

Department of Conservation Status Report for the Minister of Conservation

Week beginning 27 July 2021

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Seen by Hon Kiritapu Allan
Minister of Conservation

DOCCM - 6732849



Contents

1	Standing and Priority Items	3
1.1	Jobs for Nature	3
1.2	RMA Advocacy.....	4
1.3	.....	5
2	Updates	7
2.1	Cyber Attack on Aoraki Search & Rescue Base Network.....	7
2.2	MBIE progressing a resolution to mineral permitting issues in World Heritage Areas	7
2.3	High Court decision in <i>Tuwharetoa Māori Trust Board v Taupo Waters Collective Ltd</i>	8
2.4	Auckland: First confirmed myrtle rust on Aotea/Great Barrier Island	9
2.5	Western South Island: Heaphy Great Walk damage and reopening.....	9
2.6	Western South Island: Update to the burglary on Heaphy Great Walk	10
2.7	Milford Opportunities: Cabinet paper release and progress toward Cabinet’s direction	11
2.8	Update on seizure of antique cabinet containing elephant ivory inlays.....	11
2.9	Rangitāhua archaeological material	12
2.10	Release of the i-SITE Future Network Strategy	12
2.11	Predator Free 2050 website launch.....	13
2.12	.....	14
3	Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities.....	15
3.1	.....	15
4	Director-General Engagements.....	16
5	Appendices	17

Attachments

1. Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
2. D-G Direct (fortnightly item)
3. Jobs for Nature weekly dashboard

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Jobs for Nature

Current State (as at 26 July):

- [REDACTED]
- We are working with your office to confirm projects progressing forward to SLU Minister approval on 5 August, including three under \$1 million projects for noting.
- There was a 90% response rate for quarterly reporting with the new format of survey-style reporting. This was a significant lift on the 30% response rate of earlier rounds.
- Staff are now progressing assurance checks for milestone payments, relevant to this quarterly reporting.
- [REDACTED]
- The Secretariat has advised that monthly reporting requirements will cease from September 2021 (DOC-led projects following the Project Management Framework will still have a monthly project status report requirement). We expect partners to be pleased with this, noting that reporting through the Rataka Taiao App should pick up employment data on a more frequent basis.
- Funding Agreements continue to progress through to execution.

Updates - Workstreams and projects

Community and Landowner Fund

- A list of Community Fund and Private Land Biodiversity Fund projects in the contracting/legal stage will be sent to your office by 30 July, as requested. Some of these projects are now beginning to move into the 'in Delivery/Execution stage'.

QEII – Protecting the Gains

- The project has been contracted and is now awaiting announcement.

Maori Land Grant

- Work is now underway to implement next steps for allocation of these funds, following your approval of Briefing 21-B-0254.

Ngā Awa

- Planning for the announcement and event for the Lower Rangitata and Upper Rangitata restoration projects is now scheduled for 8 August.
- The Ng`a Awa: Te Hoire/Pelorus restoration project is now in the final stages of assurance check, prior to DOC signing the agreement.

South Island Threatened Species Prevention

- The project is short listing Senior Ranger and Supervisor positions and advertising for 2 additional monitoring Rangers this week.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.

Prevention of North Island Indigenous Forest Collapse: Update on Raukūmara Pae Maunga:

- Recruitment for a General Manager is underway, with this person expected to be appointed mid-August.
- Work on the Partnership Agreement and models for working continues, with this expected to be completed by the end of December 2021.
- The project aims to deliver 194.7 FTE over the project lifetime, with 41 employment starts each year. 24 people have been employed so far. There are also 4 specialist contractors.
- The focus of the work to date has been on the establishment phase, including completing operational planning, pre monitoring, and some 'quick wins' mahi (e.g. culling to test and understand the planned approach, weed surveying & control, training)
- Roles currently filled include an interim Project Manager, 5 Operational Supervisors, deer cullers and pest control workers, and monitoring and cultural advisors.
- A training programme is also underway to build capability.
- The above personnel will either transition into similar roles within the next phase or return to hapū level engagement. All roles will be focused on 100% operational delivery.
- Monitoring for pest control has been completed and the use of thermal imaging has been hugely successful.

Relationship Scan: Ministry for the Environment

- We have seconded another DOC employee to the Secretariat in mid-August with the previous secondee finishing their tenure. The role will involve supporting the work of the Secretariat, including briefings, papers to governance groups, responses to queries, ministerial correspondence, and parliamentary questions.

Other

- We are working closely with the DOC ISS team on an assessment of options for Funds Management tools to support the Jobs for Nature programme. This work has explored four possible options, [REDACTED]

Implementation of a tool will greatly support both Jobs for Nature staff and recipients in the management of their projects and reporting requirements.

Contact: Reg Kemper, Chief Advisor Jobs for Nature: [REDACTED]

1.2 RMA Advocacy

DOC's recent RMA work is as follows:

Hearings:

Kuku Holdings Limited

- On 26 July DOC staff appeared at a resource consent hearing in Blenheim regarding marine farm expansion in Pelorus Sound, Marlborough.
- We oppose the expansion of the marine farm, which is adjacent to scenic reserve land managed by DOC on the grounds that the proposed activity

will have significant adverse effects on the landscape and natural character values of the reserve and the surrounding area.

Appeals:


Watercare Ltd – Huia Water Treatment Plant

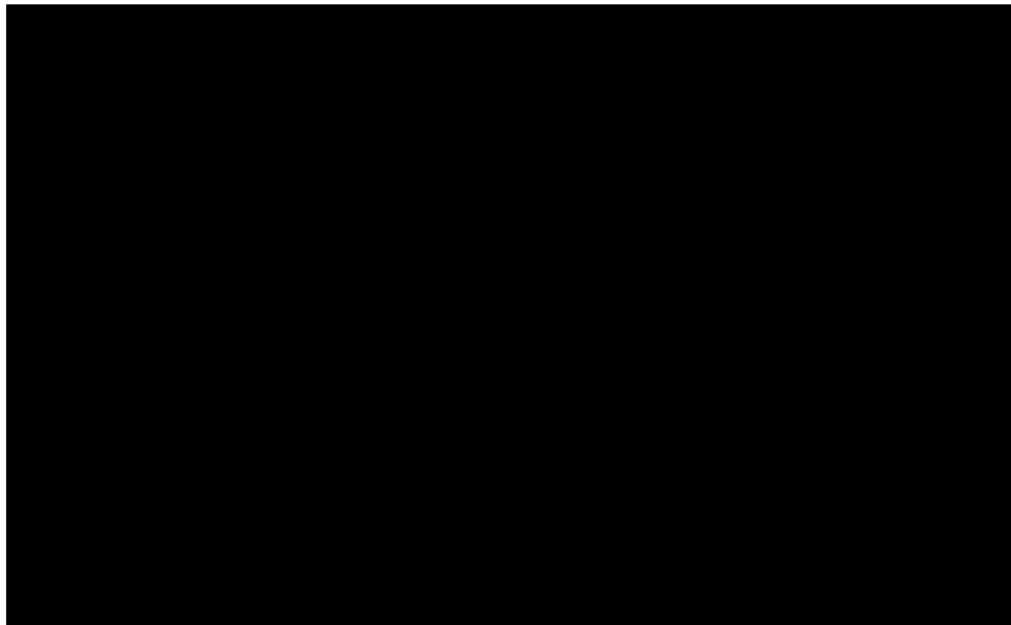
- DOC has been involved with Watercare's Huia replacement water treatment plant hearing resource consent proceedings. The decision to grant the consent was released on 1 July 2021.
- We have assessed the decision and while some outstanding concerns remain (particularly relating to biodiversity offsetting and environmental compensation, and kauri dieback measures) we have decided not appeal as the benefits of doing so would not be commensurate to the resource required to continue.
- An indigenous wasp species has been discovered at the site and brought to our attention by community groups. We did not submit on this basis and as such will not appeal on it, but will review the risk to the species and consider the value of joining proceedings later in the process.

Submissions:

AN and AJ Stalker – Wetland works

- We have submitted in opposition to a resources consent application to develop a farm track near Mossburn, Southland.
- The development includes earthworks, reclamation, diversion of water and dewatering of a natural wetland. Both the wetland and part of the proposed development is located on land managed by DOC.
- We consider that the activity is a prohibited activity under the National Environment Standard for Freshwater, which does not allow drainage and reduction of extent of natural wetlands, and submitted on that basis.

Contact: 



IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.

IN-CONFIDENCE

2 Updates

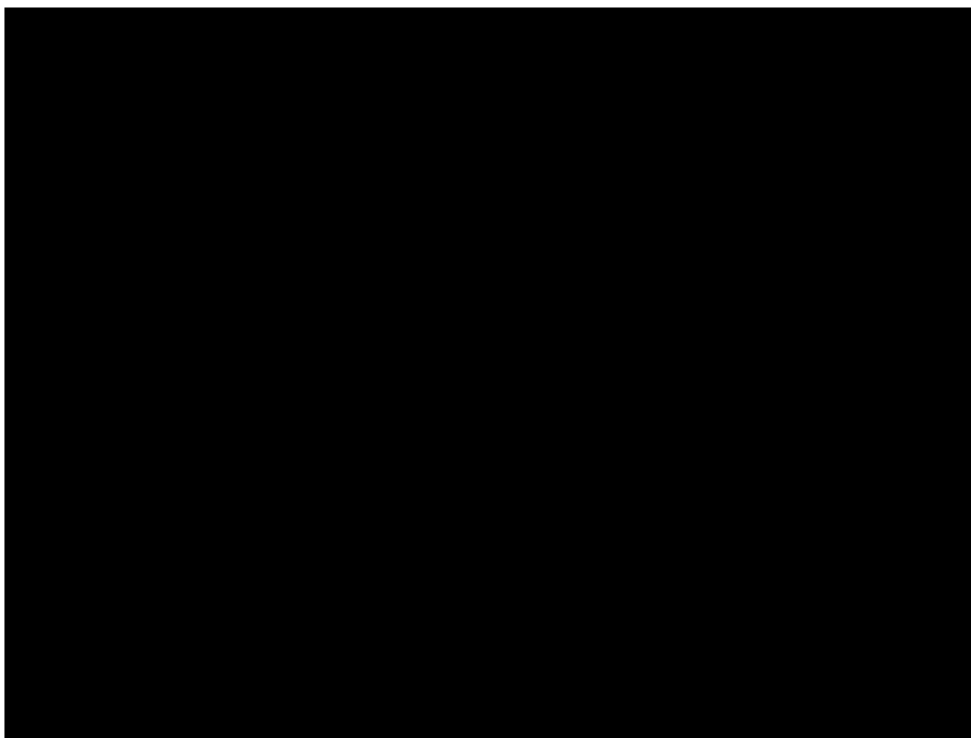
2.1 Cyber Attack on Aoraki Search & Rescue Base Network

- On 21 July 2021 we discovered that a small and isolated IT network within the Department of Conservation Aoraki Search and Rescue Base was subject to a ransomware attack. The network is not connected to the wider DOC network and we have acted quickly by removing and replacing potentially infected devices.
- Our support partner Fujitsu has scanned all the DOC corporate devices that were connected to the DOC network and have found no suspicious activity. There are no other known impacts on our network and we are confident that the risk is contained.
- The incident remains under investigation, with external cyber security experts assessing devices and storage drives that were connected to the Search and Rescue (SAR) base network to confirm the source of the virus and ascertain if any data has been accessed or copied. As this network is used by other organisations, we have advised them of the incident so they can scan their networks.
- We have also advised the GCSB and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner and will conduct a lessons-learned review of the network setup and the incident to ensure our business continuity plans are fit for purpose.
- The databases on the SAR network contained data on search and rescue operations. This information can include some sensitive personal information about the individuals who were rescued or bodies that were recovered. Once we have established if any data has been accessed or copied we will assess privacy impacts, including the requirement to contact any individuals (or next of kin) whose privacy may have been breached.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.2 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



2.3 High Court decision in *Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board v Taupo Waters Collective Ltd*

- In 2007, the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board (TMTB) and the Crown, through the Minister of Conservation, entered into a Deed concerning TMTB's ownership rights in Lake Taupo. The Deed replaced a more broadly worded Deed from the early 1990s.
- After opposition from commercial operators on Taupo Waters since 2007 to obtain licences to conduct their businesses on the lake, TMTB sought declarations from the High Court concerning its ability to require commercial users to obtain licences to operate on Taupo Waters and to pay for the same.
- The phrase "Taupo Waters" covers the lake bed, water column and airspace above the lake.
- Taupo Waters Collective (being a consortium of Lake Taupo commercial operators) opposed the granting of the declarations and sought a range of alternative declarations.
- The Attorney-General was an intervenor (representing DOC and TPK interests in particular) as he broadly agreed with the approach taken by TMTB.
- The hearing occurred in early September 2020.
- The High Court released its judgment on 23 July 2021. It:
 - declined to make the declarations sought by the defendants; and
 - granted the declarations sought by TMTB.
- The High Court also clarified that, in relation to the Taupo-nui-a-Tia Management Board (which has a duty to manage Taupo Waters as if a reserve):
 - Its functions do not include any reference to the Management Board considering and deciding applications for commercial purposes;
 - The circumstances in which an administering body under the Reserves Act can issue leases or licences over a reserve do not apply to the

Management Board's management of Taupo Waters as Taupo Waters is neither owned by the Crown nor vested in the Management Board;

- The requirement in the Deed for the Management Board to prepare a management plan does not require conformity with s 41 Reserves Act if to do so would be inconsistent with the 2007 Deed; and
- The Management Board is not required to prepare a management plan that includes conditions and/or restrictions for the management and regulation of the commercial use of Taupo Waters
- The decision in favour of TMTB provides it with the certainty that it needs in dealing with commercial operators on Taupo Waters.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.4 Auckland: First confirmed myrtle rust on Aotea/Great Barrier Island

- On 22 July, myrtle rust was detected for the first time on Aotea / Great Barrier Island, on a self-seeded pōhutakawa tree.
- The infection is considered very small, but given the disease is airborne, the risk for further spread is high.
- Aotea's forest is largely regenerating mānuka and kānuka forest, species that can be infected by myrtle rust. There is potential for a significant impact on the island's economy via impacts on mānuka honey production. The island also has an endemic kānuka tree.
- The infection was located on an Auckland Council road reserve and the infection response is being led by the Council.
- We are working closely with Auckland Council, MPI and iwi to manage the impacts and risk.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Western South Island: Heaphy Great Walk damage and reopening

- The Heaphy Great Walk is currently closed due to slips and windfall material, from recent heavy weather.
- Two DOC regions maintain the track (Northern South Island and Western South Island) and we are confident a coordinated opening can be achieved by 6 August 2021. This is contingent on the weather, and on the reinstatement work programme being delivered as planned.
- Of the 72 km length of track, less than 10% has been affected by the rainfall event, with the significant damage being –
 - 14 landslips, with two impacting the coastal section of the track and one the Heaphy staff hut (image below)
 - Windfall
 - Washout of the Pitt Creek bridge
- Sections of the track affected by the landslips are currently being reinstated with excavators.
- The two damaged coastal sections (south of the Heaphy staff hut) have been inspected by geotechnical engineers; remedial work to contain the landslips and widen the track will be undertaken this week.

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.

- The landslip behind the Heaphy staff hut has been cleared and the gas, solar power and water services are being checked this week.
- A geotechnical report has been received about the slip and replacement of the bridge at Pitt Creek; DOC staff are currently considering the options in the report.



Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 Western South Island: Update to the burglary on Heaphy Great Walk

- You asked for further advice on the recent status report item about the burglary on the Heaphy Great Walk 'outlining the penalties provided for illegal activities in National Parks under relevant legislation, and their enforcement (including who has authority to enforce penalties)'.
 - National Parks Act 1980, S.60(1)(g): wilfully damages or defaces any fence, building, or apparatus in any park.
 - Penalty: in the case of an individual, imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or a fine not exceeding \$100,000, or both.
- In respect to the Great Walks hut burglary offences, these fall under the Crimes Act 1961, S.231 and carry a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment. In this matter NZ Police have jurisdiction and took relevant action.
- We also issued a \$400 infringement for taking a dog into a National Park.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.7 Milford Opportunities: Cabinet paper release and progress toward Cabinet's direction

- On 28 June Cabinet received the paper Milford Opportunities Project (MOP), which included recommendations for the Master Plan. Cabinet took the following decisions:
 - Cabinet agreed to the establishment of a dedicated unit so that detailed planning and feasibility assessments may be undertaken on the recommendations in the MOP Master Plan to determine their feasibility.
 - Cabinet agreed to an Establishment Board to oversee the dedicated unit with Dr Keith Turner appointed Chair (CAB-21-MIN-0235).
- This Cabinet paper is scheduled for proactive release on MBIE's website on 9 August.
- MBIE, DOC and the Ministry of Transport have reviewed the paper and suggested redactions, mainly under Section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA: free and frank expression. A cover memo with these suggested redactions has been provided to your office and to the Minister of Tourism.
- The communications risk for specific issues is high, and there are particularly contentious recommendations that may generate public comment.
- The Master Plan for the Milford Opportunities Project was also publicly released on 28 July, with many of the details from within the Cabinet paper entering the public domain.
- Cabinet approved \$15 million (CAB-21-MIN-0111) to fund the detailed planning and feasibility testing work, to take place over the next two years. We are referring to this work as Stage 3 of Milford Opportunities.
- To enable Stage 3 to progress forward, DOC has agreed to a funding MOU with MBIE to release the approved \$15M from Vote Business, Science and Innovation to Vote Conservation. The transfer will happen at the October 2021 baseline update.
- The MOU is to provide DOC with the funding to host the unit that will undertake the detailed planning and feasibility after Cabinet's decision on the Master Plan (CAB-21-MIN-0235)
- The pre-work to establish the foundation for Stage 3 is expected to take approximately six months to set up. This will include the Establishment Board, a dedicated unit and defining the schedule of work.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.8 Update on seizure of antique cabinet containing elephant ivory inlays

- In February 2020, an antique cabinet containing elephant ivory inlays was imported into New Zealand by Mr Patrick Soanes.
- Elephant ivory is protected under the Trade in Endangered Species Act 1989 (TIES Act). The cabinet was seized at the border and forfeited to the Crown as it was not imported in accordance with the TIES Act.
- Mr Soanes complained to the Office of the Ombudsman, who investigated the case. The Chief Ombudsman has now formed a final opinion that DOC has not acted unreasonably – both in the seizure of the cabinet and our refusal to return it to Mr Soanes.
- We will now work with Mr Soanes to explore the remaining available options for the cabinet. These may include gifting or loaning the item to an

appropriate institution (such as a museum) or removal of the ivory with the remainder of the cabinet returned to him.

- The case attracted some media coverage when the cabinet was first seized and may do so again as we progress further. Reactive media messages have been prepared and can be shared with you if required.
- A further status update on this case will be provided to you once a final outcome has been reached.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.9 Rangitāhua archaeological material

- This entry responds to a query from your office regarding opportunities to engage with the return of archaeological material from Rangitāhua to Auckland Museum and Ngāti Kuri.
- Unfortunately, by the time the query arrived in the Department, the handover had been completed (on Thursday 22 July), so engagement in this instance is not possible.
- Initial analysis by the museum suggests that some material was not catalogued and may still be with the original researcher. We will continue to work with the museum and Ngāti Kuri to see how we can identify and locate this missing material.
- Ngāti Kuri have significant aspirations relating to Rangitāhua, so there will likely be future opportunities to engage with Ngāti Kuri on this issue. We will identify these opportunities as they arise and work with your office to ensure you are aware of them.
- There is no clear direction in the Conservation Act as to how or when material should be returned, and the links with the Protected Objects Act 1975 and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 are not defined. We are reviewing industry best practices and developing internal guidelines for directing this work.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.10 Release of the i-SITE Future Network Strategy

- The i-SITE Visitor Information Network (VIN) will be sharing its Future Network Strategy with its members at a hui in Wellington on 29 July 2021.
- i-SITE New Zealand is Aotearoa's official visitor information network brand. Each i-SITE is individually owned and operated, mostly by local government or through entities such as Regional Tourism Organisations. The i-SITE brand is managed by Tourism New Zealand and accredited members must meet specified service standards.
- There are 64 i-SITE visitor centres across New Zealand that provide international visitors, domestic travellers and locals with comprehensive, information, and a New Zealand-wide booking service for activities, attractions, accommodation, and transport. Tourism New Zealand is looking to refresh its business model to reflect changes in tourism post-COVID and to provide a more integrated approach with destination management.

- Through its visitor centres, DOC is also a key player in providing information to visitors. Our visitor centre network is considered as part of the report. DOC has 18 visitor centres located in or near to National and Conservation Parks across the country. In addition, we also provide visitor information at key urban gateway locations in conjunction with VIN i-SITE's by sharing infrastructure. Currently, our Dunedin & Nelson Visitor Centres are co-located in the respective i-SITES and at Whakapapa, the VIN i-SITE is co-located with DOC's Tongariro Visitor Centre.
- We have provided input to the VIN's Future Network Strategy during its development. While we have several existing operational relationships with the VIN network, we do not anticipate any significant changes to the DOC network because of the VIN strategy. We will however review the VIN proposal in more detail to identify future options, including further opportunities to collaborate in delivering visitor information services and potential synergies with our own Visitor Centre Strategy.

Contact: [REDACTED]

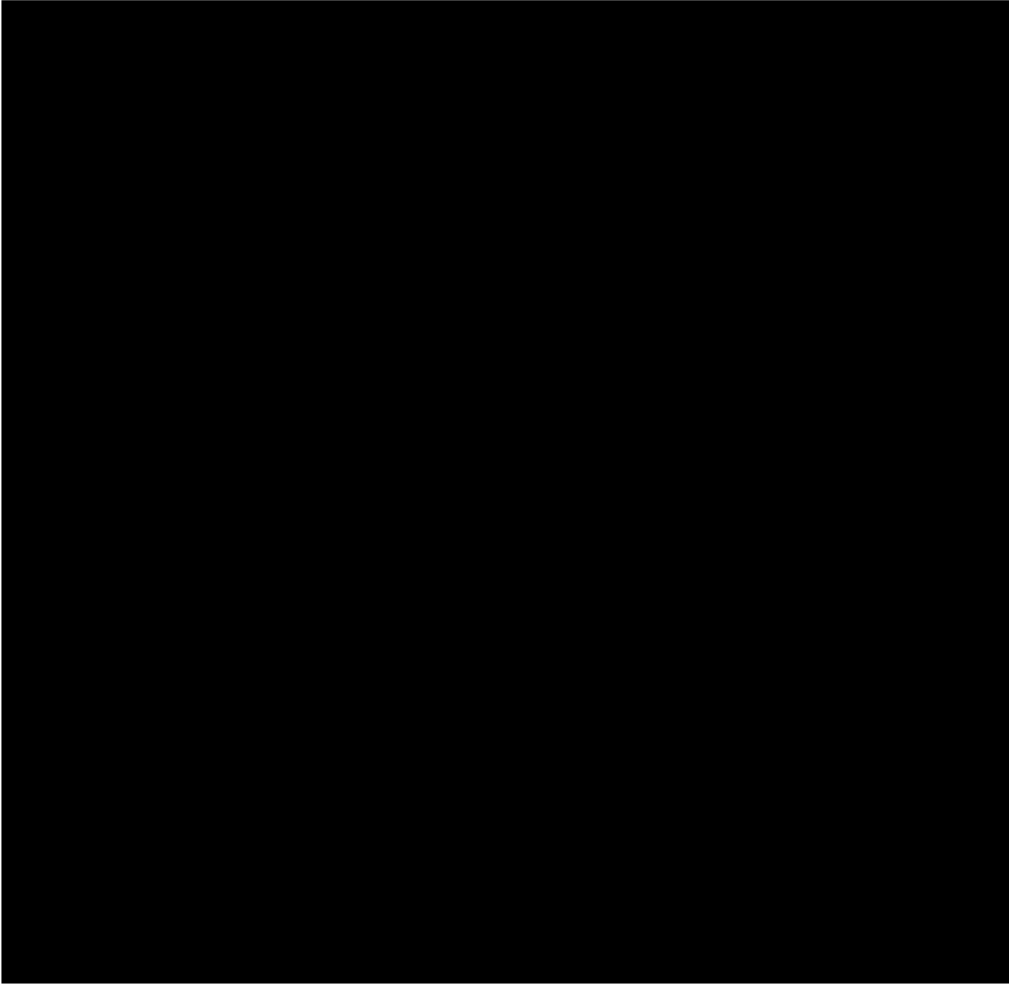
2.11 Predator Free 2050 website launch

- A new Predator Free 2050 website will be launched on tuiatetaiao.nz in the first week of August.
- The site will provide a 'front door' for the national Predator Free movement. It will be branded with the *tohu*, and house information relating to the whole Predator Free movement.
- The website will fulfil the following objectives:
 - Provide an agency-neutral space to display Predator Free key messages.
 - Host downloadable resources for the *tohu* encouraging its widespread use.
 - Provide a news summary from across the Predator Free Movement.
 - House the Predator Free 2050 Strategy, Five-year Action Plan and Collaborative group Action Plans, as well as the Five-year Progress report.
- The website will be hosted on the Bionet platform, a shared web-platform operated by MPI, and contributed to by DOC, regional councils, and Land Information New Zealand. All government website security requirements are met by MPI as the responsible agency. However, as required by Government web standards, DOC will be listed as the party responsible for content. A contact form will go through to the DOC Predator Free email address.
- The Predator Free Comms team will be responsible for updating the site and working with other Predator Free Partners to develop content.

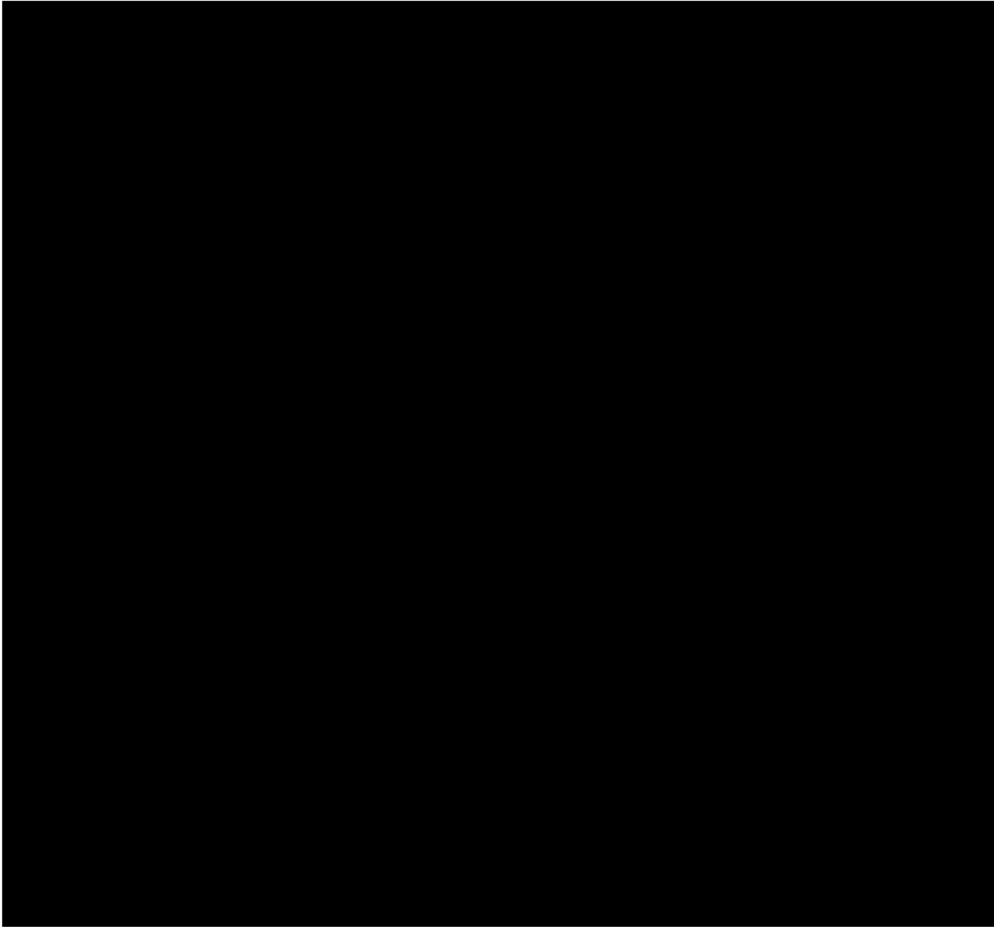
Contact: [REDACTED]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.



3 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities



4 Director-General Engagements

August

- 4 August Senior Leaders Hui, Worsler Bay Wellington
- 4-5 August Environmental Defence Society Conference, Christchurch Town Hall
- 19-20 August NZ Conservation Authority, Wellington
- 19-20 August Public Service Leadership Team Retreat Brackenridge, Martinborough
- 21-22 August Conservation Board Chairs hui, Wellington
- 25-26 August Visit with Te Hiku, Northland

September

- 7 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Auckland
- 8 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Christchurch
- 9 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Wellington

5 Appendices

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

1. Appendix 1 – JFN Dashboard (regular item, Status Report item 1.1 refers)
2. Appendix 3 – Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
3. Appendix 4 – Forthcoming items (regular item)

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.

Department of Conservation Status Report

for the Minister of Conservation

Week beginning 9 August 2021

Seen by Hon Kiritapu Allan
Minister of Conservation

Date: / /

DOCCM - 6740225

Contents

1	Standing and Priority Items	3
1.1	Jobs for Nature	3
1.2	RMA Advocacy.....	4
1.3	.....	5
1.4	Healthy Nature, Healthy People	7
2	Updates	8
2.1	.....	8
2.2	Māui dolphin abundance estimate	8
2.3	Western South Island Region: West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board.....	9
2.4	Western South Island Region: Predator Free South Westland Project.....	9
2.5	Wildlife Institutions Relief Fund (WIRF) – grants paid for 2021-22	10
2.6	Australia's Great Barrier Reef not placed on UNESCO 'in danger' list	10
2.7	.....	11
2.8	Request by the Government of Chile for collaboration on conservation	11
3	Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities	13
4	Director-General Engagements.....	13
5	Appendices	13

Attachments

1. Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
2. D-G Direct (fortnightly item)

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Jobs for Nature

Current State

- As at 30 July; there are 121 projects in the execution/delivery stage and 79 projects in the contracting/legal stage; 40 of those 79 are projects from the Community Fund and Private Landowner Fund.
- This week we executed a number of funding agreements, including one for the Ngā Awa: Pelorus restoration project.
- We have been working through multiple assurance checks and milestone payments that are due for projects over the last week.
- The call for monthly reporting for July has been sent to project partners. We have also sent out the call for quarterly reporting for projects which are due mid-August.
- We are assessing how stopping monthly reporting will impact the programme, and are supporting partners with uptake of the Rataka Taiao reporting app. Quarterly reporting will remain for the duration of the programme.

Reference Group and SLU Ministers

- Two projects will be presented to SLU Ministers meeting on 5 August for approval. Three projects under \$1 million will also be presented for noting.

Updates - Workstreams and projects

Community and Landowner Fund

- A list of JFN Community Conservation Fund and Private Land Biodiversity Fund projects that are currently in the contracting/legal stage was sent to your office on 30 July (21-B-0574).
- We are actively working with community, iwi and private landowners groups through our DOC Delivery Managers at place to finalise funding agreements as quickly as possible.
- As at 3 August, nine funding agreements have been signed by both DOC and recipients (with a further five ready for counter-signing by DOC).
- We estimate 26 out of 49 funding agreements will be signed by 15 August, a further 18 by 31 August, and the remaining five to be signed in September 2021.
- There is a balance between speed to sign-off agreements and ensuring projects are sufficiently planned to support effective project delivery and successful outcomes.
- In some cases, additional work is required before funding can be released, for example where the recipient needs to enter into a Community Agreement for work on PCL, which may require additional engagement/consultation.

Maori Land Grant

- We are working through the implementation of next steps for the Maori Land Grant, including the assessment of proposals.

Ngā Awa

- You announced the Lower Rangitata and Upper Rangitata restoration projects on 5 August.

Kiwis for kiwi

- Kiwis for kiwi have submitted their agreed reporting and the milestone payment has been made.

Other

- As part of the Information Systems and Service (ISS) scoping work for a Funds Management tool, we received a demonstration of the system that the Ministry for the Environment has recently implemented for their Funds programmes, including for the Jobs for Nature programme. ISS looked at four tools, and are currently finalising their recommendation for JFN, with discussion being around usage of the MfE tool. ISS is scoping whether there is any Ministerial direction for DOC to implement the same tools/platforms as other JFN agencies. This direction would evidence an exemption for the RFP procurement process, and shorten the implementation timeframe by 3-4 months.

Contact: Reg Kemper, Chief Advisor Jobs for Nature: [REDACTED]

1.2 RMA Advocacy

DOC's recent RMA work is as follows:

Appeals

Waste Management NZ, Auckland Regional Landfill

- On 14 June the decision to grant resource consent for the proposed landfill at Dome Valley was released. We lodged an appeal on 5 July opposing the decision. The reason for the appeal was to ensure the protection of native and threatened species and their habitat. Species include the threatened long-tailed bat, Hochstetter's frogs and native birds like the fernbird and Australasian bittern.
- Eight appeals have been lodged in total.
- The Environment Court schedule is for mediation September-October 2021, expert conferencing from October to January 2022, evidence exchange February-May 2022, and hearing in June-July 2022. We await instruction from the Court in response to this application.

Submissions

45 South Mining Limited, Kye Burn, Otago

- We submitted in opposition to an application by 45 South Mining Limited to operate a hobby mining suction dredge for gold in the flowing bed of the Kye Burn, Maniototo, Otago. The Kye Burn is habitat for the Central Otago Galaxias (threatened: nationally endangered), Taieri Flathead Galaxias (threatened: nationally vulnerable), and Longfin eel / *tuna* (at risk: declining). The Department's technical advice is that the application does not adequately avoid, remedy, or mitigate the effects on native fish and historic gold mining heritage values. The submission seeks that the activity be declined.

Contact: [REDACTED]

1.3

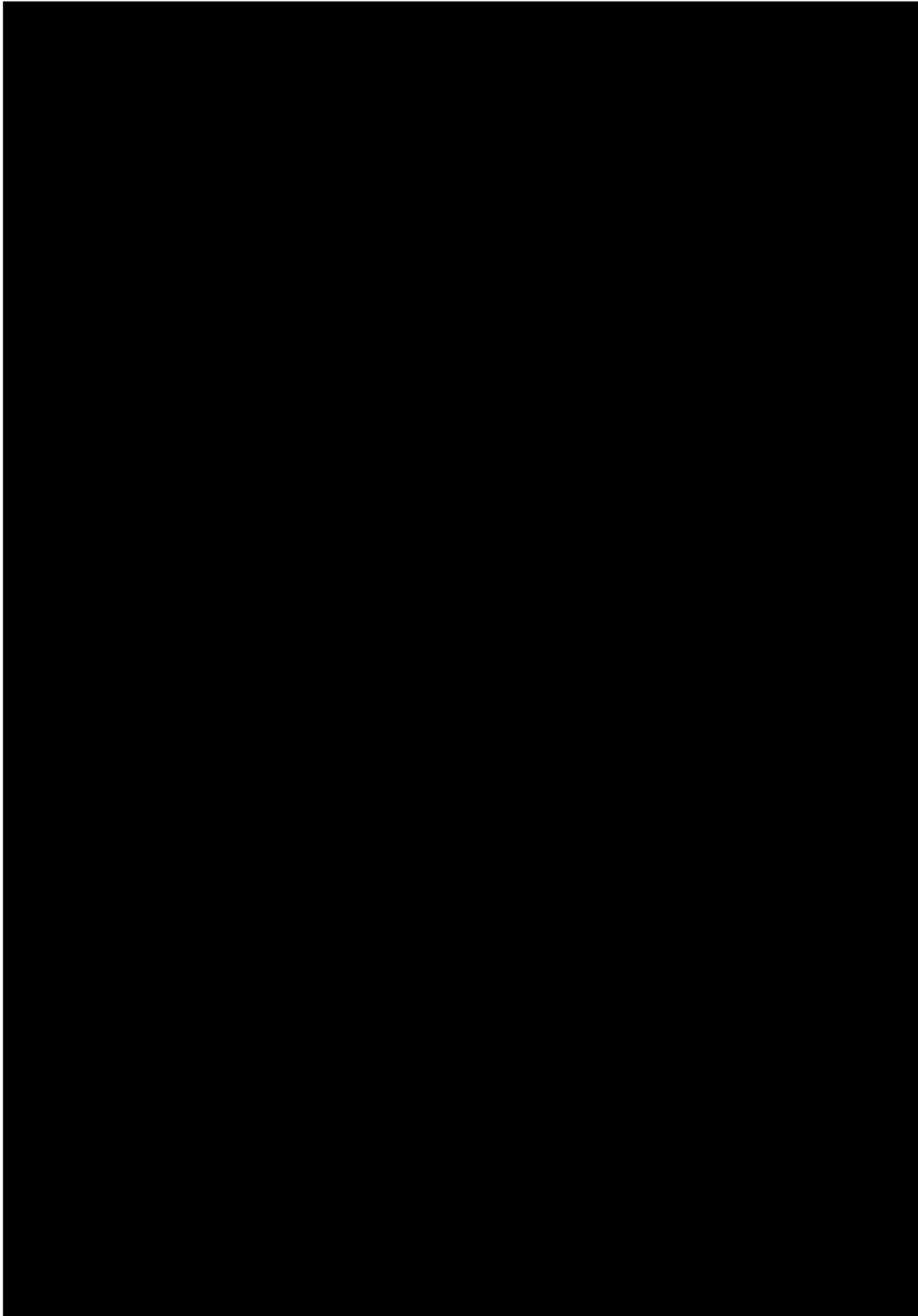
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.



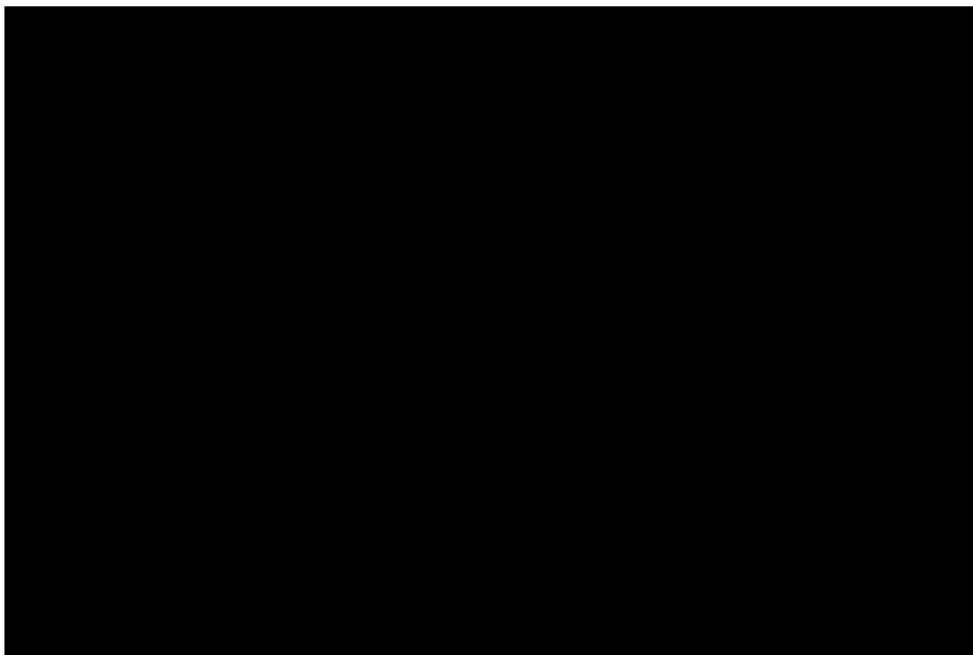
1.4 Healthy Nature, Healthy People

- Your office has recommended the Healthy Nature Healthy People programme becomes a standing item in the Status Report.
- Deputy Director-General Partnerships Lian Butcher and Deputy Director-General Policy and Visitors Bruce Parkes met this week to set direction of travel and assign tasks to their teams.
- We are booking meetings with the Ministry of Health and Sport NZ starting this week.

Contact: Lian Butcher, Deputy Director-General Partnerships:



2 Updates



2.2 Māui dolphin abundance estimate

- This advice has been jointly delivered to Hon Parker as Minister for Oceans and Fisheries through the Oceans Report.
- The Department of Conservation and Fisheries New Zealand have received the preliminary results of the latest Māui dolphin abundance survey.
- The new 2020-21 Māui dolphin abundance estimate is 54 individuals (aged 1 year and over), with 95% confidence that the estimate is between 48 and 66 individuals. This estimate is similar to the previous:
 - 2015-16 estimate of 63 individuals (aged 1 year and over, with 95% confidence that the estimate is between 57 and 75 individuals), and
 - 2010-11 estimate of 55 individuals (aged 1 year and over, with 95% confidence that the estimate is between 48 and 69 individuals).
- Given the 95% confidence bounds of all estimates overlap (i.e. the uncertainty in the abundance estimates), inferring trends for the population remains difficult. However, the estimated number of Māui dolphins remains critically low, and emphasises the importance of addressing residual threats (such as toxoplasmosis) to ensure the goals of the Threat Management Plan (TMP) can be achieved.
- To ensure a rigorous peer review process the abundance survey results will be presented to a joint DOC Conservation Services Programme/Fisheries New Zealand Aquatic Environment Working Group meeting in early September for scientific review. It is highly likely that the Working Group will accept the results, as the research uses the same methods and analyses as the previous surveys.
- A final report will be made publicly available before the end of the year. DOC and Fisheries New Zealand will work closely with both Ministers' offices to ensure a communications plan is in place prior to the joint Science Working Group meeting. Although the participants involved are required to abide by

the Terms of Reference of the group, including confidentiality, there is a risk that information on the new estimates will be leaked publicly prior to publication.

- The Māui dolphin TMP fisheries objectives remain met as the current fisheries measures effectively restrict the estimated level of fishing-related mortality to zero. We do not consider these measures, including those put in place last year, need to be reviewed at this time.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.3 Western South Island Region: West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board

The West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board had its first meeting with new board members on 30 July, and we bring two matters to your attention.

Appointment of Chairperson

- At the meeting the Board appointed a new Chairperson, Mike Legge.
- Mike is a new board member this time round, but he has previously been on the board from 2011 to 2018, with four of those years as Chair, during which time he oversaw the development of the Paparoa National Park management plan and early draft Westland National Park plan. His appointment was nominated by Francois Tumahai and seconded by Kara Edwards. Mike is already reaching out to Mayors and Chairs to re-establish the relationships.

Disagreement during the meeting

- After a presentation provided to the board about the Dolomite Point redevelopment project, a motion was put to the board (and carried) that it accepts the development project update and that it endorses the direction of travel and timeline.
- At this point, Neil Silverwood, who opposed the motion, chose to leave the meeting, suggesting he might resign.
- It is likely that this board member will choose to take his opposition to the redevelopment and his opinion on board procedures to the media and we are preparing reactive messages accordingly.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.4 Western South Island Region: Predator Free South Westland Project

Relationship with Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio

- Since the launch of the Predator Free South Westland (PFSW) project in March 2021, relationships between Makaawhio Rūnanga Chairman Paul Madgwick, Pourahi Kara Edwards and Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) leaders have continued to deepen.

PFSW Project and 'Jobs for Nature' Funding

- The ZIP team delivering the PFSW project now comprises 45 people. At current rates of employment, the team will invest approximately 33 full-time equivalents in the project by 30 June 2022.

- 22 members of the team are based at Franz Josef, one is at Hokitika. Ten team members employed since June 2020 were living on the West Coast when they joined ZIP.
- The project is helping to sustain employment in local West Coast and other providers, including helicopter, accommodation, food, and vehicle services.

Progress with Predator Removal

- A significant milestone was achieved in late July, with the successful aerial operation to remove possums, rats and stoats from the 16,000ha Whataroa-Butler block. This means a total of 28,000 ha of South Westland backcountry is now being managed for predator freedom by the PFSW project. We are on track to exceed the Government's interim target ahead of schedule.
- Work is underway in South Ōkārito and neighbouring settlements preparing for the next stage of predator elimination. The support from the local landowners and the community has been very positive.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Wildlife Institutions Relief Fund (WIRF) – grants paid for 2021-22

- Following a call for Expressions of Interest in June, the WIRF panel decided to support 16 wildlife institutions for 2021-22, with grants totalling \$3.4m. Variations to Deeds of Grant have been finalised and all institutions have now been paid their grant money.
- The West Coast Wildlife Centre was the only applicant to be declined funding. As the proprietor raised some concerns about the reasons for the application not being supported, the WIRF Assessment Panel was re-convened, with new membership, to re-assess the application. The new Panel's recommendation was again to decline funding, primarily due to concerns about the institution's long-term viability and a lack of local DOC Operations support for the application.
- \$847k of the original \$14.89m remains unallocated. If it is not used for further support in 2021-22, these funds will be retained by the Crown.

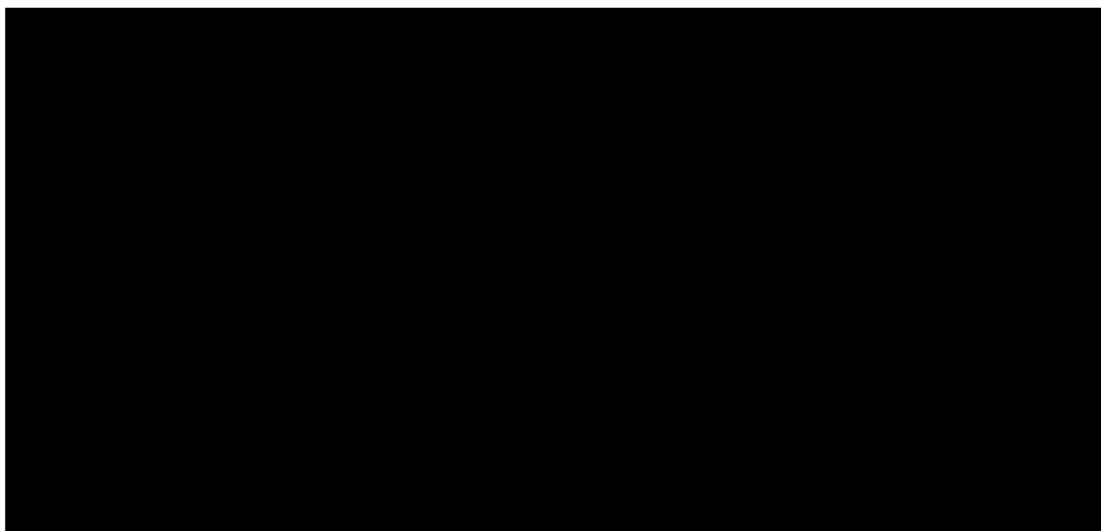
Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 Australia's Great Barrier Reef not placed on UNESCO 'in danger' list

- The World Heritage Committee (WHC) decided not to place the Great Barrier Reef on a list of UNESCO world heritage sites 'in danger' [REDACTED]. Other members of the WHC supporting Australia included Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Ethiopia, Hungary, Mali, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia and Spain.
- UNESCO will instead be asked to carry out a mission to the reef in the coming months and Australia will need to send a progress report to the agency by February 2022 – earlier than a December 2022 deadline Australia had asked for.

- The WHC decided the reef's health would be considered again at next year's meeting in June or July 2022.
- The WHC meeting concluded on 31 July with:
 - the inscription of 34 new properties on the World Heritage List (5 natural and 29 cultural) and the deletion of one property from the list, taking the total to 1154 World Heritage properties;
 - the inscription of one property on the list of world heritage in danger and the removal of one property from the danger list, retaining its total at 52.

Contact: [REDACTED]



2.8 Request by the Government of Chile for collaboration on conservation

- The Chilean Minister of the Environment, Carolina Schmidt Zaldívar has written to the Director-General requesting a Chilean representative from the Ministry of the Environment in Chile work for 12 months at the Department of Conservation, funded by Chilean philanthropists committed to conservation.
- Chile considers Aotearoa New Zealand a role model in many public matters, especially biodiversity conservation and protected areas management due to its ecological, geographic, economic, and social characteristics.
- Since 2011, all Chilean governments have supported a bill in the National Congress to improve the country's environmental institutions and establish a comprehensive environmental policy framework, in part inspired by the Department of Conservation.
- It is proposed that the Chilean representative would spend 12 months working in various parts of the Department of Conservation to understand how DOC functions. The representative would then return to their role at the Ministry for the Environment in Chile.
- DOC and MFAT in principle support this proposal to assist conservation efforts in Chile and further our positive bilateral relationship. Additionally, it would enable DOC to strengthen our cooperation with Chile on conservation matters important to Aotearoa New Zealand, including in relation to seabirds.

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.

- Owing to current border restrictions, however, it will not be possible for a Chilean representative to enter Aotearoa New Zealand.
- The Director-General of DOC will write to the Minister of the Environment of Chile supporting the request in principle and agreeing to revisit it when current travel restrictions are lifted.

Contact: [REDACTED]

3 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

None this week.

4 Director-General Engagements

August

19-20 August NZ Conservation Authority, Wellington
19-20 August Public Service Leadership Team Retreat, Brackenridge, Martinborough
21-22 August Conservation Board Chairs hui, Wellington
25-26 August Visit with Te Hiku, Northland

September

7 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Auckland
8 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Christchurch
9 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Wellington

5 Appendices

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

1. Appendix 1 – Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
2. Appendix 2 – Forthcoming items (regular item)

Department of Conservation Status Report

for the Minister of Conservation

Week beginning 16 August 2021

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Seen by Hon Kiritapu Allan
Minister of Conservation

DOCCM - 6746671

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Jobs for Nature

- We are working with agencies on a detailed heatmap for Northland and Canterbury, which will show investment and job creation at a district/local level for these regions. A cross-agency meeting is scheduled for 19 August to determine requirements for the heatmaps.
- Approval in-principle letters have been sent to projects approved at the SLU Minister meeting on 5 August. This includes projects in Northland, Auckland, Taranaki, Central Plateau, and Otago.
- The reporting team is facilitating a pause/review session for the Rataka Taiao reporting app. This will include seeking feedback from project partners, GIS team, Delivery Managers, and the Secretariat to understand how the App many need to be developed for future use.
- We are working through the agreed proportion of funds to be administered through Ngā Whenua Rāhui over the coming three years. The proposed allocation will be presented to the Reference Group and SLU Ministers at their upcoming meeting.

Workstreams and projects

Māori Land Grant

- Assessments on project applications for the Māori Land Fund are now underway. These projects will be presented to Reference Group and SLU Ministers in upcoming meetings.

Ngā Awa

- We provided you with additional information on the Rangitata announcements in response to an OPQ from Jo Luxton on 10 August.

Other

- ISS have completed their scoping work for a Funds Management tool for Jobs for Nature and have presented two options. One of the options is the funds management tool that MfE have recently implemented for their funds programmes (including Jobs for Nature).

Contact: Reg Kemper, Chief Advisor Jobs for Nature: [REDACTED]

1.2 RMA Advocacy

DOC's recent RMA work is as follows:

Hearings

New Plymouth District Plan Review, District-wide Matters – Light

- On 6 August, two briefs of evidence were filed on behalf of the Director-General of Conservation, to be presented at the upcoming hearing on the light provisions in the proposed New Plymouth District Plan.
- The overall goal of our case is for the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animal – Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife

including Marine Turtles, Seabirds, and Migratory Shorebirds be included in the permitted activity standards to protect seabirds and their habitat, as well as support the long-term restoration goal of the Taranaki Mounga project (reintroducing seabirds back into historical habitat).

Appeals

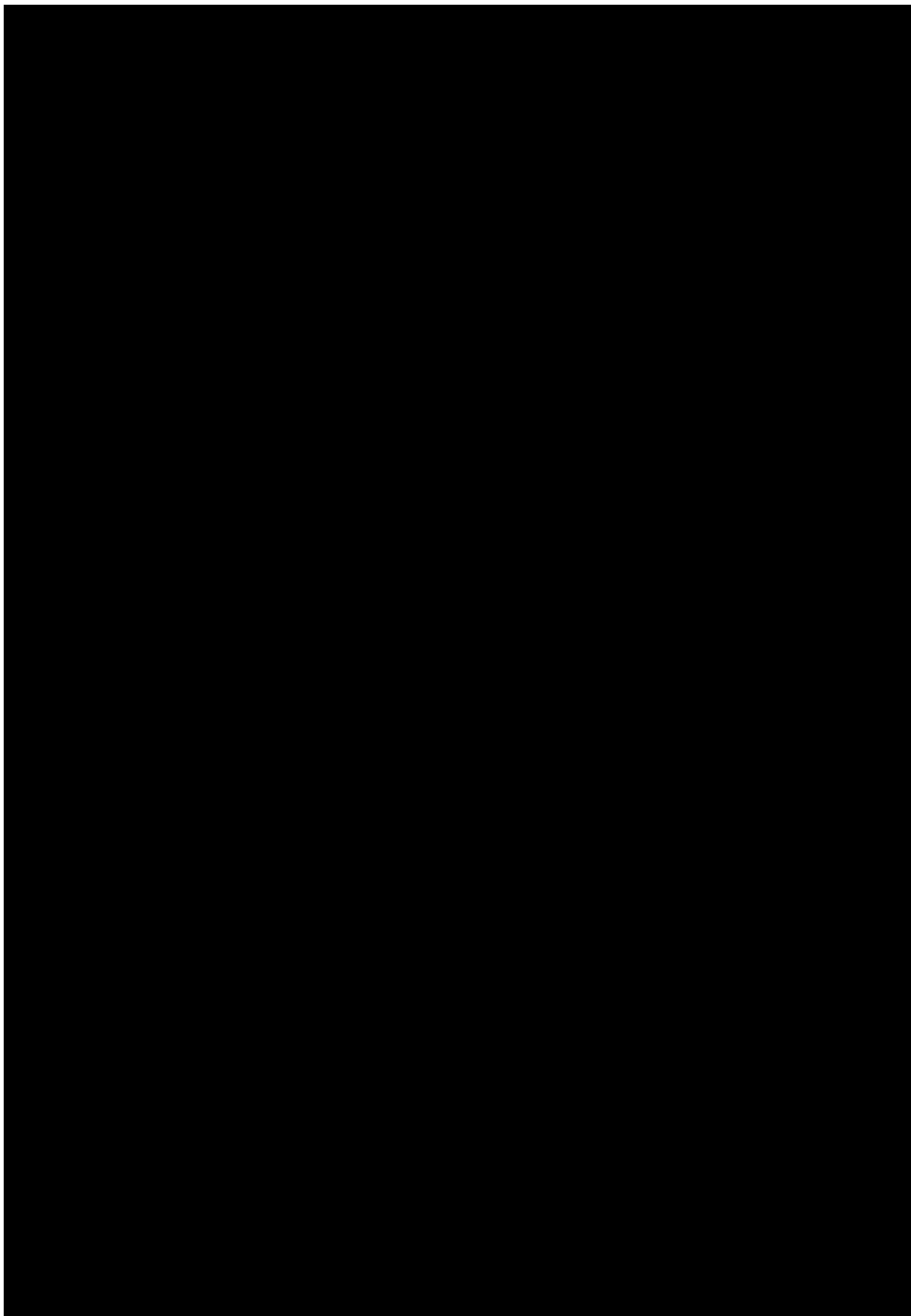
Mackenzie District Plan – Plan Change 18 Biodiversity

- The Director-General of Conservation has lodged an appeal to the Environment Court on Plan Change 18 to the Mackenzie District Plan. The plan change includes provisions to manage indigenous vegetation clearance and protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.
- The Mackenzie Basin supports significant dryland ecosystems. The amendments sought through the Director-General's appeal will better ensure these values are protected.

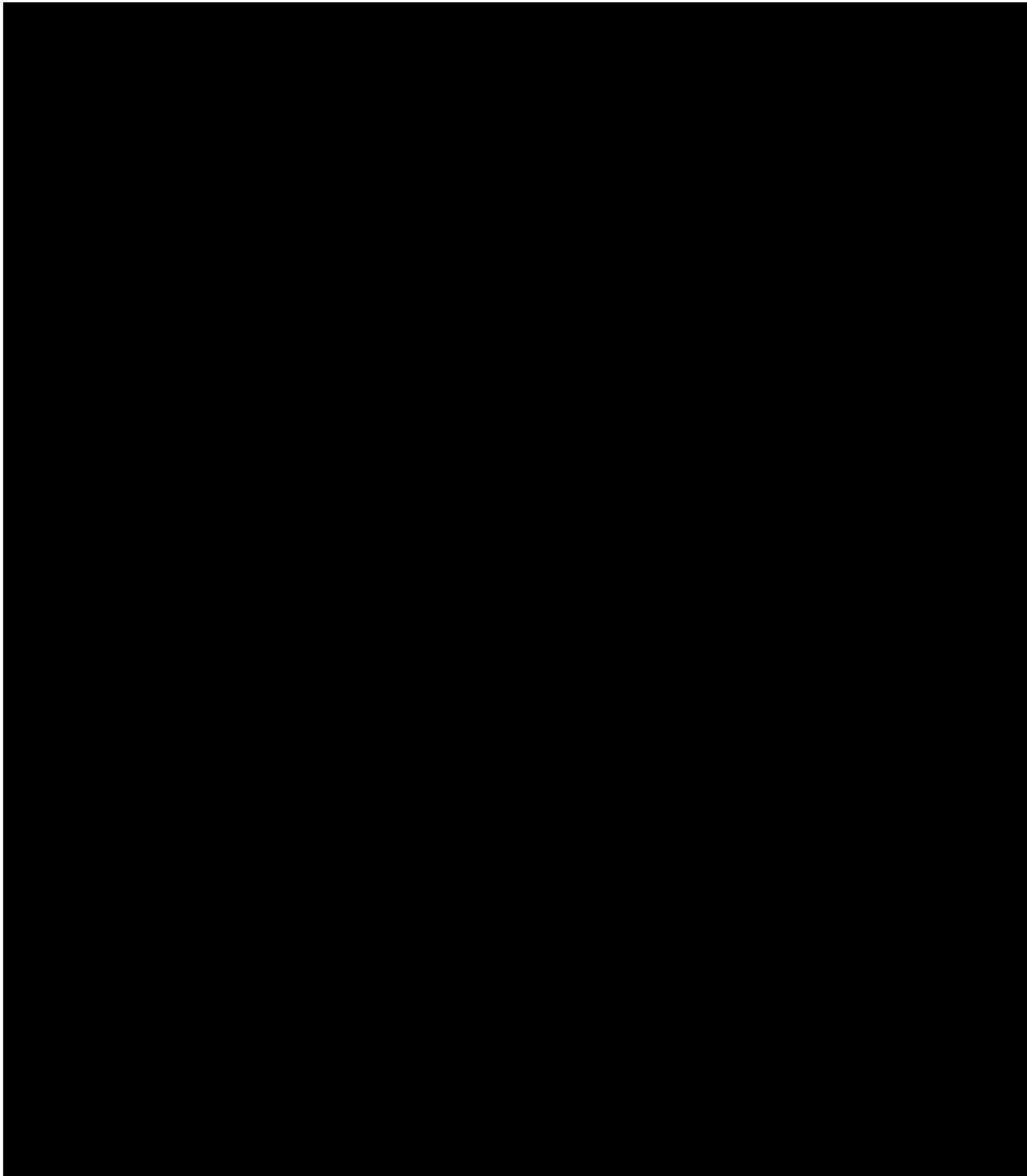
Contact: [REDACTED]

1.3 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



2 Updates



2.2 Western South Island Region: Pike River Recovery Agency's withdrawal from the Pike River Mine Site, Paparoa National Park

- The scheduled date for the Pike River Recovery Agency's (PRRA) withdrawal from Pike River Mine, handover of infrastructure to DOC, and surrender of Access Arrangements is drawing near. The date is expected to be in November 2021.
- At that point in time, it is likely that the PRRA will be disestablished, as their purpose and task will be completed.
- DOC have a good working relationship with the PRRA, we are liaising with them regularly and collaborate well on matters of mutual interest.

• [Redacted text]

[REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.3 Closure of the Windows Walk – Karangahake Gorge

- The Windows Walkway, located within the Karangahake Gorge (SH2 between Paeroa and Waihi), was closed on 3 August 2021, following a routine geotechnical engineering assessment of all seven tunnels. The report made several remediation recommendations.
- The majority of the tunnels were assessed as low geotechnical risk and able to remain open to the public while further works and/or assessments are being undertaken. However, two of the tunnels were identified as being high risk to visitors and the engineers recommended they be closed to investigate further.
- Our visitor safety team recommended that the high-risk tunnels be closed with temporary barriers and signage located at the tunnel entrance/exit until further investigations could be made.
- We are not yet sure how long the Windows Walkway will be closed but will provide a further update once the further engineering assessment has been undertaken.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.4 Establishment of Motiti Protection Areas

- On 11 August 2021, three new marine protected areas around Motiti Island (the Motiti Protection Areas) came into effect. This followed the Minister of Conservation's approval of the remaining parts of the Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan in February this year.
- The new protected areas are closed to all fishing and other extractive activities. This is largely equivalent to marine reserve status. These will be some of the largest protected areas around the mainland New Zealand coast (approximately 30km²).

- These protected areas are the result of a 5-year legal process which ultimately found that:
 - Regional councils can control fishing activities through the Resource Management Act (RMA) for the purpose of protecting biodiversity, provided those controls are not for Fisheries Act purposes (such as allocations and catch settings); and
 - The reef systems around Motiti Island have significant biodiversity values that warrant such protection.
- The Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) is responsible for the implementation of the new protection areas. DOC is supporting the Council with the implementation, including alignment with our marine reserve monitoring and compliance programme. MPI will undertake enforcement patrolling of the protected areas in a discretionary capacity. BOPRC is the lead for any public communications.
- The implementation of the new protected areas, and the process by which they came about, have not been supported by the entire Bay of Plenty community, some iwi/hapū and fisheries stakeholders. Continued media interest and expression of disapproval by some fishing interests is likely.
- DOC and Fisheries New Zealand recently provided joint evidence to the Environment Select Committee regarding the petition of MP Todd Muller seeking a review of the Motiti closures. We understand the petition was scheduled to be considered by Select Committee in a private session on 5 August.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Tourism concession fee waiver

- The tourism concession fee waiver is due to end on 31 December 2021.
- The Cabinet paper on the tourism concession waiver noted: “DOC, in consultation with MBIE and Treasury, will undertake a review of the impact on tourism concessionaires in September, with the Minister for Conservation reporting back to Cabinet in October 2021. This will enable agencies to provide advice on confirming concessions reinstatement or provide a further waiver if extraordinary circumstances warranted it.”

- [REDACTED]

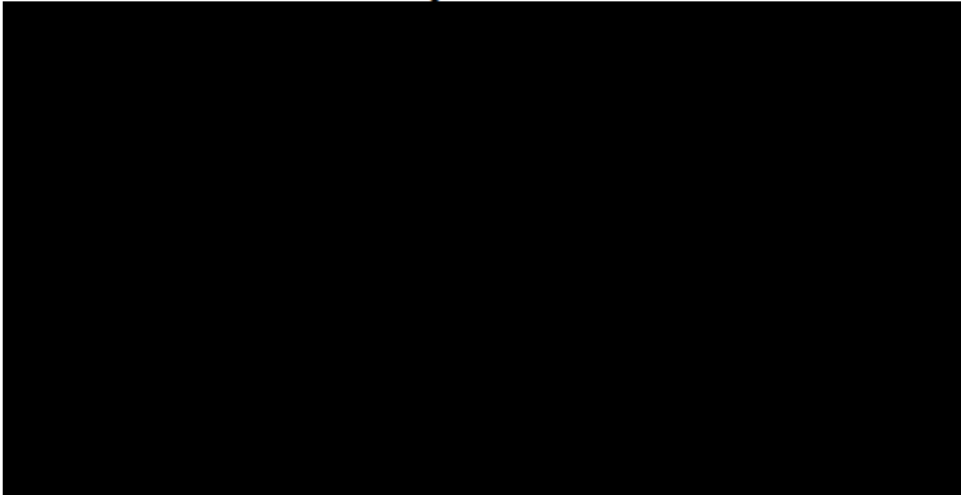
Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 The Clean Hull Plan – a national marine pathway management plan

- The Clean Hull Plan is a collaborative, multi-agency project involving the four northern-most regional councils, MPI, and DOC, which began in early 2019. You were given a verbal briefing about this project by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council in February 2021. At that time, it was called the Inter-

regional Marine Pest and Pathway Management Plan (since re-named the Clean Hull Plan).

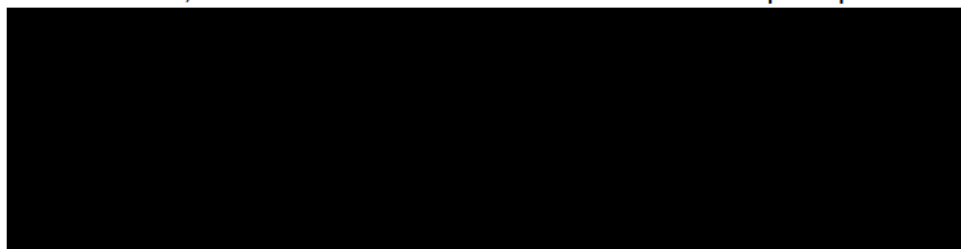
- The Clean Hull Plan proposes consistent rules across New Zealand's four northern regions to reduce the risk of spreading marine pests and diseases in vessel hull biofouling. The proposal under the plan is that a vessel cannot have more than a slime layer and barnacles on its hull before moving within or between the four northern regions.



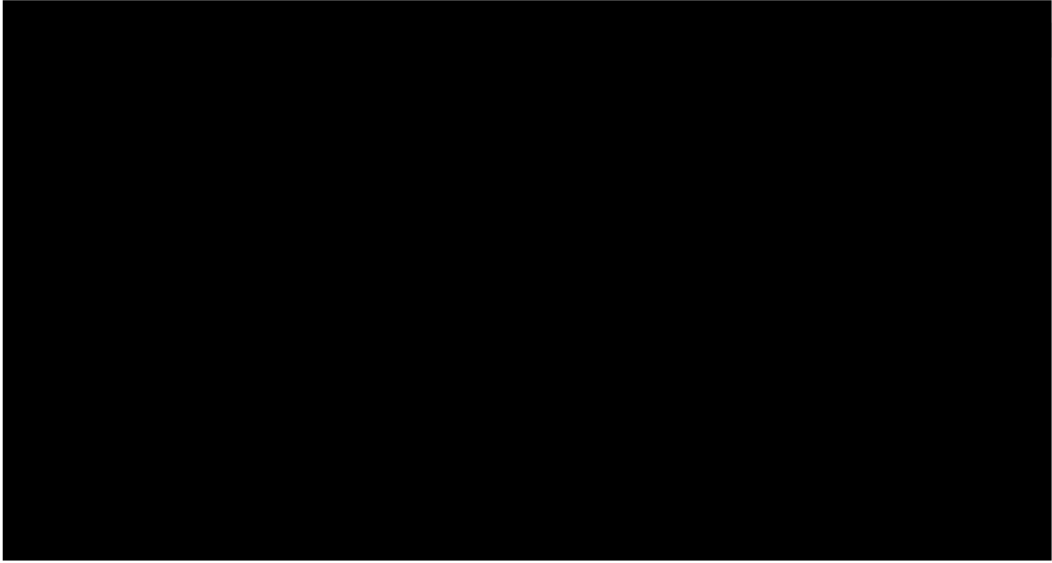
Contact: [Redacted]
[Redacted]

2.7 Milford Opportunities Project

- Stage 2 of the Milford Opportunities Project is now complete with the public launch of the masterplan, and the detailed planning and feasibility assessment phase of Stage 3 has commenced.
- Cabinet appointed a Ministerial Group as decision maker for the project. For the launch, the Minister of Tourism was nominated as lead spokesperson.



Contact: [Redacted]
[Redacted]



3 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

None this week.

4 Director-General Engagements

August

19-20 August NZ Conservation Authority, Wellington
19-20 August Public Service Leadership Team Retreat, Brackenridge, Martinborough
21-22 August Conservation Board Chairs hui, Wellington
25-26 August Visit with Te Hiku, Northland

September

07 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Auckland
08 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Christchurch
09 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Wellington

5 Appendices

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

1. Appendix 1 – Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
3. Appendix 2 – Forthcoming items (regular item)

Department of Conservation Status Report

for the Minister of Conservation

Week beginning 23 August 2021

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Seen by Hon Kiritapu Allan
Minister of Conservation

DOCCM - 6754028

Contents

1	Standing and Priority Items	3
1.1	Jobs for Nature	3
1.2	RMA Advocacy	4
1.3	[REDACTED]	5
2	Updates	6
2.1	Puhipuhi Mine Remediation	6
2.2	Western South Island: Update on closure and rehabilitation of the Globe Progress Mine, Victoria Forest Park – Reefton Restoration Project West Coast	6
2.3	[REDACTED]	7
2.4	Walter Peak Station tenure review	7
2.5	Whitebait season opening	8
2.6	Update on Trade in Endangered Species Act Bill	8
2.7	FMC concerns about hut bookings	9
2.8	[REDACTED]	10
2.9	Environment Committee review of bottom trawling petition	10
2.10	Two Projects from DOC in the Govtech Accelerator Programme 2021	11
3	Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities	12
3.1	Potential milestone announcements for 2021	12
4	Director-General Engagements	13
5	Appendices	13

Attachments

1. Cabinet Paper Report
2. Jobs for Nature Dashboard

1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Jobs for Nature

Current state (as of 17 August):

- There are 126 projects in delivery and 80 projects currently in contract negotiations. Contracting for remaining projects is progressing steadily.
- A total of \$445.4 million is approved, with \$347.6 million of this contracted and \$62.8 million paid to projects. Assurance checks and milestone payments continue to be made, generally on a quarterly cycle, for projects where these are due.
- Your office was sent a national heatmap for Jobs for Nature approved projects on 13 August (21-B-0617) and regional heatmaps for Jobs for Nature approved projects in Northland, Bay of Plenty, East Coast and Canterbury on 17 August (21-B-0634).
- We met with other Jobs for Nature agencies (MfE, MPI, LINZ) on 19 August to determine the parameters for cross-agency heatmaps of regions. The Secretariat is coordinating this work and these heatmaps will be supplied at the next SLU Minister meeting.
- The July monthly reporting for employment data was submitted to the Secretariat on 17 August and will inform the next monthly dashboard.

RG and SLU Minister Updates:

- Dates for the upcoming meetings are yet to be scheduled, however we have been advised that the Reference Group will likely meet in early September.

Updates - Workstreams and projects

Community and Landowner Fund

- 17 projects within these funds are in delivery and 32 projects are in the contracting phase.

Māori Land Grant

- We expect to present the allocation for Ngā Whenua Rāhui at the upcoming Reference Group in September and, subject to assessments, any recommendations for projects to fund directly. Following feedback, this allocation will then progress to SLU Ministers for approval.

Ngā Awa

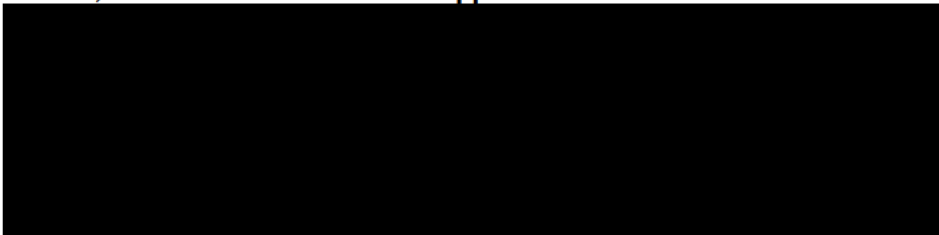
- The Whanganui funding agreement is expected to be returned from the recipient in the week commencing 16 August for final assurance check and funding release.
- The Arahura draft funding agreement is with the partner for review and expected to be finalised by the announcement planned for 10 September.

Kiwis for kiwi

- We are working with the Governance Team to establish ongoing quarterly reporting requirements that are fit for purpose for the funding arrangements for Kiwis for kiwi.






Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities



- Three projects in Southland/ Otago (Te Nukuroa o Matamata, Increasing Hoiho, and Te Tapu a Tane) are due to be announced to the Southland Times on 26 August.

Other

- 
- The implementation of the Funds Management online system is progressing rapidly,  and a collaborative working group is planned to ensure cross-agency alignment and knowledge sharing. It is expected that the system will be in full use by the end of 2021.

Contact: Reg Kemper, Chief Advisor Jobs for Nature: 

1.2 RMA Advocacy

DOC's recent RMA work is as follows:

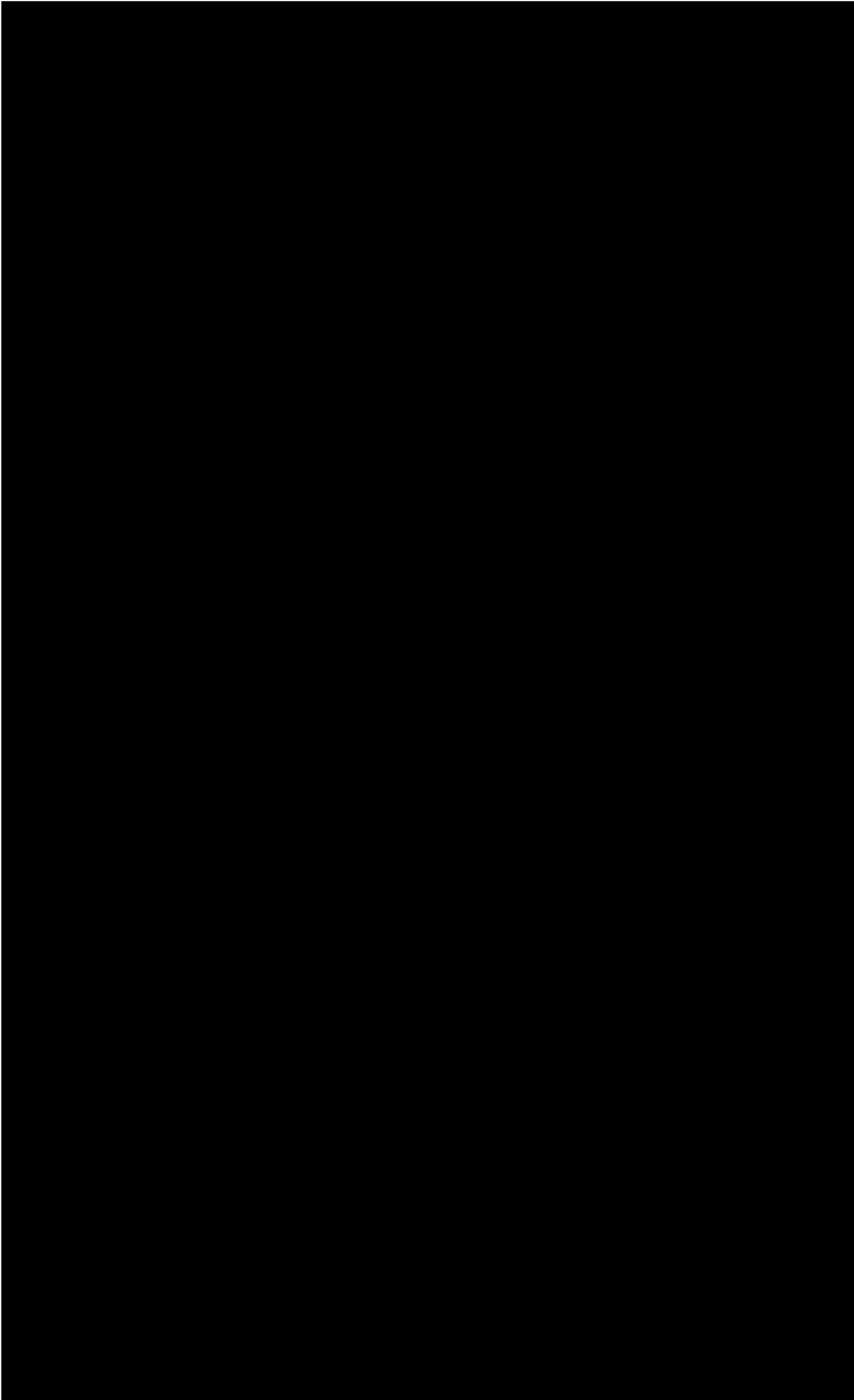
Hearings

Barrytown JV Limited – sand mining – Barrytown Flats, West Coast

- DOC is a submitter on a suite of resource consent applications for sand mining operations on private land at Barrytown Flats. The council hearing was delayed from 6 August to 24 August.
- Our submission opposed the applications on the basis of a lack of detail on mitigations proposed to protect or enhance adjacent natural wetlands and waterways from sedimentation and altered hydrology, and potential effects on avifauna. The delay to the hearing has allowed further information to be exchanged which has now addressed most of these concerns. DOC will appear at the hearing in a limited capacity, explaining that concerns expressed in the submission have now been appropriately addressed and to provide expert evidence on potential effects on Westland petrel.

Contact: 

1.3



2 Updates

2.1 Puhipuhi Mine Remediation

- We are undertaking a long-term work programme to investigate and address contaminated sites on public conservation land across New Zealand. These sites have been used for activities such as mining, fuel and chemical storage, agriculture, cemeteries, landfill and a range of other activities.
- Sites have been prioritised in each region to investigate potential remediation over the next 10 years.
- The Puhipuhi mercury mine, north of Whangarei, is one of these sites. We are working with local hapū, Northland Regional Council and the wider community to investigate and understand the scale of contamination to inform the next steps.
- Funding for the initial investigation stage of this project has come from DOC and the Ministry for the Environment (Contaminated Sites Remediation Fund - the recipients of which are yet to be announced by the Minister for the Environment) and is an important first step towards remediation of the site.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.2 Western South Island: Update on closure and rehabilitation of the Globe Progress Mine, Victoria Forest Park – Reefton Restoration Project West Coast

- The former Globe Progress Mine is located behind Reefton, within the Victoria Forest Park on the West Coast. There is significant gold mining heritage fabric and stories to be told from 130 years of mining operations.
- OceanaGold commenced commercial operation of the mine in 2007. The mine transitioned from operations to closure and rehabilitation in 2016 with the set-up of the Reefton Restoration Project, a comprehensive closure and rehabilitation programme.
- We have been working closely with OceanaGold and monitoring their delivery of the rehabilitation programme since 2016. Rehabilitation works are scheduled to be completed in 2025. At that point, the Access Arrangement (AA) held by OceanaGold will be surrendered and the site returned to DOC.

Environmental Management

- More than 130 hectares (of the 260 hectares of disturbance) has been completely rehabilitated including the planting of approximately 800,000 seedlings. An additional estimated 200,000 beech and manuka seedlings will be planted by December 2023.
- Once complete, the rehabilitated area will incorporate a shallow lake, maintained to provide a minimum two-metre water cover above the tailings surface (acting as a hydraulic seal to the tailings empoundment). There will be riparian planting of a further 64,000 wetland species on the lake's margins and a small wetland adjacent to the eventual spillway.
- This methodology aligns with the restoration goal to ensure long-term stabilisation of the physical, chemical, and ecological condition of the tailings

impoundment. The planting program is designed to re-establish indigenous ecosystems in a new post-mining landscape.

Community Engagement

- OceanaGold are well connected to the Reefton and broader West Coast community. They have partnered with the Buller District Council and Inangahua Community Board and are committed to deliver projects to support Reefton into the future.
- We are working with OceanaGold on a Community Engagement Plan and a programme of work that will welcome visitors back into the Globe mine site post completion and surrender of the AA in 2025, offering a heritage and visitor experience that will benefit the community of Reefton.
- This Community Engagement Plan process may raise the expectations of the Reefton community for some facilities and infrastructure to remain on the site for future use by the community. This will be carefully managed by the DOC team.
- There may be some media interest when the Engagement Plan is launched in September / October and we will prepare messaging in anticipation of this.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.4 Walter Peak Station tenure review

- The Department sent you a briefing in April 2021 seeking decisions on proposed designations in the Preliminary Proposal put by the Commissioner of Crown Lands (CCL) concerning the Walter Peak Station (WPS) tenure review.
- Acting Minister Hon Dr Verrall declined to grant provisional consent to the various designations on 9 June 2021. She then signed a letter to the CCL on 16 June 2021 setting out, in greater detail, the reasons for her decision.
- The CCL advised WPS via their lawyers, Chen Palmer, of the Minister's decision and that, as a consequence, the Preliminary Proposal could not be

put to WPS. He identified two options going forward: either to re-open consultation on a new preliminary proposal; or to decide not to put a preliminary proposal which would result in the discontinuance of the tenure review. He sought the views of both DOC and WPS.

- Having received the views of both parties, the CCL decided, on 5 August 2021, not to put a preliminary proposal. [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Whitebait season opening

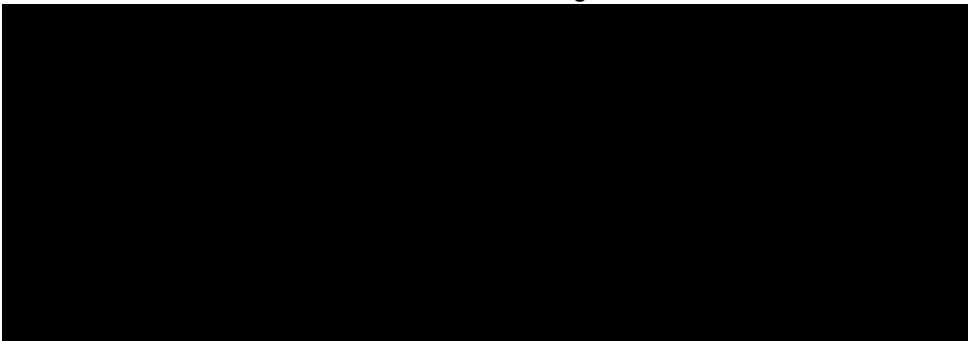
- The new whitebait season has opened for all the country except the West Coast. This is the first season where the new whitebait fishing regulations are in force.
- Preparations for the regulations have generally been smooth, however two concerns have been raised about the consultation process leading to the new regulations in the last week.
- One is from bach-owning residents of Torrent Bay and Tasman District Council about the new refuge on the Abel Tasman coastline.
- The other, from Te Wai Maori also raises concerns regarding refuges generally as well as the hui and tangi provisions carried over from the previous regulations.
- In both cases DOC is seeking to engage to understand issues and consider options, if appropriate.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 Update on Trade in Endangered Species Act Bill

- The Trade in Endangered Species (TIES) Act 1989 implements the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). CITES aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival in the wild.
- A review of the TIES Act was initiated in 2018 and public consultation took place in September 2019. DOC received 119 submissions on the TIES Act discussion document.
- In August 2020 Cabinet agreed to a suite of changes to the TIES Act including:
 - Strengthening the regulation of elephant ivory.
 - Updating definitions and regulation making powers to ensure the TIES Act aligns with international requirements and is operationally efficient at the border.
 - Rewriting the TIES Act using modern drafting language to improve the structure and clarity of the Act.
- DOC has been working with Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) on a draft Bill to repeal and replace the TIES Act.

- Once the drafting process is complete, we will provide you with a draft paper and Bill to review and take to the Cabinet Legislative Committee.

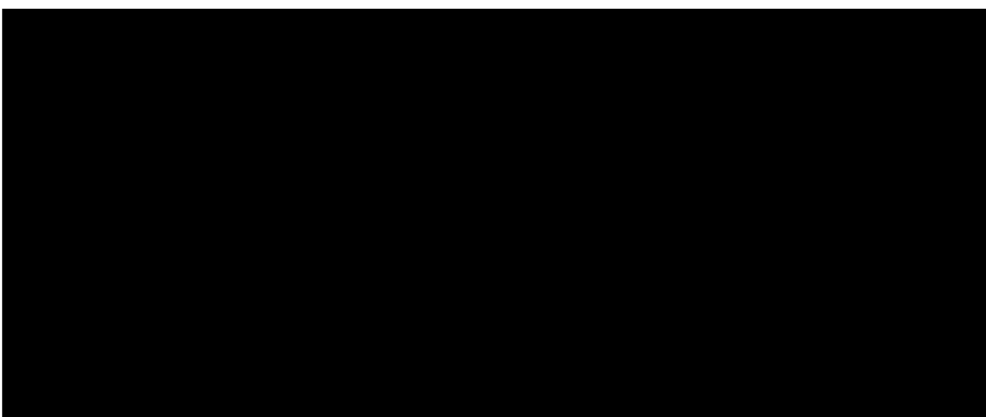


Contact: [Redacted]

2.7 FMC concerns about hut bookings


- At your recent meeting with FMC, Jan Finlayson raised some concerns and questions about bookings for backcountry huts. She asked how DOC manages the risk of people booking out a whole hut but with the intent of only using some of the beds.
- DOC has terms and conditions that it requires everyone who makes a booking to agree to before completing their booking. These state that bookings can only be made for those intending to use the hut and that no speculative bookings are permitted.
- Where a warden is in place at the hut, they can ensure that these conditions are met when the party turns up at the hut.
- Where there is no warden, DOC relies on awareness of terms conditions, and backcountry hut etiquette being applied by those booking, that the hut is a "shelter from the storm" and no one is turned away.
- DOC has 32 backcountry huts (30 Serviced and 2 Standard) that are currently bookable. This is in addition to the 35 Great Walk huts.
- This number will likely increase under the draft Visitor Accommodation Booking Policy that aims to ensure more users of popular backcountry huts have the benefits of being certain of a bunk for the night.
- DOC has been identifying huts where demand for bunks sometimes exceeds supply and relies on this information to determine whether huts should be added to the booking system. DOC consults with FMC and other users before deciding to add a hut to the booking system.
- FMC has raised concerns with the booking system, including that it can result in poor decision making if people prioritise bookings without regard to the weather, their skills, and local conditions. DOC provides detailed information on local conditions as part of the booking process.

Contact: Steve [Redacted]



2.9 Environment Committee review of bottom trawling petition

- On 5 August 2021, the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) presented to the Environment Committee on their petition "Save Deep Sea Corals – Ban Bottom Trawling on Seamounts".
- DSCC is an international alliance of organisations that works to promote the conservation of biodiversity on the high seas. In New Zealand, their members include environmental and recreational fishing non-profit organisations.
- The petition called for a ban on bottom trawling on seamounts and similar deep-sea features and for the government to stop issuing high seas permits for bottom trawl fishing.
- Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ) and DOC provided joint evidence to the Environment Committee, which you have been provided a copy of, and presented at the Environment Committee session.
- Concurrent to the Environment Committee session, DSCC, FNZ and DOC officials met with Minister Parker. Both agencies contributed to a memo for the meeting.
- FNZ and DOC work closely on bottom fishing science initiatives to evaluate the impact of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs).
- FNZ is the lead agency and represents Aotearoa New Zealand at the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO), which sets the governance for fisheries and issues fishing permits in the South Pacific. DOC contributes to Aotearoa New Zealand's position at SPRFMO.
- Within the SPRFMO membership, New Zealand is the predominant member undertaking bottom fishing in the South Pacific.
- As noted in the joint evidence provided to the Environment Committee, the SPRFMO Scientific Committee has recommended that in its review of the bottom fishing conservation management measure (CMM), the Commission may wish to consider additional precautionary management measures for areas and taxa at higher risk from bottom trawl fisheries to address uncertainty in model predictions and provide additional confidence that the CMM will meet its objective.

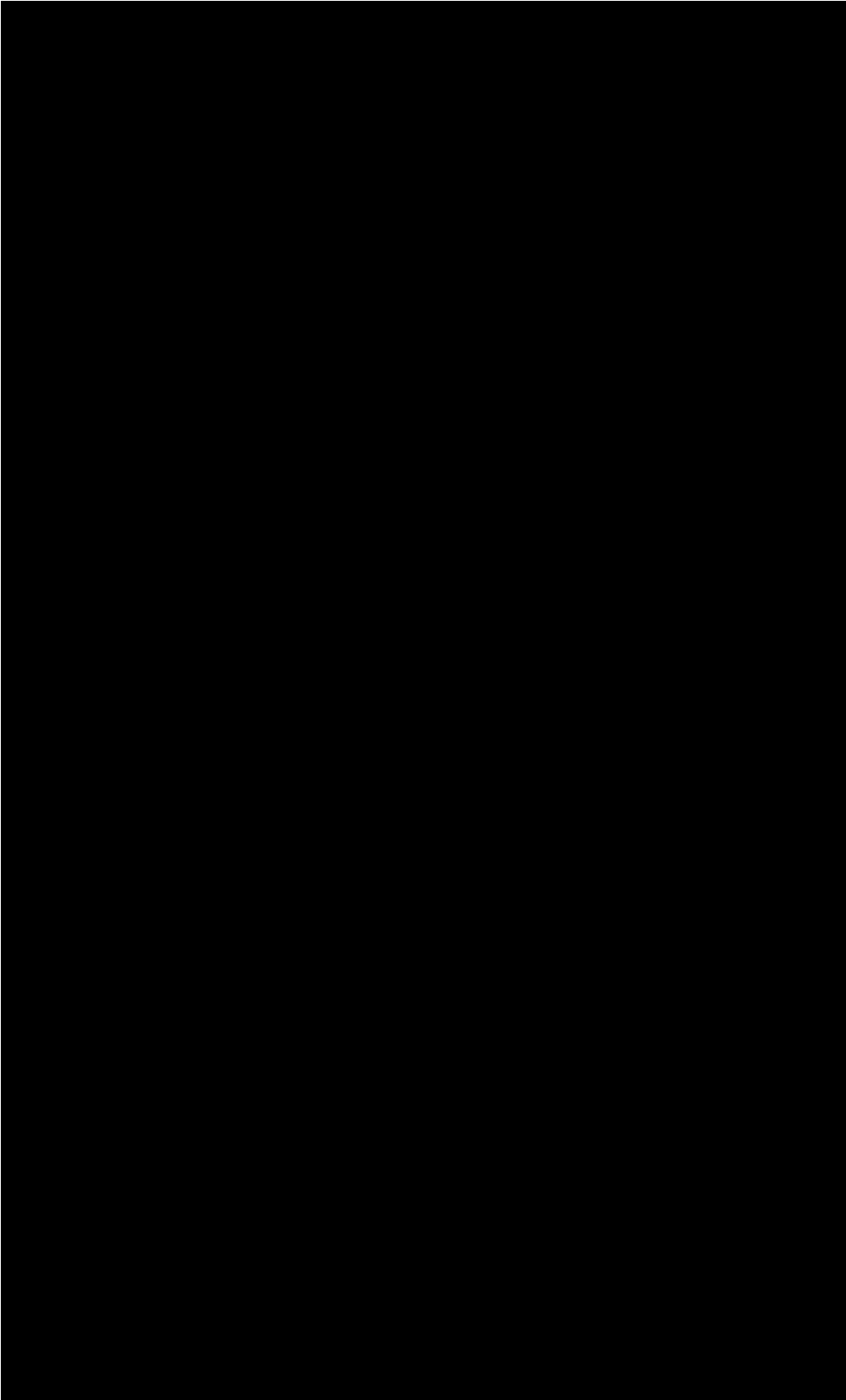
Contact: 

2.10 Two Projects from DOC in the Govtech Accelerator Programme 2021

- The NZ GovTech Accelerator is a 12-week government innovation programme that takes place annually in Wellington. The programme takes government projects and staff through a proven innovation process to solve complex challenges.
- Commencing this week, DOC has two projects in the 2021 programme:
 - Social licence for Climate Change - DOC has a current programme of work that is highly valued by stakeholders. Climate change demands work of the future to be low carbon and adaptable to the changing environmental landscape. DOC needs to balance the current work with the change required and the competing demands that stakeholders have. This project will support the social process required to bridge the public perception gap between traditional conservation and working differently in a low carbon future.
 - Conservation Skills Academy - DOC in partnership with Te Pukenga (the newly formed education entity that brings together ITO's, PTO's and the 16 Polytechnics) are working with iwi to review and design a training-based ecosystem, that focuses on building nationally recognised qualifications and learning pathways for anyone undertaking conservation work now and in the future. This project will define an optimal model which each entity can use to build and develop critical conservation skills. This will allow 'eco-warriors' to have access to common learning and develop transferrable skills irrespective of the pathway into the work. It will enable better movement of skills around the conservation sector and relevant system partners.

Contact: Ginny Baddeley, Deputy Director-General: [REDACTED]

3 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities



4 Director-General Engagements

August

25-26 August Visit with Te Hiku, Northland

September

07 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Auckland

08 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Christchurch

09 September Conservation Week Stakeholder function, Wellington

5 Appendices

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

1. Appendix 1 – JFN Dashboard (regular item, Status Report item 1.1 refers)
2. Appendix 2 – Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
3. Appendix 3 – Forthcoming items (regular item)

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.

Department of Conservation Status Report

for the Minister of Conservation

Week beginning 30 August 2021

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Seen by Hon Kiritapu Allan
Minister of Conservation

DOCCM - 6757844

Contents

1	Standing and Priority Items	3
1.1	Jobs for Nature	3
1.2	[REDACTED]	4
1.3	[REDACTED]	5
1.4	RMA Advocacy.....	6
2	Updates	7
2.1	[REDACTED]	7
2.2	Northern North Island: Pātaua Occupation update	8
2.3	Kokiri Mine application and World Heritage Status	9
2.4	Meeting of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) Advisory Committee	9
2.5	Report on APEC Oceans and Fisheries Work Group Seabird Conservation.....	10
2.6	Update on new global biodiversity goals negotiations under the Convention on Biological Diversity	10
2.7	Tai Poutini / Western South Island - Population Management Kapitea skink.....	11
2.8	Otago Conservation Management Strategy (Otago CMS) partial review update	12
3	Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities.....	13
3.1	DOC Community Fund announcement opportunity	13
3.2	[REDACTED]	13
4	Director-General Engagements.....	15
	Appendices	15

Attachments

1. Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
2. D-G Direct (fortnightly item)



1 Standing and Priority Items

1.1 Jobs for Nature

Jobs for Nature Summary:

- DOC is providing JFN project partners timely and informative communications about delivering projects during Covid Alert levels. This guidance aligns with the guidance that DOC staff receive. We have advised that we will continue to pay project partners and that we expect partners to continue to pay staff. We are engaging with the JFN Secretariat to investigate if the wage subsidy or other forms of Government assistance could be relevant for Jobs for Nature projects, and we will keep you updated on any recommendations.
- As of 24 August, there are 137 projects in delivery and 68 projects currently in contract negotiations. Contracting the remaining projects is progressing steadily. There were 13 Funding Agreements finalised the week commencing 16 August.
- Assurance checks and milestone payments continue to be made, generally on a quarterly cycle, for projects where these are due. We are connected to Delivery Managers to ensure that those projects where recipients are indicating payment is urgently required are prioritised.

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Updates - Workstreams and projects

Community and Landowner Fund

- 20 projects within these funds are in delivery and 29 projects are in the contracting phase, with nine of these 29 projects in the final stages of execution of agreements.

Māori Land Grant

- A summary of the approach will be added to the upcoming Reference Group papers. Any recommendations for project funding that may be ready for this timeframe will be presented to you prior to the meeting for feedback and endorsement.

Ngā Awa

- The Whanganui funding agreement is expected to be returned from the recipient this week for final assurance check and funding release.
- The Arahura draft funding agreement is with the partner for final review and expected to be finalised by the announcement date planned for 10 September at Arahura marae.

[REDACTED]

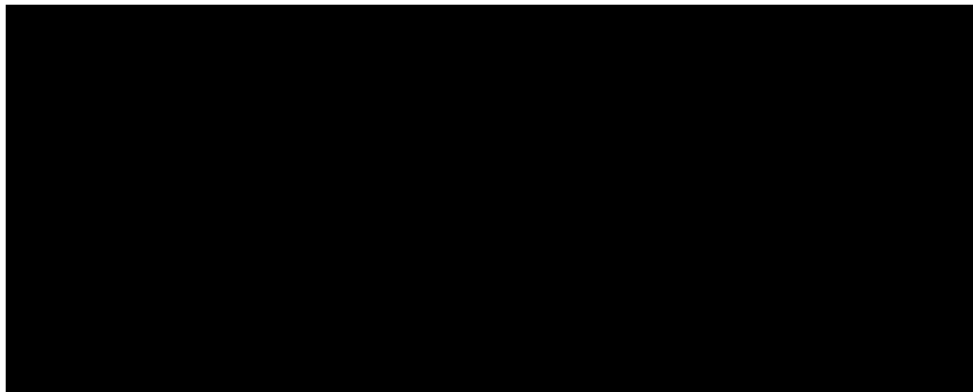
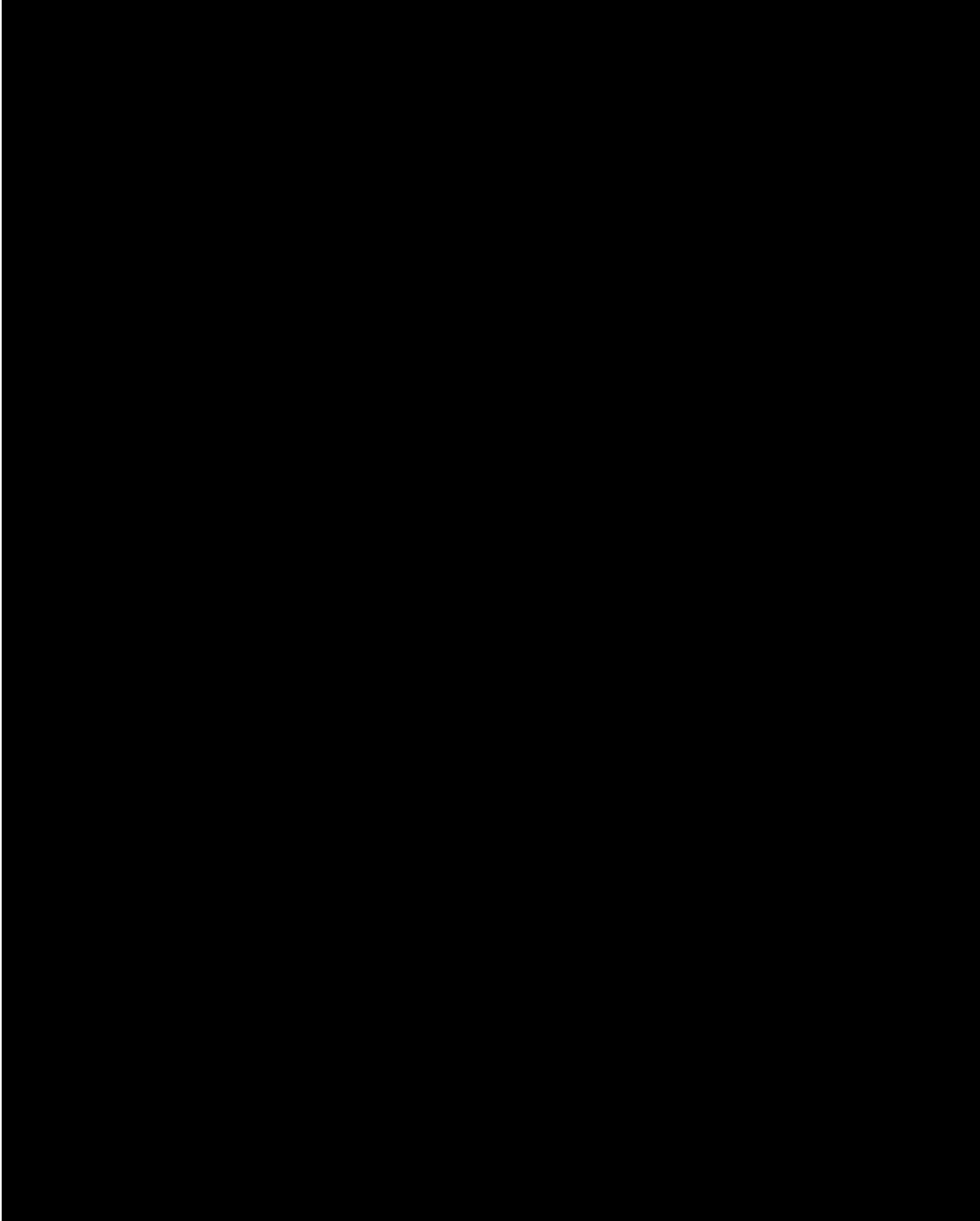
Other

- The 12-week project led by the Information Systems and Services team to implement the Funds Management system began on 23 August and is progressing rapidly. [REDACTED] Key staff from the Jobs for Nature team will be embedded within the project.
- Work to build the Jobs for Nature team following the management of change process has been a focus for the last week, including mapping people to roles, managing secondments, and establishing clear understanding of roles by team members.

Contact: Reg Kemper, Chief Advisor Jobs for Nature: [REDACTED]

1.2 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

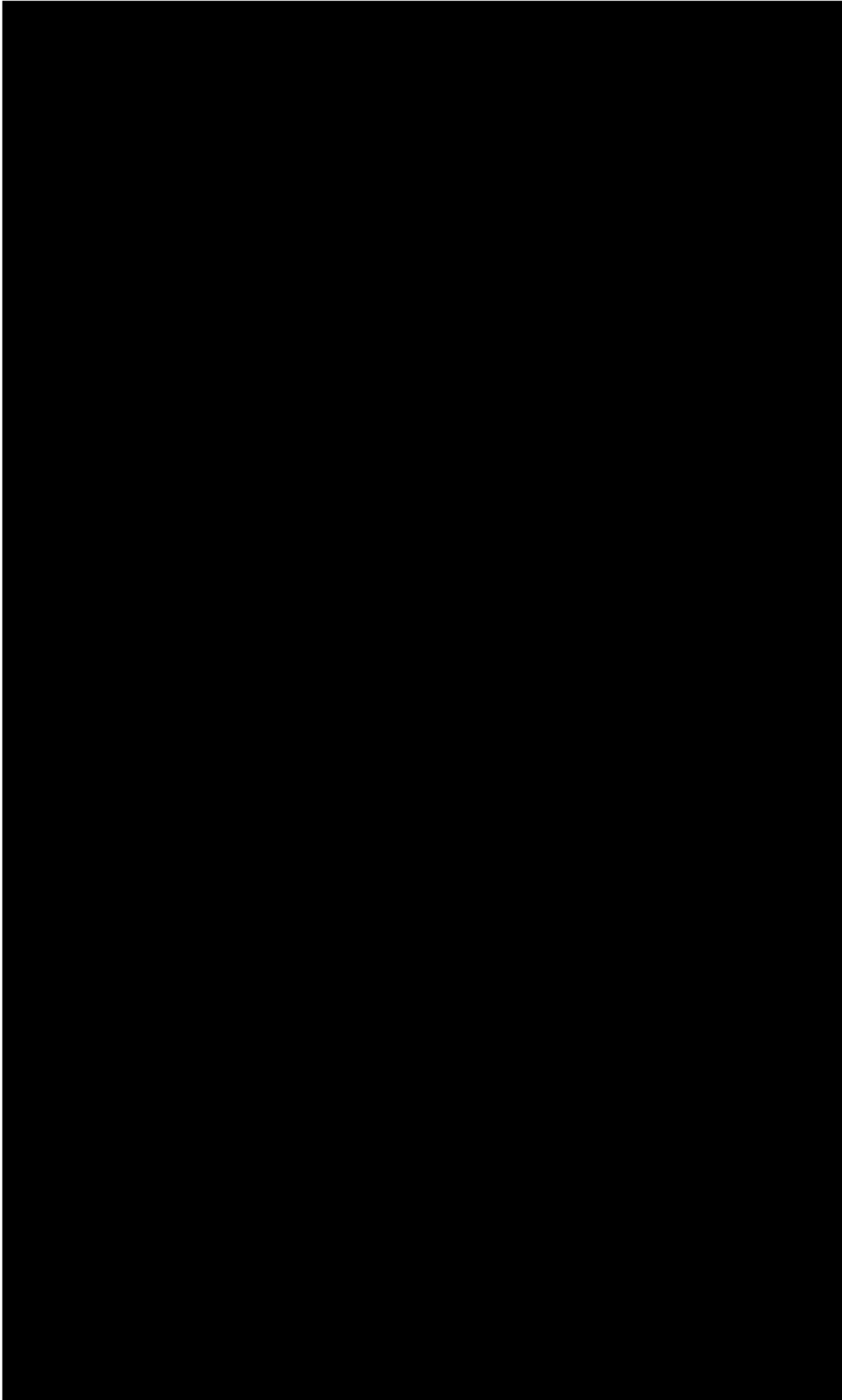


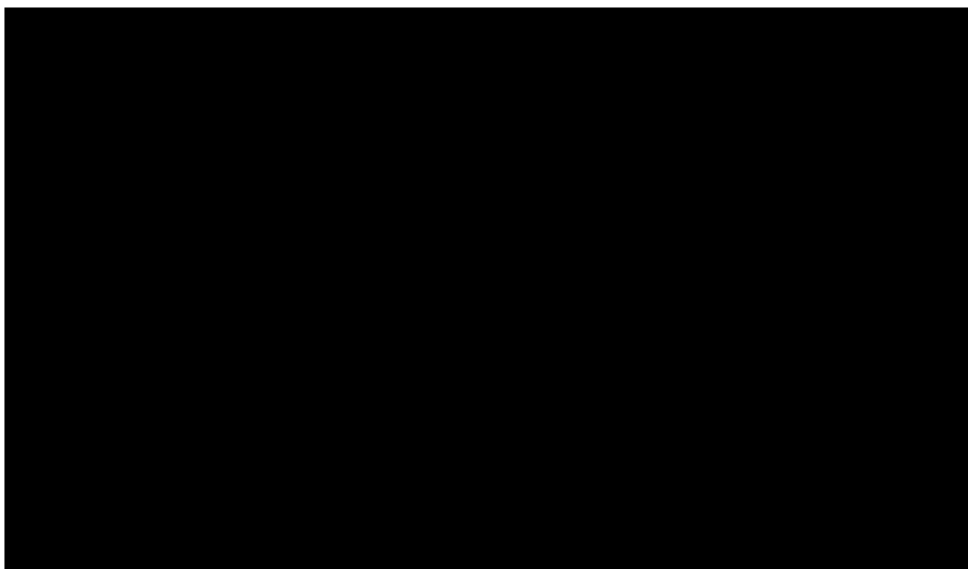
1.4 RMA Advocacy

No items this week.

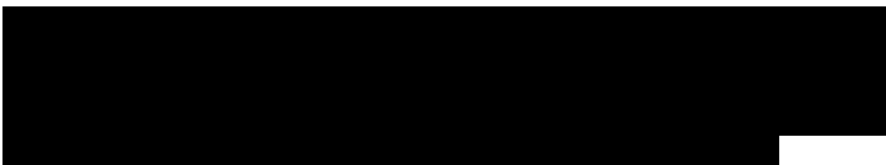
2 Updates


2.1







2.2 Northern North Island: Pātaua Occupation update

- Further to briefings on 30 March, and 22 July, we wish to update you that members of the Te Matakīrea o Pātaua (Ngātiwai) vacated Pātaua Island Recreation Reserve, on 7 August.
- Their occupation stemmed from opposition to part of the Pātaua Recreation Reserve being set aside as a road (to be administered by the Whangārei District Council), a claim of continued alienation from ancestral lands, and a desire to see the return of those lands to tribal ownership.
- The Northern North Island (NNI) Director Operations and regional managers met with members of the Te Matakīrea o Pātaua roopu on 27 July, to discuss a way forward. At this meeting we demonstrated our commitment to working on issues of concern to Te Matakīrea o Pātaua. We believe this led to them choosing to end their occupation.
- We also met with Te Waiariki/Ngāti Korora/Ngāti Taka Hapū Trust, who have interests at Pātaua South, and the Ngātiwai Trust Board and new CEO Huhana Lyndon on the 9 August.
- 
- We are committed to working through the issues and looking for opportunities to work more collaboratively with iwi/hapū/whānau at Pātaua. A working group has been established to facilitate this. We are planning a hui to meet and discuss with iwi/hapū/whānau their aspirations and goals for the public conservation land administered by at Pātaua.

Contact: 

2.3 Kokiri Mine application and World Heritage Status

- A Status Report item 1 February 2021 advised you of an application by Kokiri Lime Limited under the Crown Minerals Act for access to 15ha of public conservation land (stewardship classification) within the Te Wahipounamu World Heritage Area for the purposes of quarrying rock.
- As required by the Operational Guidelines for the World Heritage Convention, DOC advised the World Heritage Centre of the application.
- The Centre's response referred to the World Heritage Committee position that mining, including exploration, is incompatible with World Heritage status, and urges Parties to take every effort to ensure extractive industries cause no damage to World Heritage properties.
- The recommendation to the decision maker (DOC's South Western District Operations Manager) on the Kokiri mine application will assess the effects of the proposal on the values of the World Heritage Area and its integrity.
- The application is currently on hold while the applicant considers DOC's request for further information.
- Quarrying is an extractive industry that requires a mining permit from NZ Petroleum and Minerals. Kokiri Mining Limited has not yet secured a mining permit.
- 
- In April this year, the President of Federated Mountain Clubs wrote to Minister Verrall, the Acting Minister of Conservation, expressing concern about the application by Kokiri Lime Limited, including in relation to New Zealand's obligations under the World Heritage Convention. This issue has received media interest.
- We will keep you informed of progress.

Contact: 

2.4 Meeting of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) Advisory Committee

- The Twelfth Meeting of the ACAP Advisory Committee will be held on-line from 31 August-2 September 2021, preceded by relevant working group meetings.
- The New Zealand delegation for the Advisory Committee will consist of two officials from DOC (lead agency) and two from Fisheries New Zealand. MFAT officials have been briefed.
- The overarching priority for New Zealand in attending these meetings is to ensure progress to improve the conservation status of albatrosses and petrels listed in Annex 1 of the Agreement.
- A key focus of ACAP is addressing global fisheries bycatch of seabirds, which poses the greatest risk to many of these species.
- Amongst other matters, important topics being addressed at these meetings are improvements to communication on the conservation crisis, new best practice seabird bycatch mitigation advice, engagement with fishery

certification schemes, new data collection guidelines and a new engagement strategy with Regional Fisheries Management Organisations.

- This work will be of high importance to the conservation of New Zealand breeding species such as the Antipodean albatross and black petrel, which are both listed on Annex 1 of the Agreement.
- The meetings will also provide the opportunity highlight and strengthen our seabird conservation collaboration with other Parties such as Chile, Ecuador and Peru, although the online meeting format limits the ability for bilateral discussions.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.5 Report on APEC Oceans and Fisheries Work Group Seabird Conservation

- As part of New Zealand's host year for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), DOC hosted a three-part webinar series via the Oceans and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG) to share technical expertise and information for the reduction of seabird bycatch in fisheries.
- Our objective was to raise awareness of the significant threat of bycatch to seabirds and to further our international cooperation for the reduction of seabird bycatch.
- Our seabird conservation initiative marked the first time seabirds have been raised with the APEC OFWG.
- The topics for the webinar series included seabird bycatch mitigation, data collection and risk assessment, and a preliminary economic analysis on the use of mitigation measures and how this can be profitable for fishers.
- All the webinars were well attended and included expert speakers from New Zealand, Australia, the US and Chile.
- Following the completion of the three-part series, we provided a report back on the webinars to the OFWG and proposed a list of potential future cooperation areas.
- During this session, the OFWG formally adopted the seabird conservation work into its strategic plan (2021-22), which is a significant step for seabird conservation in this international forum.
- The next step for DOC in progressing the seabird conservation work through the OFWG is to identify potential likeminded economies that would like to work with us in developing a proposal on an area of cooperation to be presented to the OFWG in early 2022.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.6 Update on new global biodiversity goals negotiations under the Convention on Biological Diversity

- The next round of negotiations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is being held virtually from 23 August to 3 September. DOC will participate as part of the New Zealand delegation, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).

- The framework will be adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties next year (COP 15). China, the host country has confirmed COP 15 will take place in two parts. Part 1 (including a virtual High-Level Segment) will take place on 12-13 October. Part 2, comprising face-to-face negotiations to finalise the framework will take place 25 April to 8 May 2022. Part 2 will also include a high-level segment.
- New Zealand's participation in the late August – early September negotiations is guided by a Cabinet mandate and subsequent Ministerial guidance, as well as a detailed negotiating brief. DOC has provided input into the brief to advance our key priorities. [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- We will keep you informed of further developments.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.7 Tai Poutini / Western South Island - Population Management Kapitea skink

- Construction of a predator free fence at the new Kapitea Scientific Reserve north of Hokitika has been completed, protecting 1ha of habitat for the Nationally Critical Kapitea skink.
- Our next step is to ensure the area inside the fence is completely predator free. Mice and rats are predators of these skinks. Once COVID19 levels allow, we will carry out rodent eradication using Brodifacoum, currently scheduled for completion by the end of October.
- The 65 Kapitea skinks currently held at the Auckland Zoo are doing well. 50 were translocated to the Zoo in 2018 after cyclone Fehi destroyed a large portion of their coastal habitat. During their time in captivity they have had 19 offspring, and there have been four deaths.
- Zoo staff and students have been carrying out trials on skink behaviour and diet and this summer an Otago University Masters student will collect post-release data.
- Ngāti Waewae has supported skink management interventions and look forward to their return home in late November/early December.
- DOC and Ngāti Waewae plan to hold an event opening and blessing of the reserve when the skinks return to the site. We will keep you informed of this event as we confirm details.

Contact: [REDACTED]

2.8 Otago Conservation Management Strategy (Otago CMS) partial review update

- In April 2020, DOC announced a partial review of the Otago CMS and asked for bike track proposals to be lodged by May 2020. We received 115 proposals from 22 proponents affecting 266 parcels of public conservation land. DOC District Office staff identified an additional 77 parcels.
- We publicly notified the draft Otago CMS partial review in October 2020, with submissions closing on 21 December. We received 1749 submissions with 571 submitters wanting to attend hearings. Thirty-three submitters attended hearings held in Wanaka and Queenstown in April 2021.
- We have revised the draft Otago CMS based on submissions and hearings and will provide it to the Otago Conservation Board for its consideration on 26 August.
- We exceeded our statutory timeframe to revise the Otago CMS by two months [under Section 17F(j)(i) Conservation Act 1987] due to the unprecedented number of submissions received and the time needed to manage the number of submitters wanting to attend hearings. We have been working closely with the Otago Conservation Board throughout this review process and the Board is aware of the delay.
- The Board will consider the revised draft Otago CMS and make its recommendation to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA). The Board has a six-month statutory timeframe to do this but we anticipate it will have accepted the revised draft CMS to the NZCA at its meeting on 26 August.
- We have made several significant revisions to the draft Otago CMS to enable flexibility for future bike track proposals.
- The NZCA will seek your comment on the revised draft Otago CMS prior to approving the document. We can support you through this process.

Contact: [REDACTED]

3 Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

3.1 DOC Community Fund announcement opportunity

- The DOC Community Fund (DOCCF) - Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori, was established in 2014 to enable community-led conservation projects on public and private land.
- The Fund has an annual appropriation of \$4.6M and typically issues small grants that amplify volunteer efforts to deliver on-the-ground projects, such as predator control, weed removal, species protection and habitat restoration.
- It is a very popular fund and receives 200-300 applications each funding round, of which 100-120 projects typically get funded.
- We take a regional approach to this fund, including regional assessment panels.
- We are intending to run a double funding round utilising FY21/22 and FY22/23 appropriations (\$9.2M in total).
- Although the appropriation requires projects to have a biodiversity element, we are considering options to broaden eligibility for funding to encourage community groups to take a holistic approach to including other benefits (e.g. education/storytelling, culture & heritage benefits).
- We are currently seeking internal feedback on options.

Announcement opportunity

- There will be an opportunity in late September for you to announce the opening of the funding round (which will open for application in October).
- Further information can be provided to your office if required.

Contact: [REDACTED]

3.2 [REDACTED]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Minister of Conservation, Minister of Conservation's Office, and Department of Conservation Eyes Only.



4 Director-General Engagements

September

Conservation Week events in early September in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington have been postponed.

Appendices

The following appendices are provided to support this status report:

1. Appendix 1 – Cabinet Paper Report (regular item)
3. Appendix 2 – Forthcoming items (regular item)