up to the Minister's responsibility to review the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS). Points in the Board's submission included:

- the need for the NZCPS to direct regional and district councils to describe and evaluate the natural character of the coast
- the inclusion of objectives, including measurable objectives for biodiversity and biosecurity
- the importance of resourcing and conducting effective consultation with tangata whenua.

The Board also prepared written submissions on the following departmental initiatives:

- Review of level of protection of some NZ wildlife
- Kiwi Recovery Plan.

**9. Liaison with Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board [Section 6M (1) (f)]**

Liaison with the Wellington Fish and Game Council is maintained through the exchange of agendas and minutes. Bev Abbott provided verbal updates of items of particular relevance to the Board and the Department including:

- implementation issues relating to the Hunter Access Management Agreement between DOC and Fish and Game
- discussions with iwi leading to agreement to limited control of raupo at Lake Wairarapa
- the Didymo risk faced by Wellington as the point of entry for many fishers and boaters arriving from the South Island.

**10. Powers of the Board under Section 6N of the Conservation Act**

**Advocacy Role**

1080: The Board submitted on the application presented to the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) by DOC and the Animal for the reassessment of 1080 under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996, and spoke to the submission at the Wellington hearings. The Board's submission emphasised that:

- the arguments in favour of the ongoing use of 1080 massively outweigh the arguments against its use

- only 1080 can substantially reduce pest densities in short time frames over very large land area
- the recreational benefits—silent bush depleted of plant species that are palatable to animal pests is not as attractive as bush inhabited by large numbers of birds and the natural range of plant species
- compelling scientific evidence of the effectiveness of 1080
- the absence of any effective alternative.

The Board received many positive comments from third parties about its submission and presentation.

Eels: The Board continued to advocate for the sustainability of eels rather than the eel fishery in any Ministry of Fisheries consultation opportunities. The Board's submission arguing for maximum weight limit of 3 kg instead of the 4 kg proposed by the Ministry was not successful. However as the reporting period came to an end, the Ministry finally acknowledged publicly that at current levels, the harvest of eels in the North Island was not sustainable.

## **Regional and District Planning**

### Otari-Wilton's Bush Draft Management Plan

The Board strongly supported the vision statement and general intent of the draft plan. It also recommended the development of better facilities and long-term funding for the propagation and culture of endangered plants given Otari's wider role in safe-guarding New Zealand's rare, threatened and endangered plants.

### Other plans

As the financial year came to an end, members were preparing submissions on:

- Greater Wellington's Regional Policy Statement provisions
- Horizon's One Plan
- Wellington City Council's Draft Biodiversity Action Plan.

## **Resource Consent Applications**

The Board's involvement in two resource consent applications initiated during 2005-06 continued into 2006-07.

As outlined in last year's Annual Report, the Board was not unanimous about the Marine Education Centre at Te Raekaihau Point but on balance, supported the application subject to a number of conditions relating mainly to the building's intrusiveness on the site. Following decisions on a second round of hearings, the Board was disappointed to learn that its proposed conditions did not result in any requirement for changes to the design of the building.

The Board and the Wellington Conservancy were two of just 14 submitters on Wellington City Council's application to Greater Wellington to continue

to operate the Western Wastewater Treatment Plant at Karori for another 20 years. The Board recognised the need for the continued operation of the facility but considered the requested period was too long given the current state of the system and the increasing concern about discharges of untreated sewage. When the Commissioners gave consent for continuous discharge of secondary and disinfected sewage for 20 years, and occasional discharge of milliscreened and settled sewage for 10 years, the Board decided not to become a party to the appeals and notices of inquiry lodged by other parties.

The Board supported Porirua City Council's application to Greater Wellington to use cube root powder to eradicate pest fish in the Whitby Lower Lake.

## **11. Liaison**

*Lake Wairarapa Co-ordinating Committee (LWCC):* Geoff Doring and Haami Te Whaiti represent the Board on the Lake Wairarapa Co-ordinating Committee (LWCC). The Committee only managed to meet once during the 2006-07 year due to a temporary shortage of DOC staff to service the committee. This meeting involved a field trip to Onoke Spit. These field trips and meetings provide an important forum for public involvement in the management of the lake and wetlands, and for developing an appreciation of the differing views that are held by landowners, recreational users and the Conservancy regarding the management of the lake and its edges.

*Pukaha/Mount Bruce National Wildlife Centre Trust:* Diane Anderson represented the Board until the end of her term and Geoff Doring accepted the role in October 2006.

The Board has been advised of changes to the Governance arrangements at Pukaha Mt Bruce.

*General:* The Board was pleased when access to its pages on the DOC website ([www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)) was restored following a gap of approximately six months. The pages contain the names of Board members, confirmed minutes and the Board's annual reports.

## **12. Conservation Week 2006**

One of the highlights of the Board year was its partnership with the Conservancy in the annual Wellington Conservation Awards as part of Conservation Week in early August. The awards recognise the work done by the community for conservation. After more than a decade, it was pleasing that the nominations process still produced individuals and groups whose work had not previously been acknowledged. The diversity of the contributions also continued to surprise. A new category, 'Business in Conservation' was introduced for the first time this year.



The winners of the 8 sections were:

<b>Habitat Restoration</b>	Tenick Dennison and the Henley Trust
<b>Recreation</b>	Tony Macklin
<b>Education and Advocacy</b>	Pam Mayston
<b>Kaitiakitanga</b>	Native Bird Rescue Wellington Trust
<b>Heritage</b>	Shear Discovery NZ
<b>Innovation</b>	Leon Kiel
<b>Young Conservationist</b>	Kenakena School
<b>Business in Conservation</b>	Tranz Metro Wellington

Merit Awards acknowledged a further 10 contributions.

The awards were presented by the Minister of Conservation, the Hon Chris Carter, assisted by the Associate Minister, the Hon. Mahara Okeroa in a ceremony in the Legislative Council Chambers, Parliament Buildings on 9 August 2006. Each winner took advantage of the opportunity to make a short speech. Following the ceremony, there was a further opportunity for Board members, DOC staff, award winners, for nominees and other guests, including previous winners, to share their enthusiasm and concerns about conservation.

### 13. Marine Reserves

#### **Kapiti Marine Reserve Committee**

In December 2006, the Board received the Annual Report of the Kapiti Marine Reserve Committee (KMRC) for April 2005-June 2006. The KMRC is a committee of the Wellington Conservation Board and the Board has delegated specific functions to the KMRC. The responsibility to appoint members lies with the Minister and day to day management and compliance activities are handled by the Department.

Some key points from the KMRC Annual Report included:

- KMRC's appreciation of the increased patrols by DOC staff
- the diversity of the educational and outreach activities, particularly during Sea Week
- increased public ownership and pride in the reserve and their wish for it to be well-looked after.
- the need for the next committee to review potential vectors for invasive species such as *Undaria*.

Proposed changes to the process for appointing members to the KMRC have been presented to the Minister of Conservation. Nominations for membership of the KMRC closed in February 2007. The committee has not met since 7 June 2006.

## **Kupe-Kevin Smith Marine Reserve**

The Board welcomed the announcement of a new marine reserve on Wellington's south coast. The persistence and patience of the reserve advocates over the last 15 years were critical success factors in achieving a result all parties could accept.

### **14. Chairperson's Comment**

It's been a year of change for the Board. In October we farewelled Robert Logan and two former chairs, Diane Anderson and Bill Carter. In February, Andrew Cutler resigned, just one meeting after being selected as Deputy Chair. We know that we will soon be farewelling Te Akapikirangi Arthur and Ray Ahipene-Mercer. All these members can feel very proud of their contribution to the life and work of the Board.

In September 2006, we were pleased for former Conservator, Allan Ross, when he was appointed to lead the Terrestrial Conservation Unit in DOC's Research, Development and Improvement Directorate. Allan developed a detailed knowledge of the Conservancy and its people during his 14 years in the role. He worked closely with the Board, and rarely missed a board meeting or field inspection. We are confident that his practical experience of conservation will be highly valued by his new team.

In February 2007, we welcomed Alan McKenzie as Conservator in a warm-hearted ceremony attended by senior DoC managers, conservancy staff and Board members. Five months later we are appreciating the benefits of a new set of eyes and new ideas in looking at the challenges in the Conservancy. Alan's willingness to update the Board on operational highlights and issues at each meeting is particularly appreciated.

I also want to acknowledge the many staff who have supported the Board during the year. Jeff Flavell guided the conservancy through the interregnum with a wise head and steady hands. Our Board secretaries, first Kerry Swadling and then Pamela Taylor have been competent, cheerful and invariably supportive in many different ways. Field inspections have been a highlight. Ian Cooksley, Area Manager, Waikanae and his team organised a highly memorable and informative trip to Mana Island in April. Ian also introduced us to Lake Papaitonga in Horowhenua, on our first visit to one of the northern reaches of the Conservancy. Rob Stone, Acting Manager Poneke, hosted us for an overnight stay on Matiu/Somes where Board members enjoyed and admired TSO Historic Richard Nester's knowledge and skills in bringing alive the island's history.

The year ahead will present new challenges. The timing for the review of the CMS is clearly a critical issue. Under one scenario, the review could become a major focus if the Conservancy and Board are told to have a draft CMS ready for consideration by the NZCA by 31 December 2008. If that particular milestone is more distant, then the Board will have more choices on how and where to invest its time, skills and expertise.

A significant opportunity is emerging through Conservator Alan McKenzie's interest in involving his staff in "conservation conversations" with the Board. I'm confident the Board would respond positively to any invitation to contribute to the Conservancy's annual business planning processes. Engagement in business planning clearly falls within the Board's responsibility to advise the "Director General" on the implementation of the CMS. The Board could also contribute a "public voice" to the development of any Action Plans showing how DOC's strategic directions and Government's policies will be implemented in the Conservancy. This level of engagement will help establish the degree of alignment and any gaps between the CMS objectives, and the objectives or intermediate outcomes in the Department's next Statement of Intent. Better links between the Annual Business Plan and the CMS will also improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes for monitoring implementation of the CMS.

Finally I want to thank my colleagues on the Board for their support and commitment throughout the year.



Bev Abbott  
Chairperson  
09 August 2007

*Please note: The comments expressed above by the Board Chairperson do not necessarily reflect the opinions of other Board members.*

**This report was adopted by the Wellington Conservation Board on 24 August 2007.**