



Northland Conservation Board
Te Runanga Papa Atawhai O Te Taitokerau



Image Kauri at Trounson T. Conaghan (DoC)

Annual Report 2006/07

Chairperson's Overview

I have much pleasure in my first term as Chairman of the Northland Conservation Board in presenting the Boards Annual Report for 2006-2007 on the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the Department of Conservation. I would like to begin by expressing my sincerest appreciation to Hally Toia, our immediate past Chairperson, for his leadership and tireless efforts during his tenure.

Chairperson, Kevin Evans [Photo by Terry Conaghan]

Once again this has been an interesting and productive year for the Board. As in previous years, the Board looked to continue and enhance the traditions that have been established over the years, particularly its close working relationship with Northland Conservancy staff. Of particular note was the outstanding support provided to the Board by Jeannie Hogarth and passion and enthusiasm of Jeff Griggs, who continually challenges the Board to think outside the square. It is a tribute to them both that the Board continues to be well serviced. I would like to acknowledge the co-operative and positive manner in which the Northland Conservator, Chris Jenkins and his Team of staff, who have ably supported the Board throughout the year.



The regular Conservation Management Strategy ['CMS'] monitoring process is a key aspect of the Board's relationship and ensures that the Board remains focused and in touch with the relevant operational issues of the Conservancy. Our role as advocates of conservation has certainly been enhanced by the knowledge we have gained during CMS monitoring throughout the year. The Board's CMS field visits have provided for an invaluable insight into the great work that is being done for conservation throughout Northland by the Department, Landcare, Community Groups, local iwi and passionate individuals. They also highlight the issues and future challenges we need to help overcome.

The Board has had a very productive year with many achievements and highlights, due to having a fantastic team of Board members, who are both passionate and willing to work towards our conservation goals. We saw three new Board members join our Team and I would like to thank them for taking up the reins so quickly and really making a difference in their first year on the Board and hope they continue on with their good work.

As the Board meets the challenges of the forthcoming year, I would like to thank the Board members and Department of Conservation staff, who have helped in numerous ways to make it possible to achieve the Board's undertakings over the last year.

Sincerely

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

Kevin Evans
Chairperson
NORTHLAND CONSERVATION BOARD

Introduction

The Northland Conservation Board is one of fourteen bodies appointed nation wide by the Minister of Conservation under Section 6P of the Conservation Act 1987.

The functions of the Board are outlined in Section 6M and the powers that enable the Board to carry out those functions are under 6N of the Act.

The role of the Conservation Boards as laid out in the Conservation Act 1987, is as follows:

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

Section 6O of the Conservation Act requires that every Conservation Board 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 Northland Conservation Board submits its Annual Report for consideration.

The Board's main focus for 2005/06 was the Conservation Management Strategy monitoring process, commercial and rural sustainability in conservation and all things marine.

1 The Board's Area

The Northland Conservation Board's area of responsibility covers the same boundaries as the Department of Conservation's Northland Conservancy.

Northland is a long narrow peninsula, the features setting it apart from the rest of the country being its subtropical climate and 1,700km of indented and very scenic coastline. The Region covers a land area of 1.25 million hectares, supporting a population of just over 150,000.

Northland's economy is based on pastoral farming, forestry and horticulture, with well over half the region's land area devoted to beef and sheep farming. Northland is a popular holiday destination, making tourism a significant industry.

In ecological terms Northland is notable as home to two high profile species - the kauri and the kiwi. One of the most magnificent trees in the world, the Kauri, was prolific in the north but much of the region's Kauri forest is now gone. A number of relatively large kauri dominated tracts do remain, principally the Waipoua/Mataraua/Waima ecosystem and the Puketi/Omahuta/Maungataniwha complex but other individual forests as well. Between them these areas are dominant elements of the proposed Kauri National Park.

Kiwi too are an important ingredient that makes Northland special, but the North Island Brown is under threat and special effort is required to maintain several large viable populations in the region.

Notable are the harbours, headlands, islands and reserves of Northland's eastern seaboard, the islands that provide offshore sanctuary to the very best of New Zealand's natural treasures and the wild and rugged yet beautiful west coast.

However, Northland also has the dubious distinction of being the region with more native plants and animals at risk than anywhere else in the country. The arrival of new pests which is not an uncommon occurrence, pose great risks to our native biota.

In terms of history and culture, Northland was the cradle of both the Maori and European settlement of New Zealand. For both cultures the North has a long, fascinating and sometimes turbulent past and the region's historic sites and buildings still reflect this history.

The majority of historic places are of Maori origin, with many holding a deep spiritual significance amongst the region's iwi. On Crown administered land alone almost 3,000 historic places have been recorded, with an ongoing programme of systematic surveying being carried out to record new sites. The sites include fortified pa, traces of ancient gardens, coastal middens and sculptured, terraced hillsides. Around Kerikeri and Waitangi there are a number of significant historic buildings relating to early European settlement in the area.

The Conservancy is split into four Areas – Kaitaia, Bay of Islands (including Russell Field Centre), Kauri Coast (including Trounson Kauri Park Mainland Island) and Whangarei. Each area has its own Area Manager.



Membership

For most of the 2006/07 year, the Board worked under less than its full compliment, due to the pressure and commitment on several Members, which prevented them from attending Board meetings and engaging in various projects during the course of the year.

It was with regret that the following resignations were noted

- Mr Hugh Pollock
- Mrs Nora Rameka
- Mr Rick Stolwerk

All three Members had played a major part in Board business when they were able, but outside pressures forced them to reassess their priorities and this resulted in each advising the Minister of Conservation of their resignations.

Board Members were sad to farewell these three Members, but fully understood and supported their need to prioritise their time. All three were acknowledged for their time on the Board and were wished well for the future.

The Board welcomed the following new Members in 2006/07

- **Mike Horne**

General Manager, Fullers Bay of Islands – aim is to add value as a Board Member.

- **David Monro**

Retired Teacher – instrumental in the establishment of the Bream Head Restoration Trust – keen tramper – lover of all things outdoors and committed to conservation.

- **Richard Shepherd**

Currently working for the Department of Internal Affairs – interest in becoming a member of the Conservation Board was ignited by involvement with staff of the Department of Conservation on the Pukenui Forest project in Whangarei. Here to represent Maori.

Farewell to Chairperson

- Hally Toia, who had been at the helm of the Board for the past three years, stood down from the Chair at the 01 June 2007 Board meeting. Hally had indicated over the past six months that he would not be seeking re-nomination to the Board and would be standing down as Chair before his term ended on 31 August 2007.

The Board acknowledged the huge commitment of time, energy and expertise that Hally had brought to the Board as a Member and as Chair. His facilitation and interpersonal skills were excellent and Board Members unanimously passed a vote of thanks to Hally for his excellent service to the Board, conservation and Northland.

Hally is truly a 'Man for all Seasons'

- Kevin Evans was elected Chairperson of the Board on 01 June 2007.



[Photograph by Terry Conaghan]

Left to right: Mike Horne, Ian Faulkner, Jeroen Jongejans, Kevin Evans [Chair], Julie Gordon, David Monro, Richard Shepherd, John Kenderdine

Absent : Hally Toia

Induction Day

An Induction Day for past, present and new Board Members was held at the QEII Environment Education Centre at Aroha Island in Kerikeri.

The venue was the perfect setting for an informal day of *getting to know one another*; getting to know what it means to be a Board Member; learning from past and present Members and meeting Department of Conservation staff and learning where DOC and the Board relate and interact with one another.

All participants endorsed the value of the Induction Day and the choice of venue – a mix of a formal facility in idyllic natural environment setting by the sea.

▪ Board's Goals and Objectives

The Induction Day was also used to review the Board's Goals and Objectives, which proved to be a very stimulating and thought provoking exercise.

The Board reaffirmed its Goals and Objectives which are appended to this Report.

Conservation Board Meetings

The Northland Conservation Board held five[5] meetings during the reporting period. The venue for Board meetings is chosen to ensure as wide a coverage as possible is made of the region and to enable members of the public throughout Northland to have access to the Board.

1	18 August 2006	-	Northland Conservancy Office, Whangarei
2	20 October 2006	-	Dargaville Town Hall, Dargaville
3	08 December 2006	-	Northland Conservancy Office, Whangarei
4	23 March 2007	-	The Bridgehouse Lodge, Warkworth
5	01 June 2007	-	Northland Conservancy Office, Whangarei

Members Attendance

▪ Kevin Evans	Dargaville	5 from 5
▪ Ian Faulkner	Bay of Islands	5 from 5
▪ Julie Gordon	Waipu	5 from 5
▪ Mike Horne*	Bay of Islands	4 from 4
▪ Jeroen Jongejans	Whangarei	5 from 5
▪ John Kenderdine	Kaitaia	4 from 5
▪ David Monro*	Whangarei	4 from 4
▪ Richard Shepherd*	Whangarei	4 from 4
▪ Hally Toia	Whangarei	5 from 5

***commenced Membership 01 September 2006**

Conservation Management Strategy Implementation and Monitoring Field Inspections 2006/07

Members of the Northland Conservation Board made a conscious effort to undertake inspections of its mandate area aligned to the implementation and monitoring of the current Conservation Management Strategy [‘CMS’]. Members also looked for and took opportunities to join with our neighbouring Conservation Board [Auckland] to undertake a joint inspection of the Kaipara Harbour.

Kauri Coast [19 October 2007]



White Rata, Waipoua Forest [Photograph by David Monro]

▪ Weka Weka Valley

Tim Brandenburg, Area Manager, Kauri Coast and his Team hosted the Board during an inspection of key sites within the Area relating to Key Outputs in the Conservation Management Strategy.

A visit through the WekaWeka Valley was a highlight and a real eye opener to those Members who had never ventured this far into the West Coast of the Northland bushland before.

The WekaWeka Valley is a hidden treasure in terms of habitat and isolation. The population has dropped considerably over the past 10 years, as has its reputation for being an area renowned for illicit activities.

The Board was hosted during this part of the visit by a Member of the local Landcare Group, who outlined the projects already undertaken within the area. The positive impact this Group has had on the landscape and focus for the people of the area was obvious. From a spectacular vantage point the rehabilitation of habitat was noted and the plans the Landcare Group has for future enhancement of the area indicated that by the time the Board visited the area again, significant gains would be noted.

- **Arai te Uru –Omapere**



Stormy weather as Board departed from Omapere. [Photograph by David Monro]

The coastline of Omapere was a spectacular backdrop when the Board viewed the site of a proposed car park on land donated by local Kaumatua and landowner, John Klaricich. Mr Klaricich outlined the reason for making this donation and acknowledged the effort of the local community without whom the project would not have got off the ground. The need to provide a public facility, while at the same time protecting the conservation, cultural and historic values of the site, was highlighted as was the protection of wahi tapu and mitigating the impacts of tourism on the natural environment.

At Omapere, Shane Lloyd, proprietor of the Copthorne Omapere Tourist Hotel, met with the Board on the site of the proposed new Visitor Centre, which was at that time three parts way through construction. The embracing of cultural and historic natural features within the new facility and its influence on the exterior and landscape was also highlighted. The Board looked forward to returning to the area to view the finished facility.

- **“Footprints” Waipoua**

A highlight for the Board during its time at Omapere was a presentation given by representatives of a local eco-tourism group “Footprints Waipoua”. This group consisted of local Iwi who had come back to their turangawaewae with a vision to bring alive key cultural, historic and natural elements within Waipoua Forest that would leave visitors with a genuine connection for what they had experienced.

The initiative of these young men and their passion and commitment for the natural environment, married to their cultural heritage and history, greatly impressed the Board. It was exciting to see the innovative manner in which this Group was delivering the conservation message in an unforgettable experience.

The Board applauds such endeavours and was grateful for the opportunity to receive “a taste” of the experience being provided.

During the day in the Kauri Coast, Board Members were brought up to speed with ongoing management of Puketi/Omahuta Forests and saw first hand the upgraded tracks and walks associated with the area around the Big Trees, including Tane Mahuta.



The ‘Footprints Waipoua’ Team receiving a 2007 Conservation Award from Chris Jenkins, Northland Conservator
[Photograph by Angelika Cawte]

Kaipara Harbour Joint Inspection [22 March 2007]

A good turnout of Members from the Northland and Auckland Boards, together with key Department of Conservation [‘DOC’] staff spent a day on the Kaipara Harbour on 22 March 2007.

The focus of the day was to reinforce the close ties of both Boards and to build on joint relationships with local Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society representatives, local Iwi [Te Uri o Hau]. Both Boards were delighted to welcome on board Mr Kerry Marshall, Chairperson, NZ Conservation Authority.



Hoteo River, Kaipara Harbour [Photograph by David Monro]

During the course of the day a wide range of issues were covered including

- **Integrated Management Plan for the Kaipara Harbour**

Te Uri o Hau representative, Mihi Kapa- Watene and DOC Kauri Coast Area Manager, Tim Brandenburg gave a brief outline of the proposed Plan and work being carried out to finalise its content and develop an implementation strategy to put recommendations outlined in the Plan in place.

- **Review of the Conservation Management Strategy**

General discussion took place on the common threads binding both Boards that would need to be taken into account during the review of the Northland and Auckland Conservation Management Strategies. The opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues, as well as focusing on those relating to the Kaipara Harbour was welcomed and produced some very good results to be worked on during the review process.

- **Aquaculture Management Areas**

The issue of the impacts of Aquaculture Management Areas [AMAs] particularly relating to the Kaipara Harbour, were also explored. The need for both Boards to work collaboratively, where possible and practical, was reinforced.

- **Underwater Turbines**

The issue of harnessing energy from alternative sources was becoming more and more prevalent throughout the country. The Department of Conservation is required to bring to the Board details of all Concessions, Leases, Licences, Easements etc, for consideration and comment.

The establishment of wind farms in both Boards' areas was highlighted. In terms of the Kaipara Harbour, a project was being put together to install underwater turbines to harness the Harbour's torrent and turn it into an alternative energy source. Opportunity was taken to view potential sites for the turbines and all on Board had a chance to air their views on the positive and negative aspects of this type of project.

The need to address our "carbon footprints" was highlighted and consideration of finding a "middle ground" when considering all types of alternative energy sources was important to ensure that any proposal with the potential to reduce "carbon footprints" needed to be given a fair chance. However, by taking a more "holistic" approach did not mean compromising conservation or environment values. The need to involve the Iwi and take into account Maori values and concerns was a given.

This joint inspection was a highlight for the Board during 2006/07. It reinforced the value of meeting our colleagues "face to face" and a conscious effort to engage more closely in this type of forum was supported by both Boards as was the value of bringing together other organisations, groups, Iwi to join in these opportunities.



Sand patterns at Pouto Lighthouse, Kaipara Harbour [Photograph by David Monro]

Summary

While directing its focus for inspections on the implementation and monitoring of the current CMS, the Board welcomed the opportunity to broaden its connection with other groups, agencies, organisations, individuals etc, during the course of these visits.

The Board acknowledged the hospitality afforded it by DOC staff and appreciated the time, effort and commitment evident in every case. The commitment, enthusiasm and dedication of DOC staff continued to be demonstrated in all aspects of the Board's work during the year, none more so when undertaking inspections within the Conservancy.

The Board would like to thank the Conservator, Area Managers, Managers and staff of Northland Conservancy for their unfailing support to the Board during the course of inspections and in providing a wide range of issues and opportunities for the Board to view first hand.

Board Functions Under Section 6M of the Conservation Act

6M1 The functions of each Board shall be

- (c) *To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of Conservation Management Strategies and Conservation Management Plans for areas within the jurisdiction of the Board:*

Conservation Management Strategy Implementation & Monitoring

During the course of the year the Board was provided with presentation from DOC staff on all Key Outputs contained in the current CMS. Emphasis was on the implementation of the objections in the CMS and monitoring the results.

At each Board meeting during the year, each Key Output was addressed and staff responsible in both Area Offices and Conservancy Office provided the Board with details of how their particular Key Output responsibility had been implemented and monitoring of results undertaken.

The CMS is a key focus for the Board in terms of its mandate under the Conservation Act 1987. Board Members take this task seriously and every presentation was carefully scrutinized, challenged, applauded/criticised, where applicable.

The commitment of DOC staff was unquestioned and overall the Board was pleased with the progress made to date. Equally, where concerns were raised in terms of expectations not being met, Board Members vigorously challenged the reasons for this as well as taking the opportunity to reinforce the offer of support from Board Members to advocate for more resources where this was seen as a stumbling block to progress.

After each presentation the critique of the presentation was sought from a selected Board Member[s], which was circulated prior to and tabled at the next Board meeting. A copy of each Report was forwarded to the Conservator for consideration and comment, as applicable, and for particular noting when review of the CMS was taking place.

Conservation Management Strategy Review

Piet Nieuwland, Conservation Support Officer, Management Planning, provided the Board with regular updates during the year on progress towards the commencement of the review of the current Conservation Management Strategy for Northland.

In May 2007 the first steps were taken to commence the process and a series of hui are being held over the next six months to inform the public of Northland of the Review and the public consultation process that will be entered into as part of the review.

Great interest from the public is already being shown and the support of the Iwi of Northland is crucial. Unlike the first CMS, it is pleasing to note even at this early stage, that the public is more aware of what a CMS is, its function and the part that the community plays in its development.

At a meeting of the Board in May 2007, a Draft Communication Plan was presented, which outlined how the review of the CMS would be communicated to all communities in Northland. The important message to the public was to ask them “What they want” from a CMS, not how this was achieved. It was all about the places people live in and their input and outcomes.

Again, unlike the first CMS, technology has come a very long way and the current CMS and details about the Review are available on the DOC Website.

All Board Members are involved with the development of the CMS, particularly in their own locations i.e. where each Member lives. In this way Members act as a conduit to the community.

The Board acknowledges the work that went into developing the first CMS and would take on board the lessons learnt when progressing the review.

The Board also acknowledges the commitment and effort Piet Nieuwland has put into the CMS [the current and the review] and appreciates the information he continues to provide at each Board meeting.

The Board looks forward to taking part in the review process and the ultimate completion of the second CMS for Northland.

(d) To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General –

(ii) On any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the Board:

Natural Heritage

Along with the need to consider our “carbon footprints” in 2006/07 the Board continued its focus on “sustainability” and taking the initiative wherever possible to bring together individuals, agencies, local authorities and Central Government, to develop strategies for sustainable growth and development in Northland and beyond.

Pilot Marine Sustainability Workshop

Marine issues remain high on the agenda for the Northland Conservation Board. The Board was delighted with the establishment of two new Marine Reserves in the Whangarei Harbour during the year.

Marine sustainability is a key issue and one that requires lengthy and careful consideration in terms of how best to get the message across to as wide a cross section of the community as possible. The buy in from Iwi, tourism, aquaculture development, environmental agencies, local authorities, recreation and commercial fishers – all and everyone associated with marine protection and sustainability was crucial.

Initially, following on from the success of the Rural Sustainability Forum, a similar large scale Forum had been planned. However, given the nature of the issues surrounding all things marine and to ensure that the best possible foundation for a large Forum was laid, the Board decided to host a “Pilot Marine Sustainability Workshop”. The focus would be on placing before representative groups, organisations, individuals, Iwi, ideas and concepts for a major Forum – testing the waters – and coming up with a fully integrated approach to holding a major Forum. It was also acknowledged that the outcome from the Pilot could indicate that the time was not right to hold a major Forum.

A very successful “Pilot Marine Sustainability Workshop” was held on 19 June 2007 in Whangarei, attended by 45 representatives from a broad representation of interest groups, individuals and Iwi. To progress the results from the Workshop a core Group representing commercial and recreation fishing, tourism, ecological & environment interests, was established to collate the messages from the Workshop and develop a “Way forward”. The main message from the Pilot was not to lose momentum and for the core Group to network with all participants and interest groups.

Marine Protected Areas

The Board was pleased to see the establishment of two new Marine Reserves in Whangarei Harbour. However, the Board will continue to actively pursue the need to establish more Marine Reserves as well as other forms of marine protection.

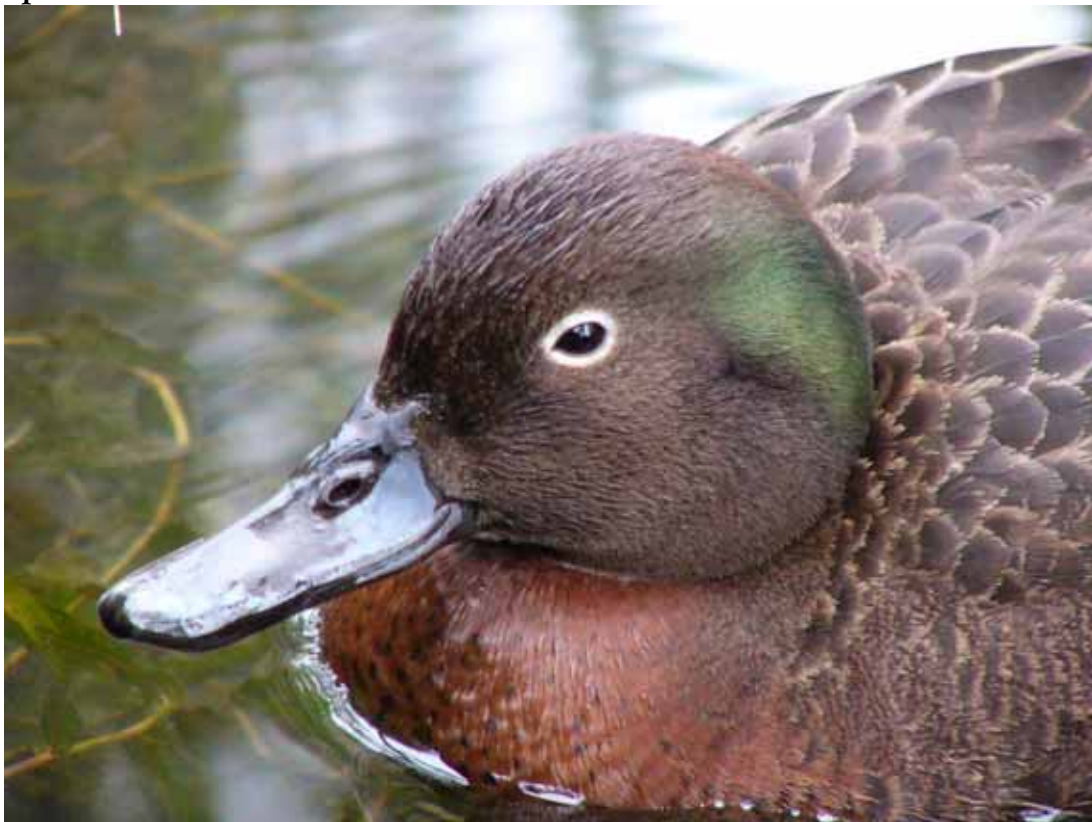
The Board and the Department continue in their commitment to working together to ensure that Northland’s unique coastline and ecosystems are protected.

Poor Knights Islands Nature Reserve & Poor Knights Islands Marine Reserve

The Board, lead by Board Member Jeroen Jongejans, supported an application to have the Poor Knights Islands Marine Reserve declared a World Heritage Site. The Board is aware of the criteria under which such sites are endorsed, but strongly believes that the Poor Knights Islands Marine Reserve meets all the criteria. The Board awaits with interest the outcome from this application.

Jeroen Jongejans continues to advocate for a Marine Park in Northland and the Board sees merit in this approach and will take the opportunity to foster this idea as appropriate and timely.

Species



Glorious Pateke/Brown Teal [Photograph by Alyssa Saltan, Orana Wildlife Park, Christchurch]

The Board has been involved in the consideration of the review of Recovery Plans for Kiwi and Brown Teal during the year. Both species are pertinent to Northland and both are under risk from predation including domestic animals.

Board Members continue to advocate vigorously for stricter enforcement of current dog control laws throughout Northland and to focus on education of dog owners on the impacts their pets have on wildlife – Kiwi in particular.

The Board acknowledges the predator control work the Department is undertaking throughout the Conservancy and continues to advocate for the appropriate level of resources to keep the momentum up long term.

Review of Level of Protection for some New Zealand Wildlife

The Board was pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the Review and **Liaison**

The mix of current Board Members is providing good opportunities to liaise with a wide cross section of groups/agencies within Northland – individually and collectively.

Historic Heritage

- **Kerikeri Basin Sustainable Development Plan**

The Conservator Northland continued to update the Board on progress with the development, finalisation and adoption of the Kerikeri Basin Sustainable Development Plan.

The Kerikeri Basin is a site worthy of World Heritage Status and the Board is keenly observing progress with the Plan. The Board is pleased to see the good mix of agencies involved on the Kerikeri Basin Steering Committee, which augers well for the future of the site. The Board is also pleased at progress being made with the Bypass which will see the cessation of vehicular traffic through the Kerikeri Basin and the removal of the current over bridge to be replaced by a footbridge at an approved alternative site.

6N[f] *To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matters within the jurisdiction of the Board.*

- **Northland Fish and Game Council**

To establish a closer link with the Northland Fish and Game Council, the Board appointed Ian Faulkner as its representative at the Northland Fish and Game Council monthly meetings. It is hoped that having this direct link on a regular basis, the Board and the Council will be able to identify issues and opportunities where both can work together and support one another.

General Liaison

The Board continued to actively engage with as wide a range of community groups, organisations, agencies, individuals etc in 2006/07. The Rural Sustainability Forum and Pilot Marine Sustainability Workshop drew together a wide cross section of Northland's local government, tourism, ecological and conservation groups, commercial and recreational users of Northland's natural resources, which has provided an excellent foundation to move forward in a collaborative way.

Individual Board Members continue to advocate conservation issues in their respective areas and this requirement is enshrined in the Board's "Goals and Objectives".

Key Liaison

▪ **NZ Conservation Authority**

As the "umbrella" agency for all Conservation Boards, the Northland Conservation Board takes every opportunity to liaise with the NZ Conservation Authority. The highlight for the year was when the Chairperson, Kerry Marshall was able to join both the Northland and Auckland Boards on an inspection of the Kaipara Harbour. This was followed the next day by his attendance at a meeting of the Northland Conservation Board in Warkworth. It was good to hear, first hand, issues being dealt with by the Authority and to have a chance to ask questions and to look at potential for further closer interaction with Authority Members.

The need for closer liaison between Northland and the NZCA was highlighted and the NZCA Chair gave an assurance that a designated representative from the Authority would be identified before the end of the year.

▪ **Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society**

During the year representatives from the RFBPS continued to attend Board meetings on a regular basis. The opportunity for them to speak during the Public Forum section of meetings has been taken up with gusto and when pertinent issues and concerns have been raised they have been followed through either by the Board or the Department.

The Board greatly appreciates the interest and support from the Society and wishes to note that the Society is well served by its Northland representatives.

▪ **Iwi**

Northland has arguably the most diverse Iwi spread in the Country. The Board is always seeking closer liaison with all the Iwi in Northland and is fortunate to have several Board Members with affiliation to a large number of Iwi in the Region. The Board hopes to visit as many Marae in Northland as possible in the 2007/08 year. However, it was acknowledged that an invitation from the relevant Iwi was required and key Board Members would be involved in preparing the ground for this to happen.

Te Pukenga Atawhai Wananga

Board Members were provided with the opportunity to attend a Te Pukenga Atawhai Wananga in Dargaville in February 2007.

Those Board Members who attended found the experience “powerful” and “emotional” and all Board Members were encouraged to participate in future Wananga that were available.

The Pukenga Atawhai programme was a tool to assist the Department to try and understand what Maori is about and to assist people through cultural safety to prevent people going out and [unintentionally] offending because they were not aware of the protocols. The benefits to Department of Conservation staff who had undertaken this training was proving its worth in a big way.

The Board acknowledged how lucky it was to have good representation on the Board to help guide Members through cultural issues and occasions.

Te Roroa Settlement

The settlement of the Te Roroa Treaty Claims has seen a major shift in terms of dispersal of land currently managed by the Department on the West Coast of the Northland. Since the Settlement, the Department is developing strategies for the handing over of the current Kauri Coast Area Office, Visitor Centre and facilities at Waipoua to Te Roroa. This action will see the Kauri Coast Area Office move to Dargaville.

The Board has been kept apprised of the outcomes from the Settlement and has offered its support to the Department and Iwi to ensure a smooth transition. The giving effect to the Settlement is still very much in its early stages and the Board will be watching developments closely.

Te Runanga o Te Rarawa

The Board continues to build on the good relationship it has with Te Runanga o Te Rarawa and looks forward to visiting the Iwi in Kaitaia before the end of 2007. Again, the Board is fortunate to have Members with close links to this Iwi, which ensures that opportunities to meet and/or take opportunities to work together are constantly being considered.

Ngatiwai Trust Board

The Board continues to follow the progress being made on the judicial review that Ngatiwai initiated in 2006 of the Department’s processes and protocols with the Ngatiwai Trust Board. The Board acknowledges that these sensitive issues take time to resolve and appreciates that the Conservator keeps the Board updated on the status of this process.

Once the dust settles, the Board looks forward to establishing closer links with the Ngatiwai Trust Board and, again, having Board Members with affiliation to this Iwi will go a long way to move this opportunity along.

Te Uri o Hau

The Board was delighted that representatives from Te Uri o Hau were able to join the Northland and Auckland Boards for the Kaipara Harbour inspection. The ability to discuss issues of mutual concern and/or interest “on site” was a bonus. Te Uri o Hau works closely with the Department in issues relating to the Kaipara Harbour and Pouto. The Integrated Management Plan for the Kaipara is an example of this collaboration.

The Board looks forward to further contact with Te Uri o Hau during the year and in particular being kept up to speed with the completion and implementation of the Integrated Management Plan for the Kaipara.

▪ **Department of Conservation**

The Board takes this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous support and assistance the Conservator and his staff have provided during the year. The CMS implementation and monitoring presentations by staff at Board meetings has been, without exception, of a very high standard. Staff at all levels have demonstrated their passion, commitment, knowledge and experience that left the Board in no doubt that they were not working for DOC “for the money”.

The regular reports provided for each Board Meeting by the Conservator and the Conservation Support Manager, are greatly appreciated, as is the full and frank answers received to questions raised.

The Board will continue to take every opportunity to work alongside the Conservator and his Team and, where possible and applicable, go into bat on issues where the Board can advocate and the Department cannot. Equally, the Board will continue to monitor the work of the Department to ensure that every opportunity to enhance and protect conservation land, marine habitats, ecosystems, species, cultural and historic heritage is taken.

▪ **Public Forum**

Board meetings would not be the same if it wasn’t for the attendance and input from members of the public who regularly attend. As noted previously, representation from the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society is appreciated, as is that of representatives of Te Runanga A Iwi O Ngati Kahu together with all the other cross section of the community who take the time to attend Board meetings. Special mention must be made of Vic Holloway from the Far North who has rarely missed a meeting of the Board, even those outside the Kaitaia Area.

It is this commitment and interest of the public that reinforces the importance of remembering the roles and responsibilities of Conservation Boards as the conduit between the Department and the public.

Wherever the Board meets, opportunity is taken to invite representatives from the resident regional and local authority, Iwi, interest groups etc to join the Board and to take the opportunity to speak during the Public Forum section of the meeting.

The Board welcomed representation from the Northland Regional Council, Far North District Council and Kaipara District Council during 2006/07. This practice will continue for all future meetings and where an inspection day is held prior to the meeting, invitations are also sent for representatives to join the Board for the day and dinner in the evening.

These opportunities outside the formal Board meeting process continue to provide a forum for full and frank discussion as well as building good relationships across a wide sector of the Northland community.

CONSERVATION LAND USE

The Department continues to involve the Board in reviewing major concessions for use of Department of Conservation administered land in the region. Some key concessions brought before the Board in 2006/07 included –

- Meridian Energy – the proposal was for 18 turbines in two stages to be constructed on Department of Conservation administered land.
- Zane Grey Resort Ltd – an easement for the purpose of discharge of treated waste water to land.
- Kerikeri Airport – proposed land exchange.

Mighty River Power – Coal Fired Power Station Proposal

The Mighty River Power proposal caused major concern throughout the Region in terms of its impact on the environment.

The Board acknowledged its role as the public watchdog for conservation and the environment in the region. It was also acknowledged that even if the Board did not have a mandate to approve or deny an application, it had a moral obligation to draw attention to the conservation issues involved.

For a variety of reasons Mighty River Power decided to scrap the proposal early in 2007.

Cape Reinga

The Board wrote to the Minister of Conservation endorsing the application by the Department for funding for roading/car parking infrastructure at Cape Reinga.

The Board was delighted to learn that not only was the Department's application for funding approved but, in the 2007 Budget, additional funds were allocated for the establishment of a Visitor Centre at Cape Reinga.

The Board looks forward to watching progress with both developments over the coming year.

SUBMISSIONS

The Board made submission on a Resource Consent Application and one Plan Change with the Northland Regional Council -

1 Crest Energy Ltd – Resource Consent application for a Marine Turbine Generated project in the Kaipara Harbour

While the Board supports, in principle, the concept of sustainable and renewable alternative energy generation, including tidal energy, it had wide ranging concerns about Crest Energy's application, not the least the lack of device specific information.

2 Plan Change 4 [Policy & Regulatory Regime for Aquaculture Management Areas]

David Monro led the Board's submission on this proposed Plan Change resulting in a comprehensive submission being lodged with the Northland Regional Council covering a wide range of issues contained in the document.

The Board's submission was based on its responsibility to look after our ecological environment for its own sake – not just for what it gives us – and to mitigate our impact upon it.

The Board was concerned about the capacity of consenting authorities who will sit in judgement on applications to set up AMAs to make independent and non-biased decisions.

The Board also saw the privatisation of the ocean as morally indefensible. Our oceans are the last great commons available to everyone.

The Board was also concerned, given the poor track record thus far in terms of the policing of marine farms in Northland, when a marine farm collapses, how did the Council intend to enforce the required clean up. This was a major concern for the Board and the submission asked that this needed to be clearly defined and considered as part of the Proposal.

The outcome of the Board's submission is still awaited.

Walkways Act

6M[e] *To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on proposals for new walkways in any area within the jurisdiction of the Board.*

▪ Mangawhai Walkway

Shaughan Anderson, Programme Manager Visitor Assets/Historic, Whangarei Area presented a case to the Board seeking its support for the uplifting of the existing Mangawhai Walkway easement replacing it with an easement over a new walkway to be constructed.

The request was to rationalise an existing arrangement that had arisen over many years and would see a situation that existed formalised and endorsed.

The Board was happy to support the actions of the Department, acknowledging the "history" of the Walkway and endorsing action that would set the record straight and be a mutually beneficial outcome to the landowner and the users of the Walkway.

Comment from Members – Highlights for the year under review

Board Members were asked to identify the *highs* and *lows* for them for the year. The following is a collation of the highlights submitted by Members :-

- Meeting with the Auckland Board and the trip on the Kaipara. It was great to put 'faces to the names' and get to know people while at the same time absorbing what the Kaipara harbour is and how large it is.
- Induction Day - Once again a highlight meeting the new members in a wonderful relaxed setting while at the same being reminded of our Goals and Objectives.
- All Board trips are valuable to the members. Our visit to the Hokianga gave the Board a unique insight about the endeavours of a community to embrace their environment and to contribute both to the community as well as conservation.

The Waipoua Forrest with its magnificent Kauri trees is now part of a tourism venture that runs from the Copthorne Hotel at Omapere on the Hokinga Harbour. “Footprints Waipoua” a guided tour through the Forest, either day or night time, with a Maori Guide who interprets the Forest through Maori legends enhanced by songs and with genuine reverence, is a unique and never to be forgotten experience. It is an example of how local people have found an innovative way to develop a sustainable venture that offers options for visitors, and employment options for local people in an area that has long suffered isolation and high unemployment levels.

As well as the Waipoua Forest experience, this Group has added “Crossings Hokianga” – the story of Kupe and the Hokianga. Both initiatives complementing each other and, again providing an opportunity for the community and individuals to enhance conservation.

Investment in a car park, infrastructure and an interpretative Visitor Centre, currently underway at Omapere, will also add value to the area for locals and visitors.

For the Board to experience these initiatives has been a major highlight as a member of the Northland Conservation Board

Summary of the 2006/07 Year

The 2006/07 year has been another good one for the Board. Opportunities were provided by the Board for local authorities, agencies, community groups, environment groups/organisations, tourism groups etc to come together to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern and to develop collaborative ways in which all can work together to achieve the common goal.

What has come through in all of this is that when looked at collectively all groups/agencies generally want the same positive outcomes for conservation and the environment. Breaking down barriers [perceived or real] is the key to bringing everyone together to achieve a better environment in Northland and to protect and enhance the wonderful natural treasures/taonga the region holds.

The year was certainly one where Board Members *walked the talk* in a positive, non-confrontational way. It was a year for “standing up and be counted”, and the Board did not shirk from this challenge. The sound foundations laid from the Rural and Marine Sustainability projects auger well for the future.

The global issue of climate change and the need for everyone to take ownership of the issue and to make a change, will continue to be an important concern for the Board to take a lead on.

At the end of the day it is each one of us as individuals who need to take stock of our “carbon footprints” and what we do about it as individuals that will be the start of

turning the tide. All individual Board Members are committed to playing their part in achieving a better environment to leave for future generations.

The enthusiasm, commitment and willingness of each Board Member to contribute to discussions, play their part in the community and actively advocate on conservation and environment issues in Northland is to be acknowledged and has set the scene for an even better year in 2007/08.

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

Kevin Evans
BOARD CHAIRPERSON