

Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board

Annual Report 2010/2011



Te Rūnanga Whakauka o Kahurangi ki Kaikōura

NELSON/MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION BOARD

Herea kia Kōtahi - Working Together

Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board Annual Report 2010/2011



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Front cover photo: Board members and DOC staff at Totaranui after tree planting.
From left: Joe Puketapu, Ian Mitchell, John Hellstrom (supporter), Lynda Neame, Gina Solomon, Ross Hall, Tracey Osborne, Bob McDowall (NZCA liaison) and Maurice Manawatu.
Kneeling: Kay Switzer (Board Support Officer), Judy Hellstrom (then Chair of the Board), Jo Gould (Community Relations Manager) and Philip Simpson. Photo by John Mason, September 2010

Back cover photo: Tracey Osborne in the rain above the Abel Tasman Coastal Track. Photo by Kay Switzer.

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Message from the Chair, Ross Hall

Kia ora koutou

This past year has been one of change for the Board, including it being my first as Chair. Having never given consideration to the possibility of filling this role, for me personally it has been a challenge as well as an honour.

There has also been a significant change in the make-up of the Board as we have welcomed four new members: Sue Brown, Bob Dickinson, Mairangi Reiher and Joy Shorrocks.

The approval of the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan partial review in December has been a highlight of the past year. While mountain biking in the park was the most high profile issue canvassed in the partial review, it should be remembered that helicopter access, hunting provisions, private accommodation and a specific horse trekking issue were also considered. The result of this process has seen some important changes in management policy. Following the formation of the national park in 1996 it has been a long journey for mountain bikers to regain access to the Heaphy Track. Thus it was with great interest I attended a function held in early May to formally open the mountain biking trail on the Heaphy and heard just how special this track is to bikers. It remains now for mountain bikers themselves to make this aspect of the partial review a success.

Another major focus this year has been preparation work for the long awaited review of the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). Board members have taken part in a number of workshops over the course of the year, giving us some indication of the complexities surrounding the CMS. We have also had the opportunity to participate in what, I am sure, we all found to be new and interesting information gathering methods. As the formal CMS review begins in the near future, members of the Board will play an important role in the review process itself and in fostering public engagement.

The Board continues to have an excellent working relationship with Departmental staff. I would like to particularly acknowledge the work of our Board Support Officer Kay Switzer and Community Relations Manager Jo Gould. Their preparation and input are vital to the successful functioning of the Board. I must also thank Conservator Neil Clifton and all Department staff for the assistance they have provided the Board, but also for the invaluable work they have completed over the course of the year in managing the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy.

Lastly I would like to thank the other members of the Board for their commitment, contribution and support over the past year.



Ross Hall

Introduction

The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board is one of 13 appointed by the Minister of Conservation under section 6(P) of the Conservation Act 1987. Board functions are outlined in section 6(M) and the powers, which enable the Board to carry out those functions, are under 6(N) of the Act.

The Conservation Act specifies that the Board's role is to:

- recommend the approval of conservation management strategies;
- approve conservation management plans;
- advise on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice;
- advise on proposed changes to the status of land areas of national and international significance;
- advise on proposals for new walkways;
- liaise with Fish and Game Councils on conservation matters; and
- carry out other powers delegated to them by the Conservation Minister, the Conservation Act or any other Act.

The Board has a number of functions under section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980. These functions include recommending the review or amendment of national park management plans and recommending approval of such plans by the New Zealand Conservation Authority.

Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires conservation boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority with an annual report as soon as practicable after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board submits this, its third annual report.

Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy

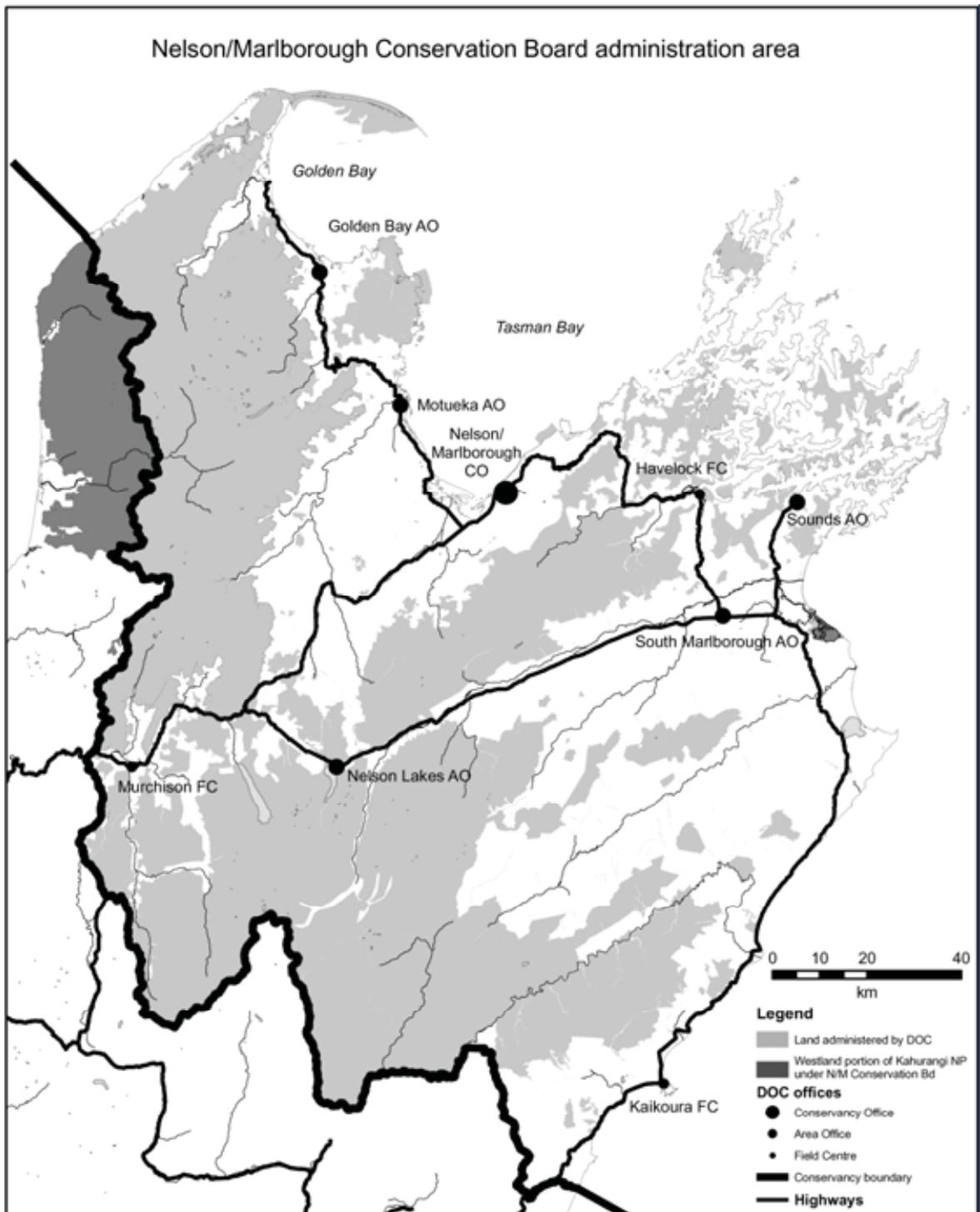
The Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy and the Kahurangi National Park situated in the West Coast Conservancy. In addition to Kahurangi National Park this includes Abel Tasman and Nelson Lakes National Parks, Mt Richmond Forest Park, Molesworth Station and important nature reserves such as Takapourewa (Stephens Island) and Farewell Spit.

The area provides for a wide range of recreational uses ranging from the Marlborough Sounds to the Kaikoura Ranges including the new Conservation Park, Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia. There are also four marine reserves in the region: Long Island, Westhaven, Tonga Island and Horoirangi.

There are about 750 historic places both Maori and European. These include Maori archaeological sites, historic backcountry huts, a whaling station and cob cottages in South Marlborough.

Species protection programmes in the area cover tuatara, endemic frogs, *Powelliphanta* snails, great spotted kiwi, Hutton's shearwater, weka, kaka, black-fronted tern and blue duck.

The Board's area of jurisdiction covers some of New Zealand's best known visitor sites, including the Abel Tasman Coastal Track, and the Heaphy and Queen Charlotte Tracks. There are over 300 other walks and tracks totalling more than 1950 kilometres.



Highlights and key events for the year

Kahurangi National Park Management Plan Partial Review

The completion of the partial review of the Kahurangi National Park Management Plan and its formal approval by the New Zealand Conservation Authority in December 2010 was a highlight. Considerable work had been involved in hearings and discussions during the previous year. Ross Hall and past Board members Philip Simpson, Judy Hellstrom and Tracey Osborne were actively involved. Members of the Board put considerable work into defining the key principles guiding their thinking on the partial review and this will be useful when the full review of the plan happens in future. The Board wishes to acknowledge the constructive and useful role NZCA played during the review process.

Mountain biking in National Parks

The reviewed Kahurangi plan makes provision for mountain biking to be trialled on three park tracks, including the Heaphy Track during the five month winter season. The first day of the trial was officially marked with a function and on the opening day about 40 mountain bikers set off to ride the Heaphy Track. Seven hundred bikers rode the track during May 2011.

In March 2011 the Board received advice about the two season mountain biking trial at Gibbs Hill, which is an inland track originally developed as a fire break within the Abel Tasman National Park. As there were no damaging effects apparent, the Board agreed that mountain biking could continue.

Review of the Conservation Management Strategy

Board members discussed the proposed new approach and format in July 2010 and made detailed comments to the Department of Conservation's National Office. In general, members considered the structure an improvement on the current model but sought improvements to reflect the Treaty partnership more accurately. Members also noted the need for any measurement processes in the new CMSs to be flexible enough to allow for changed circumstances over time.

Several members of the Board attended a workshop on the new framework for Conservation Management Strategies with National Office and Conservancy DOC staff. There was also a Board workshop in May with Conservancy planning staff which focused on identifying values and issues and also tested out methods for later public consultation.

Philip Simpson presented the last of his four papers on landscape ecology to the Board in September 2010 and the Board commended the approach put forward as a useful integrative philosophy for developing the new Conservation Management Strategies. Copies of Philip's four papers have been made available to other Boards on request.

Farewells

Members acknowledged the passing of Aunty Kath Hemi, a former Board member and an influential person who had been an active supporter of the Department's work in the Nelson Lakes Area. Bob McDowall, the Board's liaison person from the New Zealand Conservation Authority also died during the year. Members recalled his generosity in sharing his extensive knowledge with others and his passion for conservation.

Progress with plans

Molesworth

There is a draft management plan in an advanced stage developed with input from Board members, but work was put on hold due to the need to agree upon wording which fairly reflected iwi customary interests in the area. This is a matter which is affected by Treaty of Waitangi settlement negotiations and is, therefore, outside the control of Board members and the Molesworth Management Committee. The Board hopes that agreement can be reached with iwi and the plan put out for consultation with the public.

Implementation monitoring

The Board considered implementation reports on the Abel Tasman National Park Management plan and for Nelson Lakes National Park during the year. In general members were impressed with the range and volume of work carried out by staff and local communities in these areas.

Abel Tasman Foreshore Scenic Reserve Management Plan

Work on the draft plan continued during the year. The arrangement for considering and approving the plan is a unique one arising out of the administration of the reserve by both Tasman District Council and the Department of Conservation and strong local interests. The draft plan is expected to be publicly notified in July 2011.

Additions to National Parks

There were no additions to National Parks this year, but the Board revisited last year's decision to support a proposed land exchange to address an encroachment by a private landowner at Anchorage into the Abel Tasman National Park. A minor amendment to the boundary was agreed upon to address a neighbouring landowner's concerns.

Board membership

All 10 members are appointed by the Minister for Conservation including two members nominated by Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu.

Lynda Neame was appointed for a second term. Marama Takao resigned during the year and Joy Shorrocks was appointed as her replacement. Sue Brown, Bob Dickinson and Mairangi Reiher also joined the Board in 2010.

The Board farewelled three long-standing members: Judy Hellstrom, Philip Simpson and Tracey Osborne. DOC staff and members acknowledged the contribution each had made in their various roles on the Board. Responding, Judy said that it had been an honour and a privilege to be on the Board for seven years. Highlights for her were the launching of the Te Waikoropupu Springs plan, the Abel Tasman National Park management plan and the partial review of the Kahurangi National Park management plan. Attending Te Pukenga Atawhai had also been special. She cautioned against measuring conservation through quantitative measures based around ecosystem services as these missed important qualitative values such as peace and quiet and stewardship.

Tracey said that her six years on the Board had been a wonderful experience. She felt that New Zealand was not currently in the right place to go another step in marine conservation. She supported modelling marine eco-systems and services and was pleased this concept was embraced by DOC and that climate change was bringing new awareness. She had enjoyed strategic planning for the Board and defining its role and she felt that the Board had been a good one, with relationships between the Department and Board very positive.

Philip added that he had learned a lot about partnership with Maori from being on the Board and acknowledged Ropata Taylor's leadership and Barney Thomas's support in his role as Pou Kura Taiao. He enjoyed working on the Te Waikoropupu Springs plan and chairing the Kahurangi Partial Review Subcommittee. He commended DOC staff and thanked them for all their assistance.

Members' profiles



Ross Hall is from Dovedale. A keen trumper, he also has experience in horticulture, a background in outdoor recreation and interests in ecology and ornithology. He joined the Board in October 2007 for a year and was re-appointed for a three year term in 2008. He was appointed Chair in September 2010.



Ian Mitchell is a viticulturalist from Marlborough's Wairau Plain with extensive experience in public land administration and management through his career as Commissioner of Crown Lands. Ian joined the Board in 2005. He also convenes the Marlborough Committee and he represents the Board on the Molesworth Steering Committee. Ian was appointed Deputy Chair in September 2010.



Maurice Manawatu was first appointed on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu in 1998 and has continued to serve ever since. He was re-appointed for a further term during 2010. He is affiliated to Ngati Kuri and Ngai Tahu. He owns and operates a Maori tourism venture in Kaikoura and chairs the coastal guardians group Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura.



Gina Solomon of Kaikoura was appointed in 2006 on the recommendation of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu. She is affiliated to Ngai Tahu, Kurahaupo, Ngati Koata, Te Atiawa, and Ngati Toa. She follows in the tradition of her mother, Darcia Solomon, a Board member for many years and her late father John, a passionate conservationist.



Lynda Neame lives in Blenheim. She joined the Board in 2007. She is experienced in air quality and water quality issues, with an interest in waste treatment systems and the impact of discharges on receiving environments. She is involved with habitat maintenance and restoration projects, particularly Te Whanau Hou project at Grovetown Lagoon. Lynda is also involved with iwi and Forest & Bird.



Joe Puketapu, who joined the Board in September 2009, lives in Blenheim. He has experience in providing an iwi perspective on conservation issues. He is the chair of Waikawa Marae at Picton and a director of the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board, Trustee Te Atiawa Manawhenua Trust, Trustee Kimi Hauora PHO and Chair - Iwi Health Board. His iwi affiliations are with Te Atiawa Nui Tonu.



Mairangi Reiher of Golden Bay is of Ngati Tama/Te Atiawa/Te Arawa iwi. Her interests are centred on the preservation of cultural sites, waahi tapu and the conservation of natural flora and fauna. She is currently a trustee of the Tasman Bays Heritage Trust and an iwi representative for the Nelson Provincial Museum. She is on the committee of the Golden Bay Museum and also on the board of the Ngati Tama Trust. She is involved with the Whakapapa Komiti with Ngati Tama, Te Atiawa and Ngati Rarua Te Ati Awa Iwi Trust as well as serving on the Manawhenua Ki Mohua and Onetahua Marae committees. She joined the Board in December 2010.



Sue Brown farms with her partner. They have a dairy farm in Ferntown, Golden Bay and a pastoral grazing block in Stanley Brook in the Motueka Valley. Sue is actively involved in the Aorere Catchment Group with the NZ Landcare Trust and is currently Dairy Section Chair for Federated Farmers Golden Bay province. She was appointed to the Board in December 2010.



Bob Dickinson has extensive experience in management and director positions having been CEO of Tasman District Council for 17 years. He is a keen user of public conservation land, as a trumper, skier, boatie and climber, with a special interest in geology and history. He was appointed to the Board in December 2010 and he lives in the Redwood Valley.

Joy Shorrocks was appointed to the Board in December 2010. She is a traditional Maori weaver and a teacher of this art form. Joy is an active member of Te Awhina Marae and is on the marae board. She is also Deputy Chair of the Kaiteriteri Recreation Reserve Board and a member of the Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust and the Motueka Museum Board. Joy has a particular interest in the preservation of New Zealand's natural resources. Her iwi affiliations are Te Atiawa, Ngati Rarua, Ngati Tama and Ngati Koata ki te Tau Ihu. She lives in Motueka.

Meetings

Five meetings were held during the financial year 2010/11. These were:

| | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| July | Nelson |
| September | Totaranui (2 days) |
| December | St Arnaud |
| March | Kaikoura (2 days) |
| May | Motueka |

Field trips

The September meeting was held at the Education Centre at Totaranui in the Abel Tasman National Park. The Board planted some trees in honour of the retiring members, Judy Hellstrom, Philip Simpson and Tracey Osborne.

John Mason, Area Manager for Golden Bay, gave a presentation on his experiences as an observer on Antarctic tourism voyages at this meeting. The next day, members heard from the DOC staff at Totaranui about the challenges of managing a very popular seasonal campground, inspected the new toilet block, and walked part of the coastal track up to Goat Point where there was a viewpoint both ways along the track.

When the Board met in St Arnaud it took the opportunity to visit the upgraded displays at the Nelson Lakes Visitor Centre and members were very impressed by them.

The Board climbed (by 4WD) to the Mt Fyffe hut in the Conservation Park Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia after its March meeting in Kaikoura to experience the spectacular view. There was a discussion on tenure review in the area and outcomes up to that point. The Board also visited Lake Rotorua (near Peketa) a little-known wildlife area.

In May, members looked at the entrance to the Motueka Sandspit and points along its length. The area is an important one for birdlife but also widely used for dog walking and recreation of all kinds. Concerns about the need to protect the birds from other users of the spit had been raised with the Board and were discussed at the meeting.

Attendance

The table below shows the numbers of Board meeting attended during the year. In addition, members attended other meetings and events in their role as Board members.

| MEMBER | HOME | ATTENDED |
|------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Ross Hall | Dovedale | 5/5 |
| Maurice Manawatu | Kaikoura | 5/5 |
| Ian Mitchell | Blenheim | 4/5 |
| Lynda Neame | Blenheim | 4/5 |
| Gina Solomon | Kaikoura | 4/5 |
| Joe Puketapu | Blenheim | 3/5 |
| Sue Brown | Collingwood | 2/2 |
| Bob Dickinson | Nelson | 2/2 |
| Joy Shorrock | Motueka | 2/2 |
| Mairangi Reiher | Takaka | 1/2 |
| Philip Simpson | Takaka | 2/2 |
| Judy Hellstrom | Marlborough Sounds | 1/2 |
| Tracey Osborne | Golden Bay | 1/2 |

Note: members resigned and joined the Board during the year

Board committees

Membership of Board committees was reviewed as new members joined the Board. Key areas of work are identified below.

Marine Conservation

This purpose of this committee is to provide a link between the Board's wider communities of interest, the Board and the Department in relation to issues associated with marine conservation.

Members at the end of the 2010/2011 year were: Lynda Neame (Convenor), Gina Solomon, Joe Puketapu and Joy Shorrock. The Marine Conservation Committee has two subcommittees covering the Long Island-Kokomohua Marine Reserve and Horoirangi Marine Reserve. These were set up by the Board to provide for the involvement of key groups associated with each marine reserve. Lynda Neame represents the Board on the Long Island-Kokomohua sub-committee and Joy is the Board's representative on the Horoirangi sub-committee.

It was a quiet year for the Marine Conservation Committee with all of the Board's contribution being made through representation on the marine reserves committees.

Board members Gina Solomon and Maurice Manawatu are actively involved in Te Korowai o te Tai o Marokura, an initiative originally started by the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board.

Management Planning

This committee is to advise the Department in relation to strategic direction and planning for the management of conservation land, in particular national parks. By agreement with members, smaller committees are set up to work on individual management plans as the need arises, which includes working with Department staff on the preparation of draft plans.

Members of the management planning committee at the end of the 2010/2011 year were: Ross Hall (Convenor replacing Judy Hellstrom) and Mairangi Reiher. The only sub-committee in action at the end of the 2010/2011 year was the CMS Review sub-committee. Members are Ross Hall, Gina Solomon, Lynda Neame, Sue Brown, Ian Mitchell and Mairangi Reiher.

The Kahurangi partial review committee was wound up when the reviewed plan was approved by the New Zealand Conservation Authority in December 2010.

Marlborough

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Conservancy on issues associated with conservation in Marlborough. Marlborough has a high concentration of endemic flora and fauna and to date much of the conservation effort there has been focused on private land. Board representatives provide an important link to local communities, particularly landowners and local decision-makers.

Members: Ian Mitchell (convenor), Maurice Manawatu, Gina Solomon, Lynda Neame and Joe Puketapu.

Concessions

The purpose of this committee is to advise the Department on policy matters associated with concession management and also to advise on specific concession applications where appropriate.

Members at the end of the 2010/2011 year were: Ross Hall (convenor), Gina Solomon, Joe Puketapu, Bob Dickinson, Mairangi Reiher and Joy Shorrocks.

In May 2011 some Board members and DOC concessions staff were involved in a concessions hui at Takahanga Marae designed to inform the local runanga about the process and how they could best become involved. Concessionaires were invited to the hui to form links and increase their awareness about iwi values relevant to their concessions. This was highly successful.

Members requested a simplified guide to the concessions process and this was developed as the Concessions Information Kit.

Report from the Convenor, Ross Hall

With the introduction of a new nationally consistent concessions processing system to meet the Department's requirement for speedier processing, the advisory role of the Board sub-committee in relation to concession processing and management has been streamlined and clarified. Regular information on concession applications is provided to the Board sub-committee and a set of nine "triggers" for formal Board consultation was agreed to by the Board.

A notable feature of concession activity this year has been the number of permits granted for filming work, especially relating to tourism.

There have also been a number of applications pertaining to helicopter operations in Kahurangi National Park following changes to access provisions stemming from the partial review of the park management plan.

The most controversial concession approval this year has related to the construction of a power project involving Lake Matiri. Resource Consent had already been granted for this scheme and the Department has been able to guarantee public access to conservation land through private property as well as mitigation works as part of the concession package.

Liaison

All Board members have responsibility for liaising with other groups, when opportunities arise and some members have specific roles in liaison.

Liaison with other Boards

West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board: Warren Inwood of the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board attended our meeting in July 2010. Sue Brown replaced Tracey Osborne as West Coast liaison person.

Canterbury/Aoraki Conservation Board: Chair Steve Lowndes took part in the Board's meeting in Kaikoura in March 2011.

Conservation Board Chairs' Conference: Judy Hellstrom reported to the Board on this at the July 2010 meeting.

Tasman Environmental Trust

The Trust was established as an independent organisation to assist in the protection and maintenance of Tasman and Nelson natural areas. The Trust administers the Cobb Dam Mitigation Fund which funds community based aquatic restoration projects in Golden Bay. Philip Simpson was nominated by the Chair in September 2010 and formally confirmed as the Board's representative on the Trust.

Molesworth Steering Committee

The Department of Conservation manages Molesworth Station as a Recreation Reserve under a lease to Landcorp Farming. The lease provides for a Steering Committee appointed by the Minister of Conservation with an independent Chair and representation from Landcorp Farming, Ngai Tahu, the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board, the Department of Conservation and conservation and recreation interests. Ian Mitchell was appointed by the Minister to represent the Board.

Walking Access Commission and Landcare Trust

Barbara Stuart, a Walking Access Commissioner, Ric Cullinane, the Operations Manager of the Walking Access Commission and Chris Tonkin, regional field advisor for the Walking Access Commission's top of the South Island Region, attended the September meeting of the Board and outlined the Commission's planned work.

Barbara, who is also the Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough Coordinator for Landcare Trust which works with communities on sustainable land management, spoke about her Landcare work. Members were impressed with the range of work done by community groups supported by Landcare.

Abel Tasman Foreshore Advisory Forum

Board representatives are Ross Hall, Mairangi Reiher and Joy Shorrock.

Fish and Game Nelson/Marlborough Region

Ian Mitchell is the liaison person and attends meetings in Marlborough.

Other Board work

Ross Hall represented the Board at a regional land and water forum.

The Board raised concerns about increased hut fees and received a report from the Department on this.

The Board received a very interesting presentation in March from South Marlborough Biodiversity Programme Manager, Phil Bradfield, on the Hutton's Shearwater work. The Board subsequently wrote to the Hutton's Shearwater Trust commending them on their substantial achievements in protecting the birds.

A progress report on the Waimea Water Augmentation Project was given at the July 2010 meeting.

A draft karst management strategy for Nelson/Marlborough was outlined to the Board and members commented on the draft document.

Community involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. Meetings are held in different parts of the Nelson/Marlborough area and the opportunities for the public to attend Board meetings are advertised. Members of the public attended four of the five meetings and a range of issues were raised. The Board appreciated their input and efforts made to attend the meetings and responded by letter with a response to questions asked or concerns raised.

Topics raised by members of the public at Board meetings included:

- safety at the river crossing in the Red Hills area;
- measures needed to protect birds at the Motueka Sandspit;
- updates on the work done by the local branches of Forest and Bird; and
- the establishment of the Game Animal Council.

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend Conservation Board meetings. If you would like more information on the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Board please see the website www.conservationboards.org.nz or contact the Community Relations Officer - Board Support, at the Department of Conservation in Nelson, phone (03) 546 3143 or email: nelsonmarlboroughboard@doc.govt.nz.

