



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

**In-Confidence**

# **Department of Conservation Status Report**

**Week beginning: 06 July 2020**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

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Seen by Hon Eugenie Sage  
**Minister of Conservation**

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

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## 1.1 Otago Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) partial review

- In February 2020 we briefed you about the partial review of the Otago CMS to consider proposed cycle trail initiatives, including Great Rides.
- The partial review was announced in late April with a request for cycle trail proposals to be lodged by the end of May. A virtual workshop was held on 5 May with those interested.
- Initial findings from the proposals:
  - 115 proposals received from 22 proponents
  - 213 parcels of public conservation lands and waters are affected
  - Most are on stewardship land and marginal strip
  - Most are within the Western Lakes and Mountains/Ngā Puna Wai Karikari a Rākaihautū Place of the CMS
  - 44 public conservation lands and waters are already listed in the CMS as being available for mountain biking (to varying levels of specificity)
  - 3 proposals in Te Wāhipounamu World Heritage Area
  - Many proposals are located within Deed of Recognition Areas and Tōpuni Sites
- We will continue to work with Ngāi Tahu, the relevant Rūnaka and the Otago Conservation Board throughout the process.
- There are many existing trails which were not identified in the CMS when it was reviewed in 2016 and others have come to DOC through tenure review. These will also be updated into the CMS (not included in the above numbers).
- An assessment of all proposed trails will be undertaken by technical experts and Operations staff to determine which proposals will be notified in the draft CMS. Public notification of the draft CMS will be the end of August.

Contact:

## 1.2 Jobs for Nature Unit

- The first five projects 'approved in principle' have task assignments out with the relevant Directors to plan and progress the work, including a seed funding draw down to support the development of the necessary partnering agreements.
- Specialist team members have been brought on board to drive this work and the associated monitoring and reporting.
- Tranche 2 quick start projects are progressing, you have received a memo outlining the details on these, in advance of next week's Joint SLU Ministers meeting.
- We are working with your office and the CNI region on your visit on 16 July to Rotorua to announce the funding for Te Arawa.
- Forty-four jobseeker emails have been received and responded to. This includes enquiries from forestry and tourism businesses offering teams who could deliver Jobs for Nature projects.

- Over three hundred proposals and ideas for initiatives have been received, including 80 from the community. These are being captured for subsequent triage and assessment. Once this information is appropriately assembled, we will make this information available to your office.
- The Jobs for Nature Team is almost fully assembled, with new additions starting over the coming weeks.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 1.3 West Coast Statutory Overview

- The Westland Tai Poutini National Park Management Plan (the Plan) review was placed on pause in February 2019, to allow DOC and Ngāi Tahu time to understand the implications of the Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki Supreme Court decision.
- Since February 2019, there have been further changes in context affecting the National Park and indeed the entire region, so we are looking holistically at the statutory opportunities for the West Coast, to ensure resources are being prioritised in the right sequence.
- As a result, we have decided to stop the review of the Westland Tai Poutini National Park Management Plan and undertake a full review of the West Coast Conservation Management Strategy (CMS).
- The decision to review the CMS is a result of several changing circumstances, including:
  - increased large weather events and the effects of climate change affecting access and safety
  - long term strategic planning is underway for the glaciers and other areas on the West Coast
  - the large addition to Kahurangi and Paparoa National Parks
  - natural hazard and risk management of Franz Josef village and proposed realignment of the State Highway being led by both NZTA and the West Coast Regional Council
  - changes in recreational use
  - the review of the national park management plans will follow the review of the full CMS
  - until now the Westland Tai Poutini and Aoraki/Mount Cook NPMP's have been reviewed concurrently. These processes will separate and Aoraki/Mount Cook NPMP review will continue.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2 Updates

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### 2.1 Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Programme (STAPP)

- Applications for the STAPP closed on 18th June 2020.
- 264 applications were received, MBIE officials are managing the assessment process. Other agencies, including DOC officials, have been invited to comment.
- The initial stage was for feedback on the eligibility assessments.
- DOC staff were able to ask questions on the phone in relation to the eligibility assessments but did not see the applications for confidentiality and privacy reasons.
- A report on the Eligibility Assessments was considered by the Tourism Recovery Ministers Group on 2nd July (MBIE reference: 3906 19-20).
- DOC officials identified approximately 50 of the eligible applications where we wish to provide further comment. These are either significant concessionaires or wildlife institutions.
- We received the list of recommended eligible applications on 1 July and need to provide comment by Friday 3 July. DOC staff can ask questions on the phone, but do not have full application details. At this stage we do not expect this to be a significant barrier to providing comment.
- We will provide you with a summary of our comments for the status meeting and more detailed memo on Tuesday 7 July.
- A report will be prepared by MBIE for the Tourism Recovery Ministers Group on 9 July. Officials will be available for that meeting.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.2 Potential withdrawal of public access to Whakamoenga Point

- The Rangatira Point Track is an easy walk that winds through native bush along the edge of Lake Taupō and is popular with families and those wanting to enjoy the rocks at the iconic Whakamoenga Point.
- For 33 years, DOC has had a lease agreement over land owned by the Rangatira Point Block Incorporation.
- While the original purpose of this lease was to protect the land from further development, this was superseded by provisions in the Taupo District Plan. The lease's purpose more recently has been to ensure public access to Rangatira Point and Whakamoenga Point Reserve.
- The lease equates to \$63,000 per annum, which DOC is not in a financial position to continue to fund, at the expense of other priority conservation work.
- We are in discussions with Taupo District Council (TDC) to take over the lease to retain public access to both Rangatira Point and Whakamoenga Point Lakeshore Reserve.
- Further consultation is to take place between DOC, TDC and trustees of the block to resolve this issue.
- If TDC are unable to take over the lease there is a high chance public access would be withdrawn, which would undoubtedly result in strong concerns from the public due to visitors no longer being able to access Whakamoenga Point.
- We will keep you updated as we work through options to keep the track open.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.3 Possible secondments of Ministry of Primary Industries staff

- As a result of COVID-19, the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) have a reduced workload for their border control staff and have offered to fund the secondment of several of their staff to DOC.
- MPI have identified a total of 18 staff as suitable candidates: 13 based in Auckland and 5 based in Christchurch. The staff would potentially be available for a 12-month secondment into DOC.
- We are in discussion with MPI regarding placements, term durations, skill-matching and opportunities. The discussion is well advanced for two staff to work on the Conservation Dogs kiwi aversion programme and the design of a national training and certification programme for Wild Animal control dogs.
- The potential secondments remain confidential at this stage, as MPI are still currently in discussion with their staff.

Contact: [REDACTED]

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### 3 Director-General Engagements

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#### July

06 July Ngati Kuri - PF2050 Via MS Teams  
08 July Treaty Partners Via MS Teams  
10 July Stefanie Rixecker/Arihia Bennett Christchurch  
16 July Matariki Stakeholder Event, DOC Wellington  
22 July Hon Maggie Barry's Valedictory Speech, Parliament, Wellington  
22 July Environment NGO Forum, DOC Wellington  
23 July NEXT function, Shed 5 Wellington  
24-26 July Visit with Te Aupouri, Northland

#### August

04 August Forest and Bird/DOC Hui, F&B Wellington  
05 August Speaking Engagement with Rotary, Wellington Club  
05 August Chief Executives Economic and Environment Forum, TBC Wellington /Zoom  
11 August Combined Business/Sustainability CEs Min Housing and Urban Development Wellington  
14 August Ohau Downs/Drylands Launch Canterbury  
14 August Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board – Waters – CE's Forum Te Puni Kōkiri Wellington  
17 August Conservation Week function, Auckland  
18 August Conservation Week function, Christchurch  
19 August Conservation Week function, Wellington  
21 August NZ Conservation Authority, DOC Wellington  
22-23 August Conservation Board Chairs Conference West Plaza Wellington  
23 August Environment NGO Forum, DOC Wellington  
27 August State Sector Leadership Team Retreat, Ohariu Farm Wellington

#### September

22 September Risk and Assurance Committee meeting, DOC Wellington

## 4 Addendum

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- One Billion Trees Update
- Proposed Dam Safety Regulations
- Possible protest action

### Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

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- Tu Te Rakiwhanoa Drylands launch

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# **Department of Conservation Status Report**

**Week beginning: 13 July 2020**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

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Seen by Hon Eugenie Sage  
**Minister of Conservation**

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

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## 1.1 Jobs for Nature Unit update

- Enquiries continue to be received by the Jobs for Nature email address. Sixty-two jobseeker emails have been received and responded to so far, twenty-one of these in the last week. These include enquiries from four forestry and tourism businesses offering teams who could deliver Jobs for Nature projects.
- We are working to develop a fair and transparent process through which proposals for funding can be submitted for the two flexible funding streams; Kaimahi for Nature and the \$76m Crown Fund programme: communities and landowners (part of the Restoring Nature workstream). In the meantime, the proposals and ideas for initiatives that come in continue to be captured.
- The Jobs for Nature Unit is developing an understanding of the other funding streams associated with Jobs for Nature and how they can be sequenced into a pipeline for delivery.
- We have developed the second tranche of quick start projects, which have been communicated with your office and shared in Reference Group papers for its meeting on 13 July. Your feedback and that of the Reference Group will inform the papers prepared for the SLU Ministers joint meeting on 20 July.
- We are developing the next tranche of initiatives and will share these with your office in a memo at the end of the w/c 13 July. These will likely include three projects from the Nga Awa funding stream as well as further initiatives in the Enhancing Biodiversity funding stream.
- Planning is under way with Te Arawa Lakes Trust, DOC's Rotorua office and your office for the quick-start funding announcement scheduled for 16 July.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 1.2 Wellbeing Survey: Post-Covid

- A whole-of-organisation wellbeing survey was run in June 2020 as a follow up to the survey run during the Level 4 lockdown.
- We were heartened to see an increase in self-reported wellbeing and an assurance that most staff were feeling well supported, had trusted people to talk to and knew where to go to get help where needed.
- We also noticed a significant shift in staff reporting an increased sense of purpose in the work they were doing as more field-based staff moved back to their usual work patterns.
- We also took the opportunity to learn more about staff experiences with working differently over lockdown and its impact on wellbeing.
- The majority of staff self-reported high levels of engagement and productivity while working from home and are interested in exploring how flexible work arrangements could support their wellbeing in future.
- It also reinforced the need for teams to find ways to stay connected to ensure high levels of collaboration and social cohesion.

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

## 1.3 Health and Safety Update

- Several initiatives have been implemented recently as part of our programme of work to reset our Health and Safety culture and systems. This work is being designed and

delivered in partnership with the PSA through DOC's High-Performance Engagement (HPE) system.

- The three most recent highlights are:
  - Results from the launch of the Stop for Safety tool
  - Results from the launch of the Restarting Safely Programme
  - LearnX Award recognition for the Restarting Safely Programme

#### **Stop for Safety tool launched**

- This new tool empowers all staff to call "STOP" without consequence to any work they feel is not safe. The system was launched as part of the Restarting Safely Programme, and since that programme was launched, we have seen:
  - Seven 'Stops' escalated to Director
  - 12 'Stops' where work was restarted safely following the completion of a Team Process conversation

#### **Restarting Safely Programme launched**

- This programme was targeted at refreshing DOC staff's knowledge of best practice health and safety. It was made mandatory for all staff to complete the programme before they could return to 'normal' work patterns as we came out of Alert Level 3. Emphasis is placed on DOC's top eight critical risks and their controls, as well as the unique needs of field staff. To date, 2516 staff have completed the Restarting Safely Programme and it remains available to all staff through DOC's online learning platform.

#### **Restarting Safely Programme becomes LearnX award finalist**

- DOC has been announced as a finalist for in the "Best Health and Safety Training Project" category of the LearnX Impact Awards. The awards are an annual event run by the LearnX Foundation, an International not-for-profit organisation promoting innovative workforce learning and supporting technologies. Awards will be presented during the LearnX Live! Virtual Summit & Awards Show on 17 September.

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

### **1.4 RMA Advocacy Update**

DOC's recent RMA work is as follows:

#### **Submissions**

Porirua City Council – Plimmerton Farm Plan Change 18

- Porirua City Council publicly notified Plan Change 18 on 20 May. The plan change is following the streamlined planning process and relates to rezoning land known as Plimmerton Farm to enable its development.
- Plimmerton Farm contains the Taupō Swamp Complex which is identified as a wetland with outstanding indigenous biodiversity values in the proposed Natural Resources Plan for Wellington.
- DOC lodged a submission opposing PC18 unless appropriate changes are made to protect biodiversity values.
- Changes sought specifically relate to the definition of hydraulic neutrality, recognition of drained paddock as wetland, mapping methods, permissive policies regarding activities within SNAs, and the fragmentation of SNAs through subdivision.

Auckland Unitary Plan – McLaughlin's Quarry Private Plan Change 43

- Auckland Council has notified a private plan change which proposes to rezone an area to light-industrial and remove an outstanding natural feature overlay to facilitate the expansion of a light-industrial park.
- The site has significant ecological, geological, and archaeological values. It is adjacent to the Matukuturua Stonefields Historic Reserve. This reserve is one of the

last remaining examples of Auckland's volcanic stonefields gardens, along with the Ōtuataua Stonefields (Ihumātao) which were recently occupied by iwi protestors.

- We will be lodging a submission in opposition to the development, seeking for it to be declined, or that changes are made to ensure the ecological, cultural, archaeological, and geological effects are appropriately managed.

### **Appeals**

Waikato Regional Council – Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1

- We lodged a comprehensive appeal on Waikato Regional Council's 'Healthy Rivers Wai Ora' plan change 1 on 8 July. This plan change seeks to manage freshwater quality in the region by managing intensive land uses.
- The appeal seeks that the plan adequately provides for ecosystem health attributes, ensuring that the region's highly degraded lakes are appropriately managed, that the few remaining wetlands are protected from further degradation, and that there is better integration with the coastal environment.
- The appeal also seeks more stringent stock exclusion setbacks than what is proposed in the Essential Freshwater package. In addition, we are seeking greater setbacks for lakes, streams, wetlands, and ephemeral waterbodies to adequately reduce levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and *E.coli*.

### **Other**

Horizons One Plan – Intensive farming activities Plan Change 2

- Plan Change 2 seeks to establish a consenting pathway to allow existing intensive farming land uses to exceed the plan's nitrogen targets (among other things).
- The plan change was opposed by Fish and Game, Forest and Bird, and the Environmental Defence Society. These parties intend to apply to the Minister for the Environment, seeking that he makes a direction to refer the matter to the Environment Court for a decision.
- We submitted in opposition to the proposed plan change because it is likely to result in further nitrogen contamination of already highly degraded water bodies in the region.
- This plan change follows a recent Environment Court declaration against Horizons Regional Council. The declaration found that the council had failed to implement its plan or take a strong enough stance on farm runoff into waterways, by granting consents which were inconsistent with the plan.
- The plan change is opposed by various iwi/hapū. Some iwi/hapū are considering whether to co-sign the appeal to the Minister for the Environment seeking the direct referral to the Environment Court.

Contact: 

## 2 Updates

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### 2.1 Healthy Nature Healthy People

Potential evaluation of wellbeing impacts for people employed through Jobs for Nature

- We are working with some members of the research community to scope research into the wellbeing impacts for people employed through Jobs for Nature.
- This research would be complemented by the monitoring and evaluation components which are being developed for Jobs for Nature.
- Jobs for Nature presents a unique opportunity to measure wellbeing impacts from nature connection (through employment), alongside economic recovery and biodiversity gains.
- This research has the potential to help DOC demonstrate and build on the value of nature for New Zealanders, from a wellbeing perspective.
- The researchers are sharing the concept with their networks and interest is strong.
- Connections have been made between researchers and Chief Science Advisors and senior leaders in the Ministry of Social Development.
- We will keep you updated on progress.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.2 Tourism New Zealand MOU

- DOC is working with Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) to develop an MOU.
- Working together we see a future where the natural environment benefits from tourism, and tourism enriches the natural and cultural environment.
- This will ensure we get good alignment of our activities and can utilise TNZ's considerable expertise. It will also ensure TNZ does not inadvertently cause issues with the way it promotes domestic tourism.
- A signing event between the DG and the CE of TNZ will take place to celebrate the partnership (most likely in late August).
- We will use the Aotearoa New Zealand Government Tourism Strategy to guide our work together. This work will be undertaken in the spirit of partnership.
- We will keep you updated on progress.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.3 Biodefence: preparing for a new era of biological hazards and threats

- New Zealand Defence Force has assessed how it supports the several agencies that work together on New Zealand's Biodefence work: Biodiversity (DOC), Biosecurity (MPI), Human Health (MoH), Bio-crime & Bio-terrorism (Police and Customs), and Countering Bio-agents (FENZ and NZDF). This is whole of government thinking and action.
- The concept of Biodefence importantly includes protection of biodiversity and mitigation of biosecurity threats. Thus, as NZ Defence Force moves about other parts of the world, we can anticipate its staff taking appropriate care not to bring back to NZ exotic plants, animals or diseases on their person or equipment.

- The assessment recognises our changing world – climate change, accessibility of advanced biotechnology, our highly linked world, and the increase in violent extremism.
- The assessment is not a review of other agencies' strategies and response plans. It reinforces how NZ Defence Force can, and does, provide critical logistic support to lead agencies, such as surveying public land for wilding conifers, or providing transport to offshore islands.
- As such, the assessment does not have any new implications for DOC. It suggests we can continue to enjoy some logistic support from NZ Defence for our biodiversity and biosecurity work as appropriate. Indeed, it suggests this might improve further, given recently announced NZ Defence capability investments.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.4 Maniapoto Treaty settlement negotiation – [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.5 North Island Forest

Raukumara

- We are in discussion with your office to present a proposal for announcing resource for Raukumara.
- Internal work is under way to 'download' Budget 2020 resources. Iwi and Te Papa Atawhai are working together on the internal expectations.
- Using a principled pragmatic approach, deer culling is being scheduled with the support of DOC's Gisborne and Whakatane Operations teams.
- Te Whanau a Apanui and Ngati Porou are meeting on 27 July to korero about their alignment on governance and operational design aspirations.

- The internal Te Papa Atawahi Steering Group has been provided with context about the Raukumara.

Kaimai-Mamaku

- DOC recently held discussions with Forest and Bird which was seeking assurance that quality standards are being applied to the project. We provided Forest and Bird with an outline of the project's expectations and approach.
- We met with three representatives from the five iwi involved: Ngati Ranginui, Pirirakau, Ngati Wai, and Nga Potiki to understand their involvement in the project. They were very supportive of the wider community engagement in the Kaimai Mamaku.
- There has been further discussion about the Kaimai-Mamaku Forum cultural and biodiversity management approach for a proposed hub (ways of dividing the Kaimai-Mamaku) approach. The hubs reflect an understanding of conservation areas, habitat and species. Those proposals are to be incorporated into the phasing exercise.
- A plan for confirming aligned outcomes, participants' roles and phasing of work is a priority for the next two weeks.
- The internal Te Papa Atawahi Steering Group has been provided with some context about Kaimai-Mamaku.

Contact: Michelle Hippolite, Deputy Director-General Kahui Kaupapa Atawhai:

[Redacted]

**2.6 Milford Opportunities Project – progress and public survey**

- The Milford Opportunities Project (MOP) is at a crucial point. The first phase of information gathering and analysis for the master planning is almost complete and ideas for the future of Milford Sound Piopiotahi, the Milford corridor and Te Anau are being gathered.
- The local community in Southland and Otago and a range of key stakeholders have had the opportunity to suggest ideas for the future. The general public is yet to be asked to contribute.
- MOP will be releasing a nationwide public survey on 13 July.
- The purpose of the survey is to:
  - socialise the early thoughts that have been gathered from consultation so far
  - gain a sense of public opinion on these ideas
  - gather ideas from the general public.

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

- Further public engagement on the master planning will take place in late September/October.
- Southland District Council will lead communications and media enquiries related to the survey. We have key messages prepared in the event of any reactive DOC-specific media requests.

- We will keep your office informed of any updates.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.7 PF2050: Improvements to Predator Trapping Methods tools

- In response to an increase in community demand for trap training, DOC and Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT) have been working on two key improvements to the 'Introduction to Predator Trapping Methods' course:
  - In November 2019 NMIT submitted an application to NZQA for the course to be offered as a stand-alone micro-credential qualification. This means that successful completion of the workshop will be recognised with a qualification cited in an individual's NZQA record.
  - NZQA approved the application in March this year. The course can now be offered to students in two formats, as a six credit micro-credential, or as part of the 20 credit conservation skills qualification.
  - 'Introduction to Predator Trapping Methods' is the first micro-credential qualification for DOC and enrolment is available on the NMIT website.
- The second improvement currently under development is the adaptation of the course to an online format:
  - During COVID-19 lockdown the cancellation of fully booked workshops meant that communities missed out on training. Development of the online version will allow students to continue their trap training at any COVID alert level.
  - The addition of the online version allows students the flexibility to complete the training in their own time and will increase access opportunities for remote communities.
  - DOC and NMIT will continue to offer the course as a face-to-face workshop across the regions in main centres.
  - Progress on the development of the online version is expected to be completed by the end of July, with student enrolments commencing from 1 August.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.8 Securing the future of the Chesterfield skink

- DOC's Hokitika office has been able to secure the long-term future of the Nationally Critical Chesterfield skink with a land purchase funded by the Land Acquisition Fund (LAF).
- The skink population of approximately 200 individuals is found in a habitat that is less than one hectare in area, located at Chesterfield.
- DOC Hokitika staff were able to reach an agreement to purchase a piece of land at Chesterfield from a private vendor and a Sale and Purchase Agreement has been signed. The land falls within the Chesterfield skink's known range and individuals, including juveniles, have been found on this land through surveys.
- We will work with local iwi to name this new piece of conservation land, and also to name the skink in Te Reo.
- Funding to build a predator-proof fence is currently being sought within our capital budgets. We have engaged fence specialists on the design so that we can be confident that the fence can withstand the harsh coastal environment and be able to exclude mice.

- Other threats to the Chesterfield skink include coastal erosion, storm events, habitat loss, and predation. Following Cyclone Fehi in 2018, 50 of the skinks were uplifted and sent to Auckland Zoo for care until a long-term solution could be found.
- We are delighted that a long-term solution has been identified and the future of the Chesterfield skink is that much closer to being secured.
- Once funding for the fence has been confirmed, the fence built and the interior made predator-free, the Hokitika team will organise an event with local iwi to welcome the skinks back into their home.
- Until then, we will undertake predator control on the newly acquired piece of land.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.9 Forestry work in Egmont National Park

- Logging and forestry workers, recently unemployed due to the COVID pandemic, have been employed by DOC's Taranaki office to remove a stand of large eucalyptus, planted during the Great Depression, within Egmont National Park.
- The trees have been identified as requiring removal under the Park's Management Plan.
- The project has been successful, with the work completed to a high standard, and proceeds from the sale of wood covering some of the cost. A local forestry school will use some of the wood debris for training, contributing to upskilling of local residents.
- More than 100 trees have been felled so far, and we are exploring options to extend the project to deal with a further 40 trees requiring removal. We are also investigating whether the resulting wood can be distributed to local whanau and hapu for winter heating, to support them during the COVID-19 recovery.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.10 Tiakina Nga Manu update: campaign completion

- We have now completed our 2019 mast response campaign, DOC's largest ever predator control programme. Over 908,000 hectares of high value public conservation land received rat, stoat and possum control in response to last year's exceptional mast event.
- This work was funded through additional resources allocated in Budget 2018. Sites were chosen based on the vulnerability of the threatened species populations they contain.
- Complementary work was undertaken by OSPRI, which agreed to coordinate its 2019 TB vector control operations to support DOC's biodiversity goals.
- Controlling rats and stoats was extremely challenging in 2019. The exceptional volume of seed and fruit produced during last year's mast meant rodent home ranges shrunk to tiny areas, and breeding rates went through the roof. We were forced to intensify our aerial 1080 methodology in response. This reduced the area we could protect in the time available from 1,000,000 to 900,000 hectares.
- Results have been mixed. Although most operations were successful, six of the 26 aerial 1080 operations did not meet their predator control targets, due to extreme conditions. We have learnt some valuable lessons to guide predator control research and tactics for future masts.
- We are still measuring the outcomes achieved through this work, as some monitoring was delayed by COVID-19. Results to date are encouraging, with positive trends for mohua, rock wren, bats, kaka and whio recorded. Orange-fronted kakariki and Fiordland tokoeka results are still to come. Kea remain a concern, with some deaths occurring as a result of our aerial 1080 operations. We are intensifying our work to



reduce this. Long-term studies of kea populations have shown an overall benefit from predator control during a mast event, despite the loss of some individual birds.

- While our 2019 mast response campaign is complete, there is no pause in predator control operations. Our 2020/21 programme has begun, and consultation is under way for the 21/22 programme. No significant mast is forecast across New Zealand in either 2020 or 2021. This means we will run a smaller programme over the next two years, focussed on catching up with work that had to be deferred during the 2019 mast.
- More work is planned in the North Island, subject to DOC gaining support from our Treaty partners. We are also beginning to engage with the teams planning new Predator Free 2050 and North Island forest protection work funded through Budget 2020.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.11 RAL bookable carparking update

- We recently informed you of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts' (RAL's) move to introduce bookable car parking at Whakapapa and Turoa ski fields for the upcoming ski season.
- While RAL had initially informed the public that car parks would need to be booked for every day of operation, it has recently amended this to weekends only, in response to overwhelming feedback, especially from the local community.
- The car park booking system is also being amended to prohibit users from booking car parks on the same day on both fields, in response to concerns about customers making dual bookings, effectively removing a car park from being able to be utilised by another visitor.
- The booking system will release car parks after 30 minutes if the customer doesn't arrive, to allow them to be booked by another customer.
- The system is being piloted over the next week and is planned to go live on 18 July.
- Feedback to these changes has been positive and DOC will work with RAL to ensure effective management of the ski fields and surrounding areas over the winter season.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 3 Director-General Engagements

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### July

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|------------|--|
| 16 July    | Matariki Stakeholder Event, Conservation House, Wellington |
| 23 July    | NEXT function, Shed 5 Wellington                           |
| 23 July    | Environment NGO Forum, Conservation House, Wellington      |
| 24-26 July | Visit with Te Aupouri, Northland                           |

### August

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 03 August | Seafood Sustainability Awards, Parliament                                    |
| 04 August | Forest and Bird/DOC Hui, F&B Wellington                                      |
| 05 August | Speaking Engagement with Rotary, Wellington Club                             |
| 05 August | Chief Executives Economic and Environment Forum, TBC Wellington /Zoom        |
| 07 August | Launch of Sentinel a Nuku, Turangi   |
| 14 August | Ohau Downs/Drylands Launch, Canterbury                                       |
| 14 August | Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board – Waters – CE's Forum Te Puni Kōkiri Wellington |

19 August Conservation Week function, Wellington  
21 August NZ Conservation Authority, Conservation House, Wellington  
22-23 August Conservation Board Chairs Conference West Plaza Wellington  
23 August Environment NGO Forum, DOC Wellington  
27 August State Sector Leadership Team Retreat, Ohariu Farm Wellington

**September**

04 September Whisper of Gold book launch – Friends of Waiuta, National Library Wellington  
18 September Mackenzie Agency Alignment Forum, Via MS Teams  
22 September Risk and Assurance Committee meeting, DOC Wellington  
26 September Senior Leaders hui, location TBC

## **4 Addendum**

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No items this week

### **Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities**

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No items this week

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# **Department of Conservation Status Report**

**Week beginning: 20 July 2020**

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**Minister of Conservation**

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

## 1.1 RMA advocacy

DOC's recent RMA work is as follows:

### Further submissions

#### Auckland Unitary Plan – Private Plan Change 42 Auckland Regional Landfill – Wayby Valley

- Auckland Council notified a resource consent application and private plan change relating to a proposed Auckland regional landfill. The Director-General submitted in opposition to both proposals as the consent proposal would have significant adverse effects on a range of conservation values and the plan change would reduce the requirements to protect indigenous biodiversity on the site. Auckland Council subsequently sought any further submissions on the proposed plan change.
- The Director-General has lodged a further submission supporting those parts of the Crown's Treaty Partners' submissions that align with his, and supported parts of several other submissions that raise matters that align with points raised in his original submission.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 1.2 Kauri dieback and myrtle rust

- No updates this week.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 1.3 Jobs for Nature Unit

- Enquiries to the Jobs for Nature email address continue. Seventy-six jobseeker emails have been received and responded to so far, fourteen of these in the last week. We are continuing to work with MSD to contribute to an MSD-led website that is intended to act as a 'front door' for jobseekers.
- We are working to develop a fair and transparent process through which proposals for funding can be submitted for the two flexible funding streams: Kaimahi for Nature, and the \$76m Crown Fund programme 'Biodiversity on Public and Private land: communities and landowners'. In the meantime, the proposals and ideas for initiatives that come in continue to be captured. More than eighty proposals and ideas have been received so far from the community. This is likely to be done through an EOI process which we are currently establishing.
- [REDACTED]
- We are seeking approval for the third tranche from the Jobs for Nature Programme. This approval is set at the programme level and includes the Enhancing Biodiversity: Communities and landowners Crown Fund funding stream, Enhancing Biodiversity: Nga Awa funding stream, and Kaimahi for Nature funding stream. Achieving approval in principle will be essential to enable the Jobs for Nature Programme to continue beyond 6 August. We have sent you a memo covering the intent and approach of Tranche 3 at a

programme-level for your consideration. Your comments and feedback will inform the papers for the SLU joint Ministers meeting, which we expect to take place no later than 3 August.

- Progress is being made on aligning DOC's regional investment with that of other agencies, particularly Te Arawhiti and MfE. In addition, DOC is contributing to preparations for the Reference Group workshop on 28 July to discuss the strategic investment plan across the whole Government Jobs for Nature programme (\$1.3b).
- We have resolved the pathway for the drawdown of quick start project seed funding.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2 Updates

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### 2.1 Allocating the Wildlife Institutions Relief Fund (WIRF) – Interim support

- On 11 July you announced a relief package of \$14.89 million for wildlife institutions affected by a loss of visitor revenue during the COVID-19 response.
- This one-off funding for 2020/21 is administered by DOC and will mitigate the risk of closure for vital wildlife protection facilities. The response from the wildlife institutions sector to the launch of the WIRF has been overwhelmingly positive.
- On 11 July, we opened to submissions for Expressions of Interest applications. This is through the website we have set up [www.doc.govt.nz/wirf](http://www.doc.govt.nz/wirf). Applications close on 27 July and we plan to inform successful applicants by 19 August on the website. We are working with MPI on the evaluation and approval processes between 27 July and 19 August.
- We are providing emergency payments to at least two institutions that are in critical financial positions, prior to applications closing on 27 July. Penguin Place (Dunedin) and the West Coast Wildlife Centre (Franz Josef) were identified as priority institutions in the budget bid for the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF), due to financial need and their contribution to conservation programmes. These payments amount to \$164,000 (1% of the Fund) to support the two institutions in the interim while they look at their long-term operating model and assess viability in a reduced visitor environment post-June 2021.
- We will keep you updated on the allocation of this fund through the status report.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.2 International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL)

- We are incorporating your feedback on our 2 July briefing about proposed conservation investment decisions (20-B-0482) and working with MBIE to finalise a joint briefing to IVL Ministers. The briefing seeks to change the IVL appropriation based on updated revenue projections and agreement to provide out-year funding for three of the four multi-year conservation projects approved in round 1. The remaining conservation project (Maukahuka Pest Free Auckland Island) is finalising its revised DBC and will seek funding approval via a subsequent briefing.

- IVL Ministers will simultaneously receive a second briefing that addresses revised IVL tourism priorities (for the MBIE-administered funds) and seeks funding for three urgent tourism projects.

- [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.3 Working with Ngāti Rēhia to support PGF funded projects

- In 2018 Ngāti Rēhia began work to create a Kauri Sanctuary on whenua tūpuna at Takou Bay, north of the Bay of Islands. The Sanctuary will, amongst other benefits, help protect kauri trees for future generations by creating New Zealand's first bio-secure Kauri Sanctuary, free of kauri dieback disease.
- In late June this year Minister Jones announced \$6.256m, which allows pest-proof fencing, biosecurity boardwalks, improvement to quarantine stations, further land clearing and planting, and employment/training for hapū to fully and effectively exercise the Kaitiakitanga role and Ahi Kā over their whenua.
- At the same time, Minister Jones also announced PGF funding support of \$1.25m towards the reconstruction and redevelopment of Te Pā Kāinga o Rewa (Rewa's Village) which is a well-known Māori tourism attraction in Kerikeri. This site sits within the Kororipo Heritage Park and is public conservation land managed by Ngāti Rēhia through a lease signed on 1 May 2020.
- We are now working locally with Ngāti Rēhia to support these projects as follows:

#### Kauri Sanctuary

- Complete the draft community agreement for pest control in the Takou River Scenic Reserve in the catchment of the Kauri Sanctuary. This includes pig control, vital to reducing the spread of kauri dieback disease.
- Provide technical advice in landscaping, biodiversity, biosecurity and predator fencing.

#### Kororipo Heritage Park

- Contribute towards developing a single Kororipo Heritage plan and provide advice to Ngāti Rēhia on infrastructure requirements such as tracks. The guiding document for any development is the Kororipo – Kerikeri Basin Sustainable Development Plan, 2005 which provides a connected vision across the DOC, Far North District Council, Heritage NZ and Ngāti Rēhia administered sites and facilities.
- Provide landscaping plans for Rewa's Village, the entranceway to Whare Waka and Kororipo Heritage Park and incorporating the Kerikeri Basin urban walk.

- These are significant projects locally and we will keep you updated as necessary.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.4 Bay of Islands Marine Mammal Sanctuary

- DOC representatives met with Taku Taimoana hapū on 25 June to discuss the statutory process for the proposed Bay of Islands Marine Mammal Sanctuary (MMS).
- Hapū welcomed your official agreement to the MMS kaupapa and the partnership through which the proposal has been established. They also indicated a desire for co-management arrangements to be developed for the MMS.
- We are scheduled to meet with hapū and the marine mammal permitted operators on 23 July 2020.
- We aim to finalise the proposed MMS restrictions and the draft public discussion document jointly with hapū through on-marae engagement throughout August 2020.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.5 Conservation Boards' Improvement Project

- DOC has made progress to respond to matters raised at the Conservation Board Chairs' Conference in 2019, identifying the need to improve governance practices.
- We are currently finalising a draft Governance Manual, which would apply to Conservation Boards and the New Zealand Conservation Authority.
- We intend to provide you with a copy of the final draft Governance Manual by 15 August for your comment, prior to tabling it at the 22 August Conservation Board Chair meeting.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.6 Antarctic and Southern Ocean science

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has initiated the review of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean science directions and priorities for 2020-2030, and plans to complete the review by June 2021.
- The strategy provides a framework for New Zealand-funded Antarctic science and is a key document for driving the science that supports the Government's policy priorities.
- DOC officials are working with MFAT, Antarctica NZ, MBIE, MPI, Iwi, hapū, and stakeholders to review the strategy which is then expected to be consulted on publicly.
- The strategy for the last decade was signed by Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs, Science, and Fisheries portfolios.
- Recognising DOC's role in promoting conservation in the Ross Dependency and Antarctica generally, it is now proposed that the Minister of Conservation is a co-signatory to the strategy.

- We will provide you with advice shortly on our role in Antarctic conservation and seeking your views on this proposal.
- The strategy will be submitted to joint Ministers for approval next year.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.7 Booking System update

- In 2018 we began a programme of investment in a Booking System to improve customer experience, improve departmental efficiencies and to build the tools needed to support revenue and visitor demand management.
- The first phase of the Booking System (Great Walks) has been operational for 2 years. This investment has been invaluable in managing the recent COVID-19 impacts. Direct benefits included the ability to directly communicate with customers, contact trace and for customers to self-manage cancellations (over 94% of refunds).
- The latest phase of the Booking System (campsites and huts) launched at the end of June:
  - 99 facilities can now be booked on the new system. This includes 47 campgrounds, 25 lodges and 27 huts. The Backcountry Hut Pass and the NZ Motor Caravan Association pass can also now be used for online bookings. A further 70 campsites, lodges and huts will be added before the summer season.
  - Since opening at the end of June, over 2,500 customer accounts, and 3,700 bookings were generated leading to \$550,383 in revenue.
  - 97% of bookings were made online, a major change from past years. Other customer benefits include the ability to amend bookings online, have confidence in contract tracing and to receive direct communication from DOC.
- The next phases of the Booking System are in development:
  - Future phases include building the tools for future active visitor demand management, for example, the ability to book a day walk or a car parking space. This will become increasingly important as NZ adapts to a new tourism future.
  - Funding had been secured from the IVL, however, this funding is no longer available and an alternative will need to be identified.
  - Other opportunities include the ability to manage other customer facing process, such as the administration of permits.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.8 Complaint about Aerial Goat Operation in Tararua Forest Park

- A hunter who had been hunting in the Tararua Forest Park on 29 June, notified the NZ Police and the Wairarapa Times Age of an incident where he alleges that he could have been accidentally shot by the operator.
- The hunter did not contact or complain to the Department directly.
- We have investigated the incident and determined that the hunter, and other members of the public were not at risk of being shot at any time.
- The Department is not taking any further action.

Contact: [REDACTED]



## 2.9 Cape Kidnappers Day Walk to be re-classified

This update was also provided to you via email on 14 July.

- DOC has decided to re-classify the DOC Cape Kidnappers day-walk track in the interests of managing visitor safety.
- The track has previously been managed and promoted as a 'day walk' visitor experience, and accordingly has attracted a low risk-taking visitor group.
- The Qualitative Risk Assessment commissioned in response to the landslide event, which severely injured two walkers on the beach on their way to the DOC track, shows that the level of risk to walkers on the beach is much higher than previously assumed.
- In this context it is not appropriate for DOC to manage the track in such a way that attracts a low risk visitor group.
- We will be installing additional signs advising walkers of the hazards associated with the walk, and will manage the physical track to a 'back-country' standard in keeping with the level of risk to visitors.
- We are also working with the District Council, stakeholders and Regional Tourism Organisations to increase awareness of the level of risk posed to visitors going to the DOC track.
- Council was advised of this decision on Tuesday 14 July.
- We have key messages and a press release in place, which have been shared with your office.

Contact: [REDACTED]

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### 3 Director-General Engagements

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#### July

- 22 July NEXT function, Shed 5 Wellington
- 23 July Environment NGO Forum, DOC Wellington
- 24–26 July Visit with Te Aupouri, Northland

#### August

- 3 August Seafood Sustainability Awards, Grand Hall, Parliament
- 4 August Forest and Bird/DOC Hui, F&B Wellington
- 5 August Speaking Engagement with Rotary Group, Wellington Club
- 5 August Chief Executives Economic and Environment Forum, TBC
- 7 August Launch of Sentinel A Nuku, Turangi
- 14 August Ohau Downs/Drylands Launch, Canterbury
- 14 August Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board – Waters – CE's Forum, Te Puni Kōkiri Wellington (Michelle Hippolite attending for Lou)
- 20 August Conservation Week function, Wellington
- 21 August NZ Conservation Authority, DOC Wellington
- 22–23 August Conservation Board Chairs Conference, West Plaza Wellington
- 27–28 August State Sector Leadership Team Retreat, Ohariu Farm Wellington

#### September

- 4 September Whispers of Gold Book Launch – Friends of Waiuta, National Library Wellington
- 18 September Mackenzie Agency Alignment CE Forum, Via MS Teams
- 22 September Risk and Assurance Committee meeting, DOC Wellington
- 29 September Senior Leaders hui, TBC

#### October

- 13–14 October Senior Leadership Team Retreat, Pounui

## 4 Addendum

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- Decision on Greenstone Caples aircraft applications

### Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

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- Yellow-Eyed Penguin Symposium – 1 August 2020
- Tu Te Rakiwhanoa Drylands launch – 14 August 2020
- Southern South Island Flood Recovery media opportunity – mid-August 2020
- Opportunity to join the kākāpō team in releasing female kākāpō on Te Kāhahu – 15-31 August 2020
- Trade in Endangered Species Act review announcement – August 2020
- Announcement of a public consultation on 'Improving Aotearoa New Zealand's approach to marine protection' – August/September 2020
- Oparara Arches media opportunity – August/September 2020
- Dolomite Point Redevelopment media opportunity – August/September 2020

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Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

**In-Confidence**

# **Department of Conservation Status Report**

**Week beginning: 27 July 2020**

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Seen by Hon Eugenie Sage  
**Minister of Conservation**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

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# 1 Standing and Priority Items

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## 1.1 Kauri dieback and myrtle rust

- Coromandel and Hauraki districts, with support from the national kauri dieback team, will continue to maintain a moratorium on planting kauri on the peninsula.
- This directly impacts the core activity of long-term community group Kauri 2000, who have been planting kauri on the peninsula since 1999.
- The halt to planting kauri was communicated to the group first in January and has been reinforced at a meeting on 13 July 2020.
- Our local district offices have offered to support the group to transition to education, advocacy and protection as an alternative to planting.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 1.2 RMA advocacy

No update this week.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 1.3 Jobs for Nature Unit

- Enquiries to the Jobs for Nature email address continue. 97 jobseeker emails have been received and responded; 22 of these in the last week. We are working with MSD to contribute to a MSD-led website that is intended to act as a 'front door' for jobseekers.
- We are working to develop a fair and transparent process through which proposals for funding can be submitted and assessed for the flexible funding streams. The intention is that this process will occur at a regional level through alliances where possible.
- We are processing Tranche 1 & 2 quick starts through their different set up and seed funding stages, as they come through the approval process.

### Update on Jobs for Nature Tranche 2 Quick-start projects

- We are analysing the various monitoring and reporting requirements as they arise, and developing the tools and systems to get this into a best practice state.
- Following the SLU Ministers' approval of the Backcountry Trust (\$2M) [REDACTED] we have begun progressing them through the seed funding release process.
- Sustainable Business Network (\$800k) and Tairāwhiti Agricultural Recovery Programme (\$500k) have been assigned to regional DOC delivery leads and are currently being progressed through the seed funding release process, with seed funding release expected in the next two weeks.

- [REDACTED]

### Update on Jobs for Nature Tranche 3

- We have provided two options on how the remaining DOC Jobs for Nature Programmes can move forward to the Reference Group, for their meeting on

28 July. We will provide details of Options 1 and 2 to your office in the Reference Group Paper. This represents an evolution to the Memo you received on 17 July, however the programme intent and approaches detailed in the memo remain correct and we are seeking your feedback on these.

- [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

Proactively Released

## 2 Updates

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### 2.1 Supreme Court decision – Rangitira Developments Ltd v Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society

- The Supreme Court released its decision on the above on 15 July 2020.
- The appeal concerned a proposal by Rangitira Developments Ltd (RDL) to develop and operate a coal mine in an area of land that is substantially within a local purpose (water conservation) reserve owned and administered by the Buller District Council (BDC).
- RDL had obtained a mining permit for the mine under the Crown Minerals Act 1991. In order to gain access to the mine site and carry out mining activities on the reserve, it had to reach an access arrangement with BDC.
- RDL sought declarations from the High Court as to the matters that the BDC would need to take into account in determining whether to enter into an access arrangement.
- The key matter in contention was whether BDC was required, at law, to have regard to s 23 of the Reserves Act (dealing with the purposes of a local purpose reserve), or to give effect to s 23. In summary:
  - s 23(a) requires the biological or natural features of the reserve to be managed and protected to the extent compatible with its principal or primary purpose as a water conservation area;
  - s 23(b) requires the reserve to be administered and maintained so that, to the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve, its value as a water conservation area is maintained.
  - s 40(1) requires an administering body of a reserve to manage and control it in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Act...“so as to ensure the use, enjoyment, development, maintenance, protection and preservation, as the case may be, of the reserve for the purpose for which it was classified”.
- The High Court granted the declarations sought by RDL, holding that BDC was only required to have regard to s 23. The Court of Appeal reversed the High Court. RDL then appealed to the Supreme Court.
- Where an owner of land that is not Crown land is considering whether to grant an access arrangement, s 60(2) of the Crown Minerals Act provides that the owner “may have regard to such matters as she or he considers relevant.”
- The Supreme Court held that, as owner of the reserve, the BDC has a wide freedom to agree to an access arrangement or decline to do so under s 60(2); but that under the Reserves Act it must give effect to s 16(8) (which requires the administering body to hold and administer the reserve for the purpose for which it is classified and for no other purpose) and to s 23(2) – that is to administer and maintain the reserve so that its value as a water conservation reserve is maintained. This was sufficient to dispose of the appeal.
- Following release of the decision, RDL has publicly announced that it is intending to lodge a fresh application for an access arrangement with the BDC.

Contact:

### 2.2 Improving whitebait management

- In light of your advice that it is not possible to progress regulatory amendments for whitebait management this term, we are proceeding with the following actions. We set out the possible timeframes in brackets for your feedback:

- Summary of submissions and submissions available on the DOC website, as required to meet our obligations under the OIA (20-E-0187; 20-E-0333 refer) (August)
  - Regulatory impact assessment completed, should the next government wish to consider completing the regulatory amendment process (end July)
  - Statement on the process included in the Briefing to the Incoming Minister, as per your direction (July)
  - FAQs supplied to your office to address queries from the public and media on the status of this process and what happens next (by 27 July)
  - DOC website updated to clarify that no changes have been progressed from the whitebait review at this point (27 July).
- The whitebait fishing season begins mid-August around New Zealand, excluding the West Coast. As in previous years, a press release will be issued urging fishers to abide by the rules. The release will also note that the rules remain the same for 2020 and that decisions have not been made on future changes.
  - Work in other areas relevant to the whitebait species continues. As part of Biodiversity 2018:
    - The recruitment process is underway to employ rangers and coordinators
    - A collation of information at priority sites for some regions has begun
    - Shortjaw kōkōpu surveys are in progress in some regions.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.3 Update West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board

- The West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board met successfully at a formal Board meeting on 3 July, the first time in 8 months.
- The meeting was preceded by a facilitated Governance workshop on 1 July and followed by a workshop on 17 July to discuss s 4 of the Conservation Act. Speakers at the workshop included Gabrielle Huria from Ngāi Tahu, Chris Finlayson QC, and Michelle Hippolite, Deputy Director-General Kahui Kaupapa Atawhai.
- The Board is currently planning for the next meeting in September, which will be in South Westland and will include a meeting and overnight stay at Te Tauraka Waka a Māui Marae, Mahithai/Bruce Bay, a public meeting at Fox Glacier, and a field trip to Franz Josef.

Contact: [REDACTED]

### 2.4 Te Tai Poutini West Coast Regional Alliance

- Development West Coast (DWC), the West Coast Regional Council (WCRC), Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae and DOC connected early in lockdown to discuss 'how can we work together to ensure that a coordinated approach was taken to both the recovery planning at the regional scale and to ensure integrated communication with Wellington so that the West Coast picture was understood'. This collective has developed into Te Tai Poutini West Coast Regional Alliance.
- The leadership group began meeting weekly in early April and DWC led a number of workstreams around recovery planning. DOC was asked to lead the conservation workstream and this merged with the national DOC workstream and thinking around Jobs for Nature (J4N).



- In May, the Operations Director presented the J4N and Regional Alliance concept to the regional Mayors and Chairs forum and gained their support for the Alliance group concept. The key interest from Mayors and Chairs was to ensure that the social and economic fabric of West Coast communities and businesses was maintained so that they are well positioned for recovery, and that an integrated approach is taken to maximise the funding opportunity.
- The WCRC, DWC, Makaawhio and Ngāti Waewae have all supported this approach.
- The first priority of the alliance is South Westland and J4N. DOC is leading on this.
- The central agencies of MPI, MfE, MBIE, 1BT, DIA, MSD and LINZ are now looking to the Alliance as a coordinated group that they can work with, and which allows them to engage at the regional scale in a coordinated manner. This will deliver significant benefits to the region and all parties over time.
- Te Tai Poutini West Coast Regional Alliance will submit its MOU to DOC to be recognised as an Alliance under J4N and secure access to a proportion of the Kaimahi for Nature funds. This will accelerate employment opportunities through business within the nature-based priority projects.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.5 Port Waikato erosion/seawall

- Erosion at the front beach at Port Waikato threatens businesses, the Surf Club and homes. It has reached a critical point, with land eroding at an estimated 5m per year based on information from Waikato District Council.
- Residents are looking for solutions and, as the largest landowner in the area there are implications for DOC.
- Several structures at the beachside have been removed or demolished and with the remaining car park now at the cliff wall, Waikato District Council is working to channel water away from the edge into a stream.
- Although the erosion has been occurring for some time, residents are looking for solutions and pushing for measures to stop further erosion, such as a seawall.
- Coastal scientist [REDACTED] has provided technical advice stating soft solutions would fail. A large (and potentially expensive) interlocking block structure is required to cope with high-wave energy.
- The seawall would need to be about 1km long, and the northern end would impinge on conservation land, making it subject to increased erosion.
- DOC is the biggest landowner in the area – so is potentially expected to fund proportionately.
- Waikato District Council has been liaising with the community and has invited DOC to join a Port Waikato Community Resilience Working Group, together with other government agencies and residents.
- DOC staff will attend working group meetings but have been instructed by the Operations Manager not to advocate for a seawall or join any associated lobby group. It is unclear whether DOC will be able to support a seawall from a financial and ecological perspective.
- The community is actively seeking support from local politicians – Minister Nanaia Mahuta has visited.
- The 2020 General Election means pressure to come to a solution might be heightened.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.6 Proposed acquisition of part of Simons Hill Station

- DOC has an opportunity to acquire approximately 1,200 hectares of land in the Mackenzie Basin floor within Simons Hill Station, known as the Drylands Recovery Area (DRA).
- The Conservation Act 1987 enables you to acquire freehold land for conservation purposes.
- The current landowner is required to spend at least \$100,000 per annum and undertake rabbit proof fencing, annual control of mammalian and plant pests and restoration management for indigenous dryland ecosystems. These activities will be undertaken by the current landowner until at least 2025 and are required irrespective of land tenure.
- The current landowner is also required to establish a Mahinga Kai Enhancement Area on two wetlands adjacent to the Tekapo River for Ngāi Tahu. We have consulted with nga rūnanga and they have indicated their support for the acquisition.
- We have undertaken due diligence required by the Act and determined the land contains significant ecological, cultural, and recreational values that warrant protection under Crown ownership. A draft Sale and Purchase offer has been presented to LINZ who are liaising with the landowner on our behalf. LINZ anticipates forwarding this to the landowner during the week of 27 July, along with the Simons Pass tenure review Substantive Proposal.
- The final decision on the acquisition will be made under your delegation by the Director Operations Eastern South Island. We will update you once a final decision has been made.
- We are waiting for the landowner's acceptance of the offer. Subject to receiving this in time, we will endeavour to finalise agreement for the acquisition prior to your Mackenzie announcement on 14 August 2020.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.7 Helicopter overshare of information incident

- In February 2020, DOC shared a spreadsheet of its approved helicopter operators with LINZ. LINZ subsequently provided this to six of their service providers. The purpose of sharing this was for LINZ to use DOC-approved operators during field inspections involving DOC staff.
- In doing this, DOC unintentionally shared sensitive information regarding operators that should not have been shared.
- It has been determined that this was an information "Overshare" with another government department, and not a breach of the Privacy Act.
- DOC and LINZ staff and their service providers have confirmed the spreadsheet has been deleted.
- DOC will be sending apologies to all 106 operators listed in the spreadsheet.

Contact: [REDACTED]

## 2.8 Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Group Establishment

- The Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Group is now established to oversee the work of the Chatham Islands landscape restoration project.
- The Group is community-led with membership including the Hokotehi Moriori Trust, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri, Chatham Islands Council, Chatham Islands

Enterprise Trust, the Chatham Island Taiko Trust, Chatham Heritage and Restoration Trust and the Chatham Islands Conservation Board.

- DOC is supporting the Group whose vision for the Chatham Islands is “A land apart for people, plants and birds: Restoring our nature’s gifts”. The project is still in the scoping phase, however it has identified the eradication of possums, rats and wild cats as its priorities.
- Most of the Chatham Islands (approx. 88%) is freehold or other private land, so landowner and community support for the ‘predator free’ vision for the islands will be critical to success.
- There is community and wider interest in progressing this landscape-scale approach to conservation on the Chatham Islands, including the opportunity for integrated One Billion Trees and predator free initiatives.
- There are specific One Billion Trees opportunities and applications in process. Because much of the island was only recently cleared there is still a good in-ground seed source; so in many instances fencing and browser removal will be sufficient to enable vegetation restoration.
- The Restoration Group is shortly to advertise a Chatham Islands Predator Free 2050 Coordinator position. This is a 12-month fixed term role focused on supporting the Groups’ scoping and planning work, establishing and maintaining relationships, supporting funding applications and providing information for the community.
- In collaboration alongside the Predator Free 2050 Ltd and the Chatham Islands Council investments, we are supporting the Group and coordinator position with in-kind contributions including a vehicle, technical advice and other support.

#### **Chatham Islands Kaimahi for Nature Alliance**

- The Chatham’s community has confirmed that it wants to form a Kaimahi for Nature Alliance comprising in the first instance: Hokotehi Moriori Trust, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri, Chatham Islands Council and DOC.
- There is potential for other agencies, including MPI, MfE, MBIE, TUR, the Chatham Islands Enterprise Trust, etc., to work with the Alliance in a coordinated manner. This approach will deliver employment and nature-based outcomes as the community seeks to recover from the impact of Covid-19 on their exports. We are coordinating across these agencies to potentially connect them to the forming Alliance.
- Kaimahi for Nature investment offers the potential to deliver ‘quick wins’ for the work of the Landscape Restoration Group, for example fencing to exclude stock and enable vegetation regrowth or support Billion Trees initiatives.

Contact: 

### 3 Director-General Engagements

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#### August

- 3 August Seafood Sustainability Awards, Grand Hall, Parliament
- 4 August Forest and Bird/DOC Hui, F&B Wellington
- 5 August Speaking Engagement with Rotary Group, Wellington Club
- 5 August Chief Executives Economic and Environment Forum, TBC
- 7 August Launch of Sentinel A Nuku, Turangi
- 14 August Ohau Downs/Drylands Launch, Canterbury
- 14 August Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board – Waters – CE's Forum, Te Puni Kōkiri Wellington (Michelle Hippolite attending for Lou)
- 14 August Hoki Gorge Opening (Conservation Week), Hokitika
- 20 August Conservation Week function, Cable Room Harbourside, Wellington
- 21 August NZ Conservation Authority, DOC Wellington
- 22-23 August Conservation Board Chairs Conference, West Plaza Wellington
- 27-28 August State Sector Leadership Team Retreat, Ohariu Farm Wellington

#### September

- 4 September Whispers of Gold Book Launch – Friends of Waiuta, National Library
- 18 September Mackenzie Agency Alignment CE Forum, Via MS Teams
- 22 September Risk and Assurance Committee meeting, DOC Wellington
- 29 September Senior Leaders hui, TBC

#### October

- 13-14 October Senior Leadership Team Retreat, Pounui
- 15-16 October NZ Conservation Authority, TBC Napier

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## 4 Addendum

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- Tatau Tatau o Te Wairoa seeking CMS boundary change

### Events, Announcements & Media Opportunities

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- 'Whispers of Gold' Documentary film – Waiuta Historic Gold Mining town
- Hokitika Gorge Visitor Experience

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