

**TARANAKI / WHANGANUI CONSERVATION BOARD**  
**TE TAI HAU-Ā-URU**

*Private Bag 3016*  
*WANGANUI*  
*Telephone: (06) 3488475*  
*Facsimile: (06) 3488095*  
*e-mail: kohara@doc.govt*

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**ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED**  
**30 JUNE 2007**

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Section 6 (O) of the  
Conservation Act 1987

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## 1. Introduction to Board Members

The following members were appointed by the Minister of Conservation to the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board.

Chairperson: **Karen Schumacher, *Appointed 2002*** -Taranaki

Deputy Chairperson: **Jenny Steven, *Appointed 2004*** –Taranaki

Board Members: **Ann Abernethy, *Appointed 2003*** -Taihape  
**Barney Haami, *Appointed 1998*** - Wanganui  
**Liz Tennet, *Appointed 2006*** - Wanganui  
**Jonathan Procter, *Appointed 2003*** - Palmerston North  
**Christine Cheyne, *Appointed 2004*** - Palmerston North  
**Huirangi Waikerepuru, *Reappointed 2005*** – Taranaki  
**Darryn Ratana, *Appointed 2005*** - Wanganui  
**Dave Digby, *Appointed May 2006*** - Taranaki  
**Ian Bell, *Appointed 2005*** – Wanganui  
**Rachel Steele, *Appointed 2005*** – Taumarunui

**The board did not co-opt any members during the report period.**

## 2. Functions and Powers of the Board

The Board has the responsibility for shaping conservation management through advising the department on the development of the Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) for the Wanganui Conservancy and Conservation Management Plans (CMPs) for public conservation lands whereas the Department of Conservation is responsible for the day to day management of these areas. The board also acts as an advocate for the protection of conservation values on land not administered by the department and it can appear at any public forum, such as planning hearings in this role.

The functions and powers of the board are formally laid out in Sections 6M & 6N of the Conservation Act 1987 (**refer to Appendix A**) and reported on in detail further in this report.

## 3. Board District

- 3.1** The Board's district covers the department's Wanganui Conservancy. It encompasses some 20,000 square km of land extending from the Mokau River in the north to the Manawatu River in the south and extending inland to include the western Ruahine Ranges, north to the edge of the Kaimanawa Forest Park, across SH49 to Raetihi and northwest to Taumarunui (**refer to map at Appendix B**).

3.2	<u>Within the Board's district are:</u>	
	National Parks (Egmont & Whanganui)	108,401 ha
	Conservation Parks – Ruahine Forest Park (western side) and Sugar Loaf Islands Conservation Park	54,936 ha
	Sanctuaries	2,357 ha
	Conservation Areas	162,241 ha
	Marginal Strips	958 ha
	Scenic Reserves	23,244 ha
	Historic Reserves	62 ha
	Recreation Reserves	1,688 ha
	Local Purpose Reserves	591 ha
	Other Reserves	880 ha
	Wildlife Reserves	181 ha
	Wildlife Refuges	254 ha
	Marine Reserves	1,844 ha
	<b>Total Area (hectares)</b>	<b>357,640 (approx.)</b>

3.3 The total area under the board's jurisdiction is approx 357,640 hectares (plus 3 Walkways gazetted under the NZ Walkways Act)

3.4 The protected lands (as detailed above) within the board district represent approximately 18% of the total area of the district.

#### **4. Board Meetings and Inspections**

4.1 The Board has adopted a policy of alternating Board meetings between Wanganui and other locations throughout the Board district to give local people the opportunity to attend meetings and raise any issues. There is time set aside at the start of each board meeting for a public forum. The policy allows an opportunity for board members to become familiar with local conservation issues. The relevant DOC Area Manager provides board members with a briefing on work undertaken as well as any current issues in the area where the Board meeting is held. This enables the Board to gain a greater understanding of the department's work in the field and an opportunity to meet field staff.

4.2 The Board scheduled six meetings for the report period, however only five meetings were held. The December 2006 meeting was cancelled due to the Wanganui Conservancy Office restructure. Two of the meetings were two day meetings as an inspection followed the next day - they were as follows;

##### **2006**

Friday 18 August: Carramar Motor Inn, Palmerston North

Friday 13 October: Department of Conservation, Wanganui

Friday 8 December: Meeting and Inspection - Cancelled

## 2007

Friday 9 February: Antonio Mews Motel, Stratford (*inspection next day*)

Friday 13 April: Himatangi Country Estate, Foxton (*inspection next day*)

Friday 22 June: Department of Conservation, Wanganui

- 4.3 The Board regards inspections as an important part of exercising its functions because they provide opportunities to discuss management issues on site and share ideas with Department staff. The Board normally makes three inspections during the summer period however due to the cancellation of the December meeting they only undertook two inspections during this report period.

## 2007

Saturday 10 February: The Board visited the historic York Road Loop Track, viewing recent work completed on this site. Then they traveled to East Egmont and walked the barrier free Poteama Track. Finally they visited Dawson Falls Visitor Centre and viewed the pouwhenua, historic power station and road end developments. The Board was accompanied by the Board servicing officer and Stratford Area Office staff.



*Powhenua – Dawson Falls Visitor Centre – Egmont National Park*

Saturday 14 April

The Board planned to visit Turitea Reserve where a proposed wind farm may be built. The Board was to be accompanied by DOC staff from Palmerston North and staff from the Palmerston North City Council. However upon arrival at the road leading up to the reserve, logging was taking place and they could not venture up the road as logging trucks were using the road. The inspection was abandoned.



*Turitea Reserve Skyline*

4.4 Attendance levels by board members were as follows:

Meetings for this period were held in August, October of 2006 and then February, April and June of 2007. New member(s) who took up their placement at the beginning of October 2006 could only attend a maximum of three meetings – held in February, April and June of 2007.

- \* It is noted that Board member Christine Cheyne's intention was to attend all five meetings but could only attend three for the following reasons: August 06 meeting was held at the Carramar Inn, Palmerston North. The conference room was on the second floor. Christine arrived for the meeting however previously sustained leg injuries prevented her access to the second floor. The date of the June 07 meeting was changed at the last minute due to a lack of a quorum – Christine was unavailable to attend on the rescheduled date.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Number of Meetings attended (5 held)</i>	<i>Number of Inspections Attended (2 held)</i>
Ann Abernethy	5	2
Jonathan Procter	5	2
Barney Haami	5	2
Karen Schumacher	5	2
Jenny Steven	4	1
Christine Cheyne	3	2
Rachel Steele	3	2
Darryn Ratana	5	2
Dave Digby	3	1
Ian Bell	5	2
Huirangi Waikerepuru	2	0
Liz Tennet <sup>1</sup>	3	2

<sup>1</sup> New member who could only attend a maximum of three meetings for the period

## **5. Board Functions Under Section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987**

### **5.1 *6M(1)(a) To recommend the approval by the Conservation Authority of conservation management strategies, and the review and amendment of such strategies under the relevant enactments.***

At the Board's October 2006 meeting the Department put forward a case that they would not be able to prepare the new CMS by April 2007. They were seeking the Board's support in an application to the Minister to obtain an extension of time for the preparation of the CMS. In November 2006 the Board gave the Department a letter of support stating that they recognised the Department would not be in a position to have the CMS completed on time. The Minister has granted an extension until April 2009.

As Bay of Plenty is one of the three conservancies that are leading the CMS review process, in December 2006 members of this Board's CMS sub-committee attended the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board meeting to view a CMS presentation by the Department. From this, the sub-committee members gained an understanding of the process, viewed the template that is to be used and obtained an insight as to how Boards could be involved in the process.

Initial planning for the CMS has been undertaken by the Department through the preparation of a business case and consultation plan. At the Board's June 2007 meeting the Department gave a presentation on Te Hikoi Whakamua (the process to develop the new Strategic Direction; the presentation also covered the revised Statement of Intent and the development of the new CMS). They also held a workshop with the Board to introduce and provide an overview of the CMS review process and to establish how the Board wants to be involved.

The Department has set up three Hikoi/focus groups (natural heritage, recreation and historic), with a community relations and Maori staff member representative on each of these groups to ensure that all views are captured. Board members will be invited to attend these meetings for their input. The Department will ensure a report from each of the Hikoi group meetings is discussed at the next planned Board meeting.

**5.2 *6M(1)(b) To approve conservation management plans, and the review and amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments.***

In accordance with the statutory requirements, the review process for the Whanganui National Park Management Plan formally commenced on 28 July 2003 and a sub-committee of the Board was established to report to the Board on the review.

The Board has a statutory role in the review process. The Board recognises the importance for members to become involved in the review as it progresses.

The Draft Management Plan was publicly notified on 15 July 2006 and submissions closed on 29 September 2006. Submission hearings were held on the 7 and 8 November 2006 at Wanganui Conservancy Office. Board members – Karen Schumacher and Jon Procter - were part of the hearing committee. The hearings were followed by a full day debrief held on 9 November where the hearing panel made recommendations on amendments to the draft management plan.

The Board sub-committee was invited to attend a meeting on the 8 December to go through the draft departmental responses to submissions. Karen Schumacher and Ian Bell attended this meeting on behalf of the sub-committee.

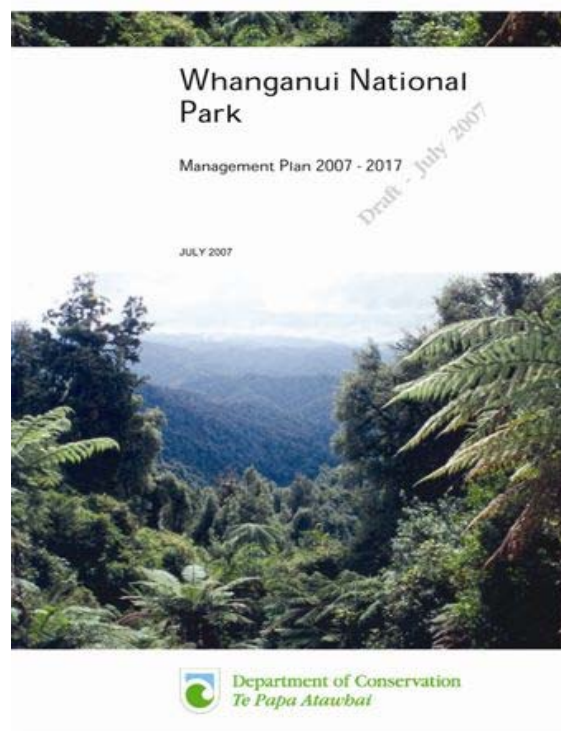
At its June 2007 meeting the Department advised the Board that the revised plan (minus the Treaty of Waitangi section) had been submitted to the Department's solicitor and DOC Head Office. The solicitor did not request any amendments and Head Office requested a few minor amendments. The changes requested by Head Office did not change the intent of the document or policy direction. The Department informed the Board that they were still working with tangata whenua to prepare some information regarding the "ecological, historical and cultural importance of Whanganui National Park to Whanganui Iwi".

At this meeting the Department presented this updated timeline:

July	Additional Treaty information received and added to plan
July	Additional information to Conservancy solicitor and Head Office
July/August	Final changes as required
August	Revised management plan referred to Conservation Board

At the conclusion of the update from the Department the Board Chairperson requested that the sub-committee be sent the current draft of the plan now (to eliminate time delays) so that they can again review and suggest any amendments to be made before it is tabled to all Board members at the Board's August meeting. The Board will then send a coordinated response to the Department listing suggested changes. It is envisioned that the Department will invite the sub-committee to a meeting to discuss these requested changes. If there are any changes relating to policy direction these will need to be approved by Head Office.

The revised plan is expected to be given to NZCA for their approval in December 2007.



**5.3 6M(1)(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.**

In November 2004, the Board, in conjunction with the Department, developed a new template for monitoring implementation of the CMS. This required the Department to prepare a report focusing on one or two different ecological districts covered by the CMS for each board meeting. The template outlines the relevant performance indicator, the monitoring method, a report on progress and now shows the update information in sequence, year by year. From this the Board can determine, analyse and discuss with the Department the reasons for change (if any).



The report covers the following key issues for each ecological district; land management, Kaupapa Atawhai, native species protection, threats (possums, goats, deer, domestic stock, weeds), historic places, recreation, commercial use and freshwater.

During the report period, the Board considered the following monitoring reports.

- August 2006 – Matemateaonga and North Taranaki Ecological Districts
- October 2006 – Egmont Ecological District
- December & February - no reports were generated by the Department due to the Wanganui Conservancy Office restructure
- April 2007 – Foxton Ecological District
- June 2007– Rangitikei and Moawhango Ecological Districts

The Board received the above reports and considerable discussion took place at the meetings on items of interest.

The Board also receives a report prepared by the Area Manager covering the area where the meeting is held. The Area Manager is invited to attend the meeting and speak to his report.

When applicable, departmental staff can be invited to attend Board meetings to speak to routine reports such as CMS monitoring reports for ecological districts, Management Planning and RMA activity reports.

Other staff are invited to give presentations to the Board. The Board received the following presentations for this reporting period;

August 2006

- Issues surrounding the predicted Ruapehu Lahar
- Explanation of the Recreational Opportunities Spectrum (ROS) system and how it is used as a recreation planning tool.
- Outcomes of Wanganui Conservancy Business Planning Priorities for 2005/06.
- DOC's new process for dealing with concession applications.

October 2006

- Wanganui Conservancy Business Planning Priorities for 2006/07
- Threatened Coastal Plants on the Wanganui Coastline
- Forestry Permits in the Wanganui Conservancy
- The historic Ahu Ahu Ohu and the request for a concession

February 2007

- Overview and Status of (ENP) Egmont National Park Management Plan
- ENP Historical & Recreational Sites – significance, scale and nature of sites
- ENP Biodiversity – status and proposed direction
- Working with communities – implementation and achievements for Stratford Area Office.

April 2007

- The Conservancy Pou Kura Taio – Charles Mareikura was invited to the meeting to undertake waiata practice with the Board in preparation for the Board's visit to Owae Marae.

June 2007

- Te Hikoi Whakamua process and CMS Workshop

The Board would like to thank the relevant staff for the time in preparing and presenting these very informative presentations.

- 5.4 6M(1)(d) To advise the Conservation Authority or the Director-General:**
- (i) On any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance; and*
  - (ii) On any other conservation matter relating to any area within the jurisdiction of the board.*

**6M(1)(d)(i)**

**March 2005**

In March 2005 the Board made a strong and comprehensive submission to the Department on the sites to be included on the World Heritage Tentative List. The Board nominated Egmont National Park/Mount Taranaki. They believed that this area has natural and cultural significance which fulfill the required criteria.

Finally, in late June 2007 the Board received notice that they had not been successful with their submission. It has been noted that although Egmont National Park/Mt Taranaki did not make it this time, the tentative list is continually evolving and is revised at frequent intervals. This means that although it may not have met the criteria at this current stage it may be included on the list in the future.

**October 2006**

**Ahu Ahu Ohu 2003 Ltd – Application for Concession**

At its meeting in October 2006, the Department briefed the Board on the above application for a concession and the historical information pertaining to this area and presented each member with a preliminary report on proceedings. The Board understands that currently the Department is undertaking consultation with Tangata Whenua regarding this application and that the Department will keep the Board informed as it progresses.

**June 2007**

At its meeting in June 2007 the Board received a briefing from the Whanganui Area Manager – Nic Peet about the down sizing of the popular Summer Nature Programme run by the Whanganui Area Office. The Board resolved to write a letter to the Department asking it to review its decision to cut back the programme and asked if DOC

could investigate a range of options to ensure this popular summer range of events would continue to be available to the public. This letter has been sent to the Department in late June.

**6M(1)(d)(ii)**

**November 2006**

The Board made a submission to the Department on the Public Discussion Document - Review of Level of Protection for Some New Zealand Wildlife. The Board applauded the Department in conducting the review and recognizing that the changing environment requires an update on policy. The Board welcomes the proposal to protect our native invertebrate species, and feels the international market for all species may be a bigger problem than realized, to the detriment of our native species.

**November 2006**

The Board made a submission to the Department on the Review of the (NZCPS) New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement – Issues and Options. In its submission the Board noted the need for the revised NZCPS to endorse a strong role for regional councils in exercising leadership and being more proactive in providing protection for unique coastal landforms and ecosystems in their plans and policy statements; strongly supported recognition of Maori interest in biodiversity; the development of ‘objectives’ which should clearly outline the conservation value of the coastal environment; that access may need to be restricted in order to achieve conservation goals and the need for greater across Government commitment to develop guidance on managing development in coastal environments.

**May 2007**

The Board has taken a keen interest in kiwi and their demise for a number of years, having submitted on previous recovery plans and having engaged the department, the Minister and the NZCA in discussion about the plight of the kiwi.

In May of this year the Board submitted on the Department’s Draft Kiwi Recovery Plan 2006-2016. In their submission they noted that they continue to have grave concerns that only 5% of the current kiwi range is treated to effectively maintain or enhance kiwi. The plan does not give guidance or mention expanding the management of kiwi over the remaining 95% of the existing kiwi range. The Board noted that public awareness over the last 10 years has seen a tremendous growth in community-based kiwi conservation activity. The continued expansion of kiwi management nationally will be hindered by a limited funding pool in support of community activity, by the limited capacity within DOC to respond to community expectations, and the lack of skill within DOC to respond appropriately.



**North Island Brown Kiwi – Photo by Rod Morris**

**5.5 *6M(1)(e) To advise the Conservation Authority and the Director-General on proposals for new walkways in any area within the jurisdiction of the board***

Proposed Aramoho to Brunswick (Westmere) Walkway

Over the last four years the Board has been in discussion with the Department, Rotary, Wanganui District Council and Horsley Christie lawyers in relation to this proposed walkway. In February 2007 the first stage of the walkway was officially opened for public access. Board members Ian Bell and Liz Tennet attended the opening on behalf of the Board.

**5.6 *6M(1)(f) To liaise with any fish and game council on matters within the jurisdiction of the board.***

Liaison with the local Fish and Game Councils has ceased due to the vacancy of the Wanganui Conservancy TSO Freshwater position. In the past this person attended local F & G meetings and in turn would report to the Board Secretary if there was information that needed to be passed to the Board. The Board believes that an appointment to this vacancy has been made and that the previous reporting structure will once again take place.

***6M(1)(g) To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act.***

In accordance with the Ngati Tama Claim Settlement Act 2003 the Board appointed Board member Karen Schumacher as its nominee for the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) established under the Act to advise on the management of Whitecliffs and other nearby conservation areas (see Section 6N(2)(b) for more information on meetings held by the JAC).

***6M(1)(h) Every board shall have such other functions as are conferred on it by or under this Act or any other Act.***

No other functions were conferred on the Board under this provision.

## 6. Powers of Boards Under Section 6N of the Conservation Act

*6N(1) Every board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions.*

*6N(2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1) of this section, each board may:*

- (a) Advocate its interest at any public forum or in any statutory planning process; and*
- (b) Appoint committees of members and other suitable persons, and delegate to them functions and powers;*
- (c) The power conferred by subsection 2(a) of this section shall include the right to appear before courts and tribunals in New Zealand and be heard on matters affecting or relating to the board's functions.*

### **6N(2)(a)**

**The Board considers it has an important role to play in:**

- Information sharing with iwi authorities
- Promoting public understanding of and fostering support for the protection of the natural and historic heritage of New Zealand.
- Raising public awareness of conservation boards and their roles, through meeting members of the public and representatives from other agencies and groups.
- Making submissions on issues relevant to the Board

### **Treaty/Iwi Relationships**

Board agendas and minutes are sent to iwi regularly and they are advised of meeting dates and venues in their area and forwarded reports or presentations which they may have an interest in.

Four Treaty settlements have been signed within the area covered by the Board and three of these claims have settlement legislation enacted.

### **Board Advocacy**

The Board has been involved in providing comments on discussion documents from other Government organisations and statutory plans developed by territorial authorities and regional councils. During the report period, the board made submission/comments on the following documents:

#### **Horizons Regional Council 'One Plan'**

Over this and the last reporting period the Board has been following the progress of the One Plan (the new combined Regional Policy Statement, Regional Plan and Regional Coastal Plan for the Horizons/Manawatu-Wanganui Region). In July 2006 the Board wrote to Horizons thanking them for Version 4 of the plan. The Board explained that they had contacted other conservancies that fall within the boundaries of Horizons Regional Council and that this Board is recognised as the leader amongst the other Boards. In

August 2006 and then again in April 2007 representatives from Horizons attended Board meetings presenting updates to the Board.

On the 31 May 07 the Proposed One Plan was released for public submissions. Board members Ian Bell, Christine Cheyne and Jon Proctor along with departmental staff attended a workshop held by Horizons on the 18 June 2007. The primary purposes of the workshop were to enable organisations to clarify the rationale/approach/methodology used in formulating the plan and to get a shared understanding of issues relating to DOC's interests so that DOC and the Board can be as clear and focussed as possible in their submission (in support or opposition).

Submissions on the Proposed One Plan close on the 31 August 2007 and the Board will be making a submission on the plan.

August 2006 – Taranaki Regional Council

Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy for Taranaki: Plants

September 2006 – Palmerston North City Council

Submission on the proposed addition to the Turitea Reserve Purposes - Section 24A Reserves Act. Darryn Ratana and Karen Schumacher spoke to this submission at the hearing stage.

September 2006 – Taranaki Regional Council

Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy for Taranaki: Animals

October 2006 – Ministry of Fisheries

Consultation on the Tapuae Marine Reserve Application

November 2006 – Taranaki Regional Council

Taranaki Regional Council's Proposed Regional Policy Statement

February 2007 – Environmental Risk Management Authority

Continued use of 1080 and continuation of current approaches to the management of 1080 use.

May 2007 – Horizons Regional Council

Horizons Regional Council's Draft Annual Plan 2007-2008

May 2007 – Department of Conservation

National Kiwi Recovery Plan

***6N(2)(b)***

**Board sub-committees**

At its March 2007 meeting, the Board appointed the following sub-committees:

- Marine  
Darryn Ratana, Jenny Steven, Jon Proctor and Huirangi Waikerepuru

- Recreation/Walkways  
Christine Cheyne, Ann Abernethy, Rachel Steele, Dave Digby and Liz Tennet
- CMS Monitoring  
Karen Schumacher, Jenny Steven, Rachel Steele and Barney Haami
- Whanganui National Park Management Plan Review  
Karen Schumacher, Jenny Steven, Ian Bell, Rachel Steele and Jon Procter
- Statutory Planning  
Christine Cheyne, Karen Schumacher and Ian Bell
- Biodiversity  
Ian Bell, Jenny Steven, Darryn Ratana and Rachel Steele
- Section 4  
Jenny Steven, Huirangi Waikerepuru, Jonathan Procter, Barney Haami and Liz Tennet

These sub-committees were active in the co-ordination and drafting of submissions.

The only formal meeting(s) were held by the Whanganui National Park Management Plan sub-committee and the members of the CMS Monitoring sub-committee when they traveled to a (BOP) Bay of Plenty Conservation Board meeting to be present for a CMS presentation given by the Management Planner for the BOP Conservancy.

#### **6N(2)(b)**

##### **Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)**

In accordance with the Ngati Tama Claim Settlement Act 2003, the Board appointed Board Chairperson, Karen Schumacher as its nominee for the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) established under the Act to advise on the management of Whitecliffs and other nearby conservation areas

The JAC has held three formal meetings during the year. Matters discussed were the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan for Whitecliffs and Parininihi Marine Reserve, culprits caught in the reserve, pest control work to be undertaken and discussion of DOC managed estate within the rohe of Ngati Tama. At their January 2007 meeting the JAC requested the Department to consider undertaking their aerial 1080 drop to coincide with Ngati Tama's planned pest control work in the Whitecliffs area.

In September 2006, Ngati Tama, Karen Schumacher and Wildland Consultants held a separate meeting to discuss the preparation of the Conservation Management Plan for Whitecliffs

With Parininihi Marine Reserve being gazetted on the 14 September 2006, this changed the status of the JAC. Once the marine reserve was gazetted, the JAC became a sub-committee of the Board.

Due to this event the Board at its October 2006 meeting passed the following resolution.

*That the Board, in line with the Ngati Tama Claim Settlement Act 2003, section 46 (a and b), appoints the joint advisory committee as a committee of the Board under section 6N (2)(b) on the Conservation Act 1987 and delegates to the committee the power to approve conservation management plans for the Parininihi Marine Reserve under the Conservation Act and under the Marine Reserves Act 1971 and any review or amendment of any of those plans.*

**7. Board Responsibilities Under Other Sections of the Conservation Act**

There were no Board activities under these sections.

**8. Board Functions Under the National Parks Act**

This section has been addressed earlier in the report under “Board Functions under Section 6M of the Conservation Act.”

**9. Board Responsibilities Under the Walkways Act**

This section has been addressed earlier in the report under Section 6M (1)(e)

**10. Board Advocacy and Liaison**

In September 2006, the Chairperson attended the New Zealand Recreation Summit Mountains to the Sea – Strategies for the future.

The Board has appreciated receiving the NZCA Chairperson’s report of Authority meetings. The report is sent out to Board members and discussed at the Board’s next meeting. Minutes of the Authority meetings are circulated to members. Barbara Arnold of Palmerston North is the NZCA Taranaki/Whanganui liaison member and she has provided an update report at every Board meeting. When possible, Barbara attends the Board meetings to speak to her reports and the Board would like to acknowledge that they appreciate her valuable input.

The Board is very grateful to Catherine Tudhope, the Manager of the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) for keeping regular contact with the Board.

The Board has continued liaison with adjoining Conservation Boards for the most part by way of exchange of minutes.



Board members throughout the report period liaised with a number of individuals, groups and organisations. This liaison was seen as a very important way of staying in touch with the public. Board members were given the opportunity to report back at each board meeting.

Liaison included:

Taranaki Tree Trust - Karen Schumacher  
East Taranaki Environment Trust – Karen Schumacher  
Taranaki Farm Forestry Assoc. – Karen Schumacher  
Waitara Womens Welfare League– Karen Schumacher  
Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust – Jenny Steven  
Taranaki Kiwi Trust – Jenny Steven  
Kaimanawa Wild Horse Advisory Group – Ann Abernethy  
Rangitikei Forest and Bird – Ann Abernethy  
Rangitikei Environmental Group – Ann Abernethy  
Friends of Mt Stewart – Ann Abernethy  
Taihape Deerstalkers Club – Ann Abernethy  
Tamaupoko Link (Chairperson) - Barney Haami  
Tupoho Whanau Trust – Barney Haami  
Tamahaki Inc. – Barney Haami  
Ngati Rangi Trust – Barney Haami  
Hinengakau Development Trust – Barney Haami  
Whanganui River Maori Trust Board – Barney Haami  
Wanganui District Council (various committees) – Barney Haami  
Environmental Network Manawatu – Christine Cheyne  
Manawatu Forest and Bird – Christine Cheyne  
Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club – Christine Cheyne  
Manawatu Te Araroa Trust – Christine Cheyne  
Nga Rauru Iwi Authority – Darryn Ratana  
Whanganui Regional Museum Botanical Group – Ian Bell  
Cullinane College, Wanganui – Ian Bell  
Ornithological Society – Ian Bell  
Friends of Gordon Park – Ian Bell  
Rangitaane Iwi Authority – Jon Procter  
Egmont Volcanic Advisory Group – Jon Procter  
South Taranaki Forest & Bird – Dave Digby  
Stratford Tramping Club – Dave Digby  
Bushy Park Trust – Liz Tennet

At the Board's June 2007 meeting they made update changes to its current Strategic Plan. (see **appendix C**).

Members of the public were encouraged to raise issues with the Board (via letters and public forums) during the report period. These issues have included:

- Central Taranaki Tourism Network
- Promotion of Tourism in Egmont National Park
- DOC's undertaking of work in Egmont National Park
- Webcam proposal for Mt Taranaki

- Forest & Bird Presentation – Turitea Reserve
- New Zealand Deer Stalkers Assoc. – Heritage Lodge
- Whanganui Summer Nature Programme

These issues were considered by the Board on the basis of reports from the department (where necessary) and feedback given to members of the public who raised the issues.

## **11. Chairperson's Comment**

During the year we welcomed Liz Tennet to the Board table. With the rest of the Board remaining the same we found a good level of continuity. This was a benefit as Board members were particularly understanding and supportive when meeting and agendas needed changing, during the conservancy office restructure. . I would like to thank the Board members for their patience during this time.

The Board welcomed the new Conservator Damian Coutts at its April meeting. Damian took the opportunity to share some of his thoughts and aspirations for the conservancy. The Board was appreciative of his openness. Going forward the Department and the Board will be working on the CMS review. A number of Board members visited Bay of Plenty Conservation Board where time was taken to go through how they are implementing their CMS review. The Board was appreciative of the time given by everyone to give us a full briefing. We look forward to working closely with Damian and his team during our CMS review. It will be a big commitment of time for all.

During February the Board was given an in-depth update on the Egmont National Park Plan. This is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, so it was timely to evaluate it. Robert Bennett and his team gave superb presentations on all aspects. It was encouraging to see that the plan is standing the test of time, is still relevant, and to see that over 73% of action points have either been achieved or are in progress now. We were impressed with the scope of the work and the dedication of the team who work in the Park. It was encouraging to see that those involved with developing the management plan had got it right.

The Whanganui National Park Plan still plagues us. The Department managed to get the draft plan out for submissions. The submission number was relatively small. The Board was involved in the hearing process, and with subsequent meetings with the Department to discuss outstanding issues. Unfortunately the Plan still remains outstanding. Delays have been experienced waiting for templates from Head Office. The Department has also gone back to iwi for additional information. It is hoped the plan will be handed to the Board later this year.

The Parininihi Marine Reserve was gazetted during the year. The Joint Advisory Committee formally became a sub-committee of the Board. The Board has a representative on the JAC, and the minutes are included in the Board paperwork. The JAC had a busy year, developing and approving a conservation management plan for the Whitecliff area. There have been challenges and the Department does need to review how it will manages areas and relationships when conservation managed

estates are handed over as part of Treaty Settlements. The resourcing of these areas and neighbouring DOC land for a healthy relationship with iwi is an area which needs improving.

The lack of any real action for kiwi continues to disappoint the Board. We note the draft for the National Kiwi Plan has been out during the year. It was of concern that there is no priority for large scale pest operations within kiwi habitat areas. The Minister has commented that the department now has the knowledge to support the theory about these types of operations, yet the National Plan is silent on it. It is very disheartening to see that only 5% of kiwi habitat in New Zealand receives protection. Within this Board's conservancy large kiwi population still exists, yet a lack of resources will be their demise. The Board is encouraged that at a conservancy level there is a commitment to develop the management plan for the taxa.

The Board has seen a noticeable increase in effort by the Department to develop closer working relationships with iwi. It has been an area where we have had some concern, with Section 4 reporting to the Board also been lacking. We are encouraged to see the importance being placed in this area.

During the year I attended the Recreation Summit which the Department held in Wellington. It was pleasing to see most of the Boards had representation at this important event. Attendees were diverse and some of the discussions were challenging. It is promising that a number of changes as a result of the Summit have occurred. For everyone attending it is always pleasing to see we did not waste our time.

The Board members have continued to freely give their time in preparing submissions to central, regional and local council plans. For this Board we have had a particular interest in Horizons ONE plan. This is taking a lot of time but as it will have a significant impact on our area, we feel it is important to be involved. The Whanganui National Park Management Plan sub-committee have also given a lot of their time, with meetings, hearings and reading vast amounts of material. I would like to acknowledge the hours of their own time given by members.

To the Department's staff and all other people who have given written and verbal reports during the year, thank you for your support and guidance. A special thanks to Kelley our Board Support Officer. You have always been a huge support to the Board and to me with all my queries and those of the Board.

Karen Schumacher  
Chairperson  
August 2007

**Footnote:** Please note that the opinions expressed under the Chairperson's Comment in this report are those of the Chairperson and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of other Board members.

***The Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board adopted this report in August 2007***