

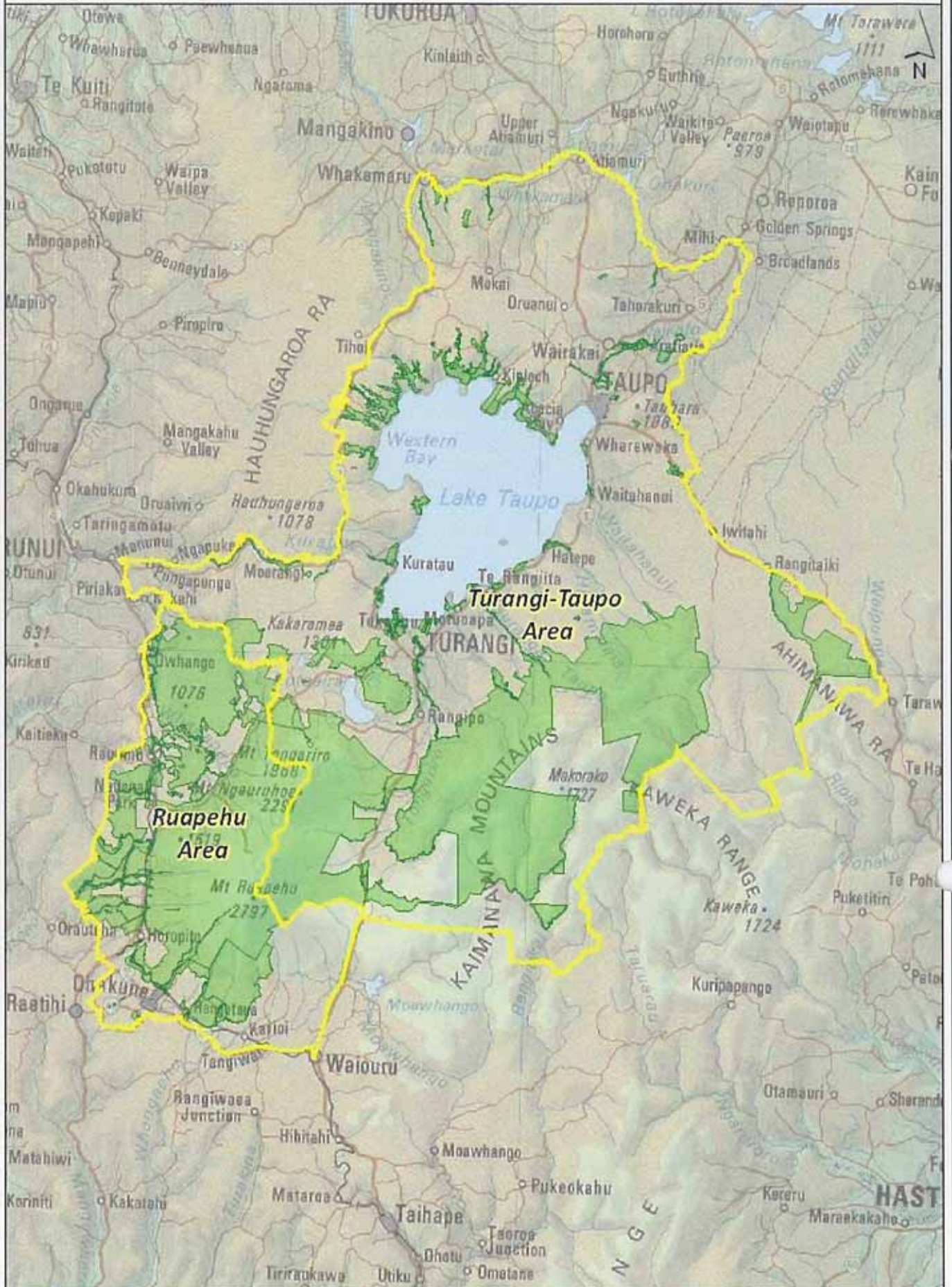
Tongariro / Taupo Conservation Board

Te Poari Papa Atawhai
o Tongariro/Taupo

Annual Report July 2007 - June 2008



Tongariro Taupo Conservancy Boundaries and Conservation Land



- Tongariro Taupo Conservancy and Area Boundaries
- Public Conservation Land in Tongariro Taupo Conservancy



Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board

Te Poari Papa Atawhai o Tongariro/Taupo

Annual Report

1 July 2007 - 30 June 2008

Presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority
pursuant to Section 60 of the Conservation Act 1987

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TONGARIRO
CONSERVATION BOARD

Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri
o Te Tongariro

Annual Report
1 July 2007 - 30 June 2008

Presented in the form of a report to the Conservation Board for 2007

Cover Photo: Conservation Board chair Sarah Gibb doubles as a tour guide for members on a trip to Hapuawhenua Viaduct

Photo: Judy Reid

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ISSN 1176-6735

Back Cover: Rainbow over Ketetahi springs

Photo: Jimmy Johnson

INTRODUCTION

Functions

The Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board is an independent advisory body, appointed by the Minister of Conservation. The Board has a number of statutory roles, which include:

- the development of the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) and the recommendation of this to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) for approval
- advising the Department of Conservation and the NZCA on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice
- monitoring the implementation of the CMS
- the approval of Conservation Management Plans
- the recommendation of National Park Management Plans to the NZCA for approval
- advising the Department of Conservation and NZCA on conservation matters, proposed changes to the status of land with national and international significance, and new walkways,
- liaising with the Fish and Game Council, and carrying out other powers delegated to them by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act or any other Act.

Area of Responsibility

The Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy covers 780,000 hectares, of which approximately 217,000 hectares is administered by the Department of Conservation. It is also the area of responsibility for the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board (refer to the Map). The conservancy is unique in that it has no ocean coastline and includes the Lake Taupo sport fishery.

The Conservancy is dominated by the volcanic landscape of Tongariro National Park, the beech forest and tussock ranges of Kaimanawa Forest Park and by New Zealand's largest lake, Lake Taupo. Tongariro, Erua and Rangataua Conservation Areas to the east and south of the national park, play a valuable part in terms of their ecological features and recreational opportunities.

Tangata whenua - Ngati Tuwharetoa, Ngati Rangi and Ngati Tahu Iwi - have long had a special relationship and history with the mountains, lakes, waterways and geothermal features of this area. Tongariro, New Zealand's first national park, grew from the Ngati Tuwharetoa gift of its mountains to the nation in 1887. The park received World Heritage status in 1988 for natural landscape values and in 1993 for its cultural landscape values, recognising the special significance of the mountains to Tuwharetoa and Wanganui iwi.

The Conservancy contains many rare, uncommon, vulnerable or threatened native plants, birds, communities and ecosystems. Managing these in light of weeds, predators, fires and other threats remains an ongoing challenge.

Lake Taupo and its tributaries provide opportunities for world-class fishing and numerous other forms of water recreation. Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy manages the sport fishery in partnership with Ngati Tuwharetoa, as prescribed by the Maori Land Amendment and Maori Land Claims Adjustment Act 1926.

The landscape of the area is unique in New Zealand and large numbers of national and international visitors come here for sightseeing and recreation. Tongariro National Park is the most visited national park in New Zealand and numbers are expected to rise further. In contrast, the surrounding mountain ranges retain a feeling of remoteness and isolation which is increasingly sought by recreationists - New Zealanders in particular.

A large number of issues occur on these lands which are of interest to the Board. These include:

- management of plant and animal species such as the blue duck (whio), kiwi (western North Island Brown), and 2-3 species of mistletoe.
- management of recreational facilities such as huts and tracks
- management of historic sites
- concession activities, including those relating to recreation and tourism, grazing, research, and leases.

The Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board has a responsibility to the people of the Tongariro/Taupo district, and the wider New Zealand population, to ensure these lands and the biodiversity which they contain are protected and enhanced.



Photo: Kim
Alexander-Turia

Membership

The names, locations of the members of the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board, and attendance at meetings from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 were as follows: (Please note that there was no meeting held in August 2007 due to lack of a quorum. A decision was made at the December 2007 meeting that this board would only have 5 meetings a year, so the February meeting was cancelled.)



Back Row from Left: Betsan Martin, Judy Reid, Ngaire George, Les Molloy, Sue Carson, Brian Robinson, John Nankervis (NZCA Liason) Rob Lester
 Front Row from Left: Sarah Gibb, Maree Gurney, Tumu te Heuheu
 Absent: Alex Wilson, Che Wilson

Sue Carson#	Rotorua	4
Ngaire George	Rotorua	2
Sarah Gibb	Taupo	4
Maree Gurney#	Marton	4
Rob Lester	Turangi	4
Betsan Martin	Wellington/Te Rangiita	2
Les Molloy	Wellington	3
Richard Pirere*	Ohakune	0
Judy Reid	Wellington	4
Brian Robinson	Taupo	4
Tumu te Heuheu	Taumarunui	1
Alex Wilson#	Rotorua	2
Che Wilson#	Whanganui	2

*Members whose terms expired at 31 August 2007

#Members who were newly appointed 1 September 2007

Conservation Board Meetings

The Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board held four formal meetings, including two field inspections, during the reporting period.

17 August 2007

This Board meeting was cancelled due to the lack of a quorum.

18 October 2007

A Board strategic planning meeting was held to discuss the following:

- Statutory Functions of the Board
- Departments Strategic Directions and Priorities
- Review the Boards Strategic Plan
- Agenda
- CMS Review procedures

19 October 2007

This meeting was held at the Grand Chateau, at Whakapapa Village, Mount Ruapehu. The Board had a presentation on the Lake Taupo Protection Trust from the Chairman, John Kneebone. The Board also received a presentation and had a good discussion on the Whakapapa Village Site and Landscape Plan. The election for Board Chair was also on the agenda and Sarah Gibb was voted in as Chair.

7 December 2007

This was a regular meeting held in Turangi. Many Board members had attended the Conservation Awards the night before. It was exciting to see Alex Wilson a Board member receive an award (Alex was unable to attend the awards himself but his award was accepted on his behalf by Tumu te Heuheu, see photo opposite). The Board received a CMS monitoring report presentation on the Control of Plant Pests. The Board also had discussions on the CMS Monitoring procedure and the boards draft strategic document.



3 April 2008

Board members enjoying the surroundings on the Old Coach Road

The Board had a joint workshop with department staff on recreation issues. In the afternoon the Board had a field trip out to the Old Coach Road track. This field trip started with a presentation from Dave Scott of Ohakune 2000 on the joint community/department work that has been done on the Old Coach Road track. The Board members then proceeded to walk the track all the way to the Hapuawhenua Viaduct.

Photo:
Judy Reid



4 April 2008

This was a regular meeting held at the Serac Alpine Club rooms in Ohakune. The Board had a CMS monitoring report/presentation on Kaimanawa-Moawhango and also received a report on the Additions to and Classification of Conservation Land. The Board also heard about a hui, hosted by the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board, for neighbouring conservation boards, that was attended by Sue Carson.

13 June 2008

The Board met in Turangi down at the National Trout Centre. The Board received a CMS monitoring presentation on Control of Animal Pests. The Board also received and signed off on the terms of reference for the subcommittees. Rob Lester gave the board members a fabulous tour of the trout centre during the lunch break.

STATUTORY FUNCTIONS – CONSERVATION ACT

Conservation Management Strategy

The Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Management Strategy was approved in May 2002 and has a lifetime of ten years.

Early this year the Tongariro Taupo Conservation Board finished its first 3-year round of monitoring all the topics in the CMS. The Board felt that at this important juncture the timing was right to initiate a review of the effectiveness of CMS monitoring. The suitability of the procedures used for CMS monitoring was discussed at a Strategic Planning meeting in October, and the CMS monitoring committee met with DOC staff in May for the purpose of developing improved procedures for CMS monitoring. Terms of reference for the subcommittee were written, including guidelines for enhanced CMS monitoring. The new guidelines are now being trialed, which the Board believes will result in more effective CMS monitoring.

The Board was briefed on four of the 20 sections of the CMS. The sections covered were:

- **Control of Plant Pests**
The Board commented that the department is to be commended on its achievements in this area. DOC provided strategic and operational guidelines that have captured the efforts and funding of other organizations and greatly enhanced conservation. It is an approach that should be continued in the area of weed control, as well as extended to other objectives, as the approach effectively expands the resources available for conservation.
- **Additions to and Classification of Conservation Land**
The Boards response is yet to come.
- **Kaimanawa-Moawhango**
The Boards response is yet to come.
- **Control of Animal Pests**
The Boards response is yet to come.

Change of status or classification

There has been no progress on the addition of Rangataua Forest to the Tongariro National Park or the gazettal of Tongariro Forest as a conservation park. These areas are currently subject to a Treaty of Waitangi claim.

The gazettal of the proposed scenic reserve at Huka Falls is currently on hold due to outstanding Treaty issues.

Advice on Other Conservation Matters

The Board was consulted by or gave advice to the Department and NZCA on the following:

Concessions

The Board continued to give advice to the Department on a number of concession applications that were forwarded to the Board provided approval criteria mechanisms were met. The department continued to provide a summary of concessions currently being processed at Board meetings.



Les Molloy,
Sue Carson and
Betsan Martin
at the start of
the Old Coach Road

Photo: Judy Reid

The concessions considered by the Board during this report period include the following:

Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre

This application was for a 15 year guiding licence. Due to the elapsed since the Board was last consulted on this application, in 1999, the department invited the Board to consider the areas under application and provide comments. The comments made by the Board outlined that it is difficult for Board members to consult on something that offers nothing to measure against, other than their own personal experience of the area and activities. The Board also had concerns with guiding on the Tongariro Crossing, caving at Okupata Caves and off track camping. The Board recommended the approval of this concession and the activities for 15 years (excluding the Tongariro Crossing) on the basis that locations are reviewed every 5 years and can be added or removed as appropriate.

Taupo Fun Limited

This application was for a 5 year guiding permit for the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. The Board commented that private land owner consent would be required before the Board could make any comments on this application.

Liaison with Fish and Game Council

An Eastern Fish and Game Council representative continues to be informed of the Board's work through agenda papers and minutes.

Powers of Boards

Conservation Advocacy

When appropriate the Board has become involved in advocating for conservation mainly through submissions on resource consents, or through regional and district plans.

The Boards Statutory Planning subcommittee identifies those consents with likely significant impacts on conservation values and then makes a decision on whether or not to include a submission.

The Department kept the Board regularly informed about planning issues through regular reports at Board meetings.

Hapuawhenua Viaduct

Photo: Judy Reid



In order to formalise and clarify our involvement in this area under the Conservation Act the subcommittee created formal terms of reference that were adopted by the Board. It is clear that Boards have an advocacy function and, being less constrained by boundaries and management functions may communicate more widely and advocate for conservation more holistically.

Our submissions relate to conservation values on both public and private land such as the protection of: indigenous flora and fauna; landscape, cultural and historic values; water quality and environmental degradation. The sub-committee must, in consultation with the Conservator, identify the conservation outcomes being sought and whether they are of strategic importance for conservation goals within the area. Where there are financial implications in the advocacy process such as travel and time costs and liability from court cases the subcommittee must have full approval from the Board and the Conservator to determine if cost can be met before proceeding.

Current DOC policy on Board liability is not sufficiently developed to give a clear direction. This situation and budget constraints currently exclude the board from the Environment (and other) Court proceedings and supporting parties at such hearings beyond initial submissions.

Therefore, we have not been able to proceed beyond our original submission on the proposed development adjacent to the DOC Whakaipo Bay Scenic Reserve (Lakeview Ventures), but were able to submit against the proposed Sade Developments site which is surrounded by the Whakaroa Point Recreation Reserve, Whakaipo Bay Scenic Reserve and Whakaipo Bay Recreation Reserve.

Again, the reasons for the opposition were: adverse cumulative effects that would endanger the existing landscape and amenity values and rural character of the area. The Whakaipo Bay Recreation Reserve and Whakaroa Point are valued for their outstanding landscape and vegetation attributes and setting in the rural environment. The focus on this area has led to DOC developing a landscape plan and updating the planting plan for the Whakaipo Bay Reserve. The public have been very supportive of this plan and the advocacy work we have conducted.

Appointment of Committees

The following Board subcommittees functioned from 1 July 2007. After the appointment of new Board members in October 2007, membership of the committees was revised and approved at the October 2007 meeting. Members whose term expired at 31 August 2007 are marked with an *. Members who were newly appointed 1 September 2007 are marked with an #.

Concessions

Sarah Gibb (facilitator), Maree Gurney#, Richard Pirere*, Ngaire George, Sue Carson#, Che Wilson#.

Volcanic Hazards

Brian Robinson (facilitator), Rob Lester, Richard Pirere*, Betsan Martin, Sue Carson#, Che Wilson#, Alex Wilson.

Management Planning and Policy

Les Molloy (facilitator), Maree Gurney#, Betsan Martin, Rob Lester.

Statutory Planning

Brian Robinson (facilitator), Betsan Martin, Ngaire George, Judy Reid.

CMS Monitoring

Sue Carson (facilitator), Les Molloy, Brian Robinson.

Recreation and Historic

Maree Gurney (facilitator), Les Molloy, Rob Lester, Judy Reid.

Tangata Whenua

Che Wilson# (facilitator), Ngaire George, Betsan Martin, Rob Lester, Maree Gurney#, Sue Carson#, Alex Wilson.



Sue Carson inspecting the trout at the National Trout Centre

Photo: Sarah Gibb

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE CONSERVATION ACT

Co-opting Members of the Board

No members were co-opted on to the Board this year.

BOARD FUNCTIONS UNDER THE NATIONAL PARKS ACT

The Tongariro National Park Management Plan was signed off on 12 October 2006 and has a life of 10 years.

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER OTHER ACTS

Walkways Act 1990

No actions were taken by the Board under the New Zealand Walkways Act 1990.

Reserves Act 1977

The Board responded to all concession applications, where they involved reserves, in terms of the Reserves Act 1977.

LIAISON

All Board members receive the minutes of the New Zealand Conservation Authority meetings. Through the year contact has been maintained with NZCA liaison member John Nankervis.

Agendas and minutes from neighbouring conservation Boards are provided to individual liaison members who raise items of relevance and occasionally attend other Boards' meetings.

The Board continues to liaise with numerous organisations including:

Bike Taupo;
Eastern Regional Fish & Game Council;
Environment Waikato;
Farm Environment Award Trust;
Federated Mountain Clubs;
Genesis;
Lakes and Waterways Action Group;
Lake Taupo Development Co;
Mighty River Power;
Ngati Hikairo ki Tongariro Trust;
Ngati Rangi Trust;
NZ Forest Managers;
Ohakune 2000;
Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society;
Ruapehu Alpine Lifts;
Ruapehu District Council;
Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association;
Taupo District Council;
Taupo-nui-a-Tia 2020;
Taupo-nui-a-Tia Management Board;
The Grand Chateau;
Tongariro National Trout Centre Trust;
Tongariro Natural History Society;
Tongariro River Advocates Inc.; and
Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board.

Board Members Che Wilson and Brian Robinson listening to a presentation from Dave Scott of Ohakune 2000 on the work they have done on the Old Coach Road project.

Photo: Judy Reid



The Board's 2007/2008 Financial Year

Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board 2007/2008 Expenditure

RESOURCE	EXPENDITURE
Board member fees	8,665
Postage/Freight & Courier	322
Phones/toll/faxes	973
Domestic Travel - Other Cost	9,192
Office Supplies	1,329
Professional Fees	240
Printing and Publishing	1,085
Catering & Entertainment	5,200
Ex-Gratia / Koha	0
Computer Internet and Network Costs	202
Education Costs	1,179
TOTAL	28,387

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

I took some time to read previous chair's reports before writing this one, and it has highlighted that our current Board is in a good state and working well with DOC staff to monitor the implementation of our CMS. Other conservancies are currently in the process of drafting their new plans but ours is not due until 2010. This gives us an opportunity to review DOC's implementation and respond in such a way that it raises questions and ideas for the next process.

At the 2007 Conservation Awards on 6 December it was great to see one of our Board members, Alex Wilson, receive a Conservation Award for his contribution to the Conservation Board and as Chair for 5 years. We are fortunate to still have his experience and knowledge on the board.

The Board is overseeing the implementation of the Tongariro National Park Management Plan. For example; the board had an opportunity to comment on the Whakapapa Village Site and Landscape Plan.

The Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan was signed off in November. This is the last management plan for a forest park in New Zealand but we were pleased to go through the process as the community were well involved in the consultation. An example of the outcome is the formation of the Kaimanawa Hunters Advisory Group.

We farewelled Richard Pirere in October 2007. He had been on the Board for 9 years and I would like to thank him for his contribution.

Board members would like to acknowledge the Conservancy staff who continued to provide the Board with a high standard of timely and professional advice. Special thanks are due to Jo Hood (Board Support Officer), Paul Green (Conservator), Nic Etheridge (Conservation Support Manager), Jim Maniapoto (Pou Koura Taio), Jasmine Hessel (Planner) and the Tongariro/Taupo Area, Ruapehu Area and Conservation Support Team for their input and guidance during the year.

I would like to thank the Board members for the contribution they have made to ongoing conservation issues which the Board has dealt with. The Board has continued to contribute positively to Tongariro/Taupo communities through quality advocacy. This has resulted from the use of the skills and knowledge of members, their willingness to engage when necessary, in robust debate and their appreciation of the value of our special landscapes and ecosystems.

I would also like to thank John Nankervis for his support throughout the year as our NZCA liaison person.

It has been a busy year as the Board has managed its responsibilities and priorities. A number of issues have been worked through in the last year and the Board looks forward to the challenges of the coming year.



Sarah Gibb
Chairperson

Adoption of Report

Moved:

That the Tongariro/Taupo Conservation Board adopt the annual report for 2007/2008 and forward it to the New Zealand Conservation Authority by 31 August 2008, as required under section 60 of the Conservation Act 1987.

Sarah Gibb/Les Molloy
Carried
15 August 2008