

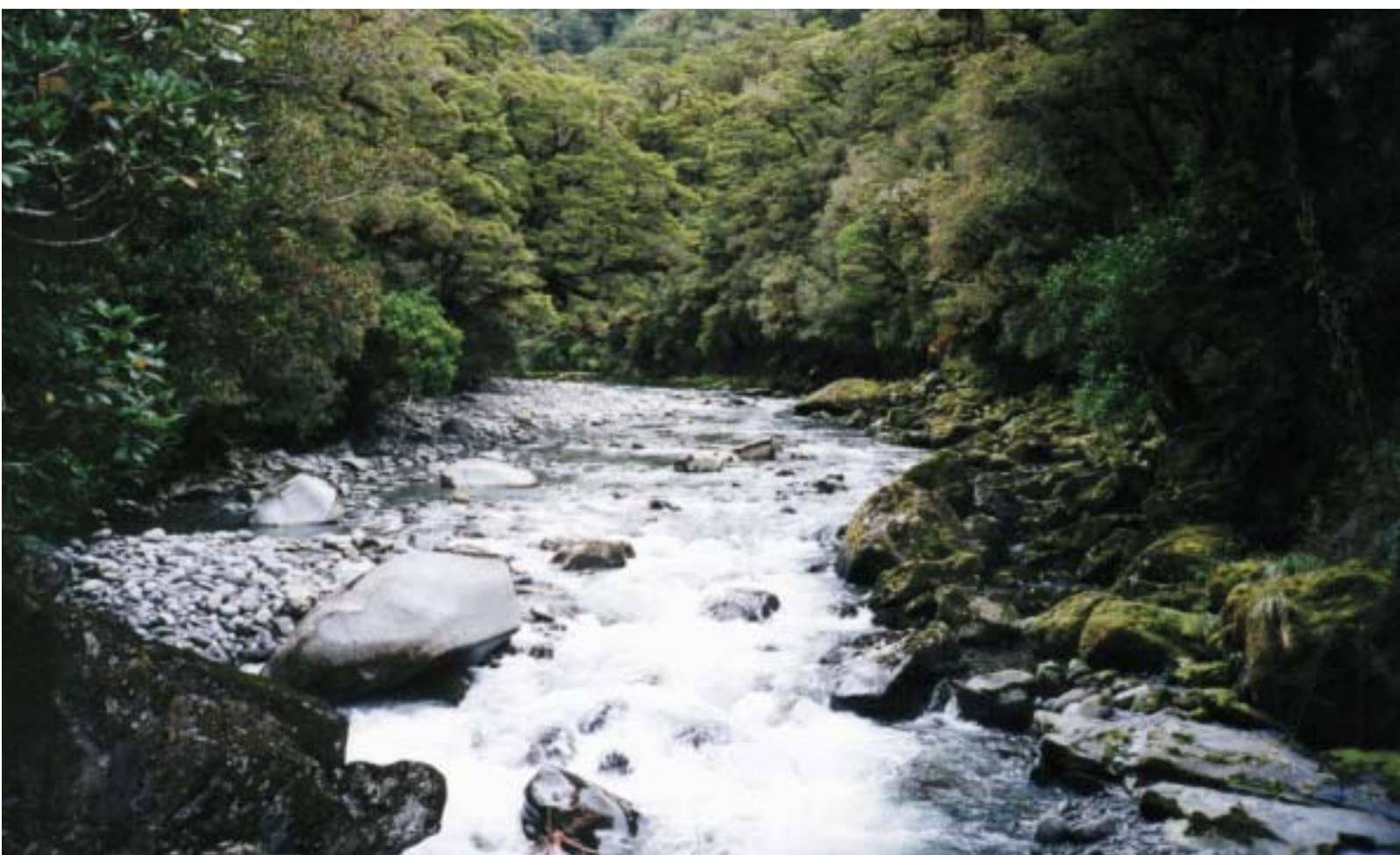


Annual Report of the

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NEW ZEALAND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa

for the period
1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004



Presented to the Minister of Conservation and tabled
in the House of Representatives pursuant to section
6E of the Conservation Act 1987



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*Front cover: Cleddau River, Fiordland National Park (February 2004) (Photographer:
Gavin Rodley/ Department of Conservation)*

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30 November 2004

Hon Chris Carter
Minister of Conservation
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

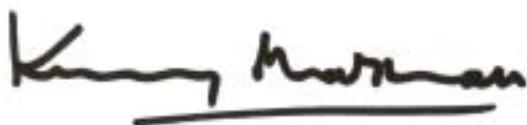
Dear Minister

I submit, in terms of section 6E of the Conservation Act 1987, the twelfth report of the New Zealand Conservation Authority, covering the period 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004.

The Act requires that the Authority shall “in each year make a report to the Minister on the exercise of its powers and functions.”

I wish to commend to you the contributions made by members of the Authority and the conservation boards during the year. I particularly want to acknowledge the active role the Authority and the conservation boards continue to play in helping shape conservation management in New Zealand.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Kerry Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Kerry Marshall
Chairperson

Vision Statement

In its statutory role, the New Zealand Conservation Authority/Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa will show leadership as an independent adviser on conservation. It will be an advocate for conservation within the framework of the Treaty of Waitangi by promoting, initiating and drawing attention to major conservation issues, and will seek to have all people participate in conservation in all facets of their lives.

New Zealand Conservation Authority Members

Front row: Left to right: Bryan Hutchins, David Chandler, Marian van der Goes, Wendy Nelson, Linda Conning, Katharine (Kath) Dickinson, Alan Mark, Lorraine Stephenson, Kerry Marshall (Chairperson)

Back row: Left to right: John Nankervis, Peter Geddes

Absent: Nganeko Minhinnick and Edward Ellison



Photograph of New Zealand Conservation Authority members on the side of the Te Anau – Milford Highway during their Southland visit on 11 to 15 February 2004

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1. INTRODUCTION

The New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority) met formally on six occasions during the 2003/2004 reporting period in August, October and December 2003, February, April and June 2004. Five of these meetings were held in Wellington; the other meeting was in Southland at Te Anau in February 2004.

Authority members met with members of the Southland Conservation Board and Kaitiaki Roopu (representing the four local runanga) in Invercargill. They visited Fiordland National Park, taking part in an overnight cruise on Milford Sound, a tour of the Te Anau Wildlife Park and a day trip, via boat, to Secretary Island (at the mouth of Doubtful Sound). Authority members appreciated the briefings they received from the Department of Conservation during their visit. With the review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan currently under way the visit gave members an opportunity to see some of the issues being considered at first hand.

The major task undertaken during the year was further work on the review of the statement of general policy for national parks, begun last year. The draft revised policy was notified for public submissions in August 2003 and an analysis of submissions was undertaken at the beginning of 2004, followed by a revision of the text by the Director-General of Conservation. A workshop was held in June 2004 to consider the proposals for revision.

The draft revised Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan was referred to the Authority in October 2003 and then to a committee of members for close consideration. At reporting year's end it was ready to be referred to the Minister of Conservation for his comments.

During the year the Authority kept its strategic priorities and other actions under tight scrutiny in an endeavour to operate at a high or strategic level and channel effort into areas where it could add value in debates about matters of national importance to conservation. The Authority adopted the following three-point test to determine whether it should become involved in an issue:

- (a) was there a role for critiquing or challenging by the Authority?
- (b) what value would the Authority's involvement add? and
- (c) could the Authority play a role in finding a way forward?

The Authority continued to work, through its working parties, on the following strategic priority areas during the reporting period:

- marine;
- visitor/natural/historical values interface;
- tussock grasslands and associated ecosystems;
- freshwater habitat; and
- pest control and biosecurity.

Officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Grant King and Mark Neeson, briefed the Authority on the feedback that had been received from the public about the Ministerial Land Access Reference Group's report titled "Walking Access in the New Zealand Outdoors" to which the Authority was a submitter in 2002/2003.

Brian Hayes (former Registrar-General of Land) gave the Authority an interesting insight into the history of the Queen's Chain concept in New Zealand. The Authority awaits an announcement by the Government with interest.

The Authority sponsored, as in the past, the biennial conference of conservation board chairpersons and conservation board support officers in Wellington. The Authority was represented at the conference by John Nankervis, Bryan Hutchins and Marian van der Goes.

Authority members welcomed opportunities to meet and discuss conservation issues (including tenure review) with the Hon Chris Carter, Minister of Conservation, on a number of occasions during the reporting period.

The Department of Conservation (the Department) services the Authority, in terms of a service agreement and its statutory responsibility under section 6J of the Conservation Act 1987. The annual satisfaction survey of Authority members confirmed that the level of satisfaction with the service provided by the Department is high.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

Membership of the Authority during the reporting period was as follows:

David Chandler, Auckland
Linda Conning, Te Teko
Katharine (Kath) Dickinson, Dunedin
Edward Ellison, Dunedin
Peter Geddes, Whangarei
Marian van der Goes, Milford Sound
Bryan Hutchins, Te Anau
Alan Mark, Dunedin
Kerry Marshall, Richmond (chairperson)
Nganeko Minhinnick, Waiuku
John Nankervis, Wellington
Wendy Nelson, Wellington
Lorraine Stephenson, Dannevirke

The members of the Authority were appointed by the Minister of Conservation for terms expiring on 31 May 2005. The Minister appointed Kerry Marshall as the chairperson of the Authority for the term of his appointment.

3. FEES AND ALLOWANCES

The chairperson receives a daily meeting fee of \$250 and other Authority members receive a daily meeting fee of \$190. Members can also be reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses incurred while engaged on Authority business.

Fees and allowances are paid in accordance with the Fees and Travelling Allowances Act 1951.

4. THE CONSERVATION ACT 1987

4.1 Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 states “This Act shall so be interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi”. The Authority is established under the Conservation Act 1987 and section 4 applies to the Authority in the discharge of its functions.

The Authority has developed a template to assist it to give effect to section 4 in its work. This template requires the Department to detail section 4 considerations in papers prepared for the Authority and the Authority to do the same in papers it generates.

The Authority completed the annual review of the template at its meeting in December 2003. The Authority was satisfied with the way in which the template was working. It identified that it was important to keep a record of section 4 issues and agreed positions.

4.2 Section 6B (1) of the Conservation Act 1987 – Functions of the Authority

(a) General Policy

The Authority, following an approach from the Minister of Conservation, agreed in December 2001, to review the statement of general policy for national parks on the understanding that the review would be concurrent with the development of a statement of general policy under the Conservation Act 1987 and other related legislation.

The draft revised general policy for national parks and the draft conservation general policy were both publicly notified in August 2003 with submissions closing on 19 December 2003. A series of briefings was held throughout the country between August and October involving Authority members, Department staff, conservation boards, iwi, conservation/community groups and members of the public. Fact sheets and information about the draft policies were also available on the Department’s website.

The Authority put forward a submission on the draft conservation general policy. This submission was confined to perceived gaps, omissions, definitions, confusions and desired differences between the two general policies.

1131 submissions were received on the draft general policy for national parks and a summary of submissions was prepared together with an analysis of submissions by Hill Young Cooper Limited.

The New Zealand Mountain Bike Association (NZMBA) mounted a campaign to secure support for its submission that mountain biking be permitted on some tracks in national parks. As a result, single issue submissions from mountain bikers supporting the NZMBA position made up the majority of submissions.

A small team of Authority members, Kerry Marshall, John Nankervis and Wendy Nelson, undertook the initial work to identify the issues raised in submissions, together with options for addressing major issues.

The Authority discussed the major issues at its meeting in April 2004 and established a number of subgroups to assist the Department with the redrafting work associated with

these issues. Kerry Marshall, John Nankervis, Wendy Nelson, and Marian van der Goes were appointed to oversee this work.

A workshop was held in June 2004 to consider proposed revisions.

At the time of writing this report, work on the draft revised general policy for national parks is continuing. The Authority hopes to approve the revised policy prior to the end of 2004.

(b) Conservation Management Strategies and Plans

A conservation management strategy (CMS) outlines a ten-year plan for integrated conservation management in a conservancy. Each conservancy's CMS is prepared by the Department in consultation with its conservation board. Once a CMS has been publicly released and amended in light of public submissions, the conservation board reviews the amendments and refers the CMS to the Authority for approval.

All CMSs, except for the West Coast CMS, have now been approved by the Authority. There are sixteen approved conservation management strategies.

The West Coast CMS was delayed, firstly due to the 1995 Cave Creek tragedy and secondly by the need to revise and re-notify the draft in light of the Department's additional management responsibilities resulting from the transfer of indigenous forest from Timberlands West Coast Limited in 2001/2002.

Several CMSs are now approaching the end of their 10-year timeframes and will shortly be reviewed. During the reporting period, George McMillan (former member of the Authority) represented the Authority on a consultative group which considered ways to improve the CMS development process and bring consistency to the overall approach and presentation of the conservation management strategies.

The Authority agreed to support the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the review of CMSs and provided advice during the drafting phase. Authority members received an update from departmental staff at their meeting in February 2004. The Authority acknowledges the importance of such an SOP and expresses its appreciation of George McMillan's work on its behalf.

Approval dates and/or status of conservation management strategies as at 30 June 2004 can be found in the First Schedule at back of this annual report.

The Authority supported the proposal by the Department's East Coast/Hawke's Bay Conservancy to extend the life of the Hawke's Bay CMS and amalgamate the Hawke's Bay and East Coast CMSs, with a combined review likely in 2006.

(c) Review of the Effectiveness of the Department of Conservation's Administration of General Policies

There are two general policies:

- (i) The General Policy for National Parks (published in 1983), and
- (ii) The New Zealand Walkways Policy (approved in 1995).

The above policies guide the Department in the development of CMSs and national park management plans (NPMPs). A review of the general policy for national parks is currently under way and a conservation general policy is being developed.

(d) Conservation Matters of National Importance

The Authority received presentations from the Department and/or submitted or provided advice on the following topics:

- Land Environments of New Zealand (LENZ);
- tenure review;
- application by the Pike River Coal Company Limited for an access arrangement with respect to the Pike River coalfield development;
- options for the review of the Himalayan Thar Control Plan;
- recreation opportunities review;
- concessions processing review project;
- mining licence on Mount Burnett;
- biosecurity research;
- deer farming notice no. 4 and other provisions relating to keeping deer in captivity;
- the responsible use of off-road vehicles;
- roading guidelines;
- Card Creek Ecological Area; and
- simplifying decision-making processes for freshwater aquatic life transfers.

The Authority was briefed by officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and Department of Conservation on the proposal to aerial spray *Bacillus thuringiensis var kurstaki* (Btk) over land administered under the Reserves Act 1977. The proposal was responding to incursions of fall webworm in Auckland and Asian gypsy moth in Hamilton. The Authority recommended to the Minister of Conservation that he approve the proposal, subject to the monitoring report on the effects of Btk on the natural environment being made available to the Authority.

The Authority considered an application by the Department to source, release and redistribute various weed biological control organisms onto public conservation land (including Tongariro National Park) in the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy in October 2003. It supported the application and recommended to the Minister of Conservation that he approve the application, with respect to Tongariro National Park, subject to a monitoring report on the effectiveness of the control organisms being made available to the Authority.

(e) Change of Status

See section 5.3

(f) Walkways

There was one meeting of the Department's Walkways Co-ordinating Group, held on 22 August 2003. This group was established in 2000 to share information relating to the management of walkways under the NZ Walkways Act 1990 and the implementation of the NZ Walkways Policy. David Chandler is the Authority's representative on the group.

The Authority, following an approach to the Surveyor-General, discovered that the current survey definition standards make it less costly to legally establish walkways than in the past. This information was circulated to the Department and conservation boards. It is hoped that this will enable some ungazetted walkways to be formally established by notice in the *NZ Gazette*.

The Authority arranged for 5000 orange walkway symbols to be produced and distributed to Department of Conservation offices throughout the country for use as markers on walkways. It is hoped this initiative, together with the revised NZ Walkways booklet launched in August 2003, will help promote existing walkways.

(g) Education and Publicity

The Authority contributed to the printing of the publication “The Conservation of Whales in the 21st Century”. It is hoped that this publication will encourage greater understanding of whale conservation and New Zealand’s approach to these marine mammals.

The NZ Walkways booklet proved to be popular and a reprint was undertaken. This booklet is also posted on the Department’s website (www.doc.govt.nz) in a form that allows for details of walkways to be printed off on a conservancy by conservancy basis.

Demand has continued for the 1999 publication “Pests and Weeds: A blueprint for action” and the 1997 customary use documents. These documents can be downloaded from the Authority’s webpage (www.conservationauthority.org.nz).

Information on the Authority’s webpage (within the Department’s website) was maintained throughout the year. Copies of minutes and agendas as well as details about the Authority’s members and functions can be found there.

In response to requests from a number of conservation boards, the Authority embarked on a campaign to highlight the adverse impacts of off-road vehicles on coastal and other fragile environments. It wrote to various Ministers, Government agencies, regional, district and city councils, and advertising agencies identifying its concerns and stressing the need for a co-ordinated approach towards the problem. The Authority was heartened by the replies it received, particularly from councils, outlining the various initiatives that are taking place throughout New Zealand to avoid or mitigate vehicle impacts.

Kerry Marshall met with the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) to discuss the Authority’s concerns about the way off-road vehicle use is portrayed in advertisements and the Authority, following an invitation from the ASA, has provided feedback on its draft Code for Advertising Vehicles. The Authority welcomed the opportunity to try to influence how off-road use of vehicles is advertised in the future.

The Authority approached three advertisers whose advertisements, in the opinion of the Authority, encouraged irresponsible or thoughtless behaviour by off-road vehicle users in fragile environments. All three advertisements have since been withdrawn.

(h) Priorities for Expenditure by the Department of Conservation

Section 6B (1) (h) of the Conservation Act 1987 provides for the Authority “to advise the Minister and the Director-General annually on priorities for the expenditure of money”. The Authority discussed priorities for expenditure at its meeting in August 2003 and

identified the following priorities for expenditure for the Department's 2004/2005 business planning year:

- increased attention to the control of weeds and pests (via integrated pest management);
- more focus on the establishment of a network of marine protected areas; and
- increased efforts to protect the eastern South Island tussock grasslands.

(i) New Zealand Fish and Game Council Liaison

Section 6B (1) (i) of the Conservation Act 1987 provides for the Authority to liaise with the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

The Authority provided the Council with copies of its agendas and meeting papers during the reporting period.

Bryce Johnson and Mike Britton (Fish and Game New Zealand) attended several meetings of the Authority. At the Authority's meeting in August 2003, Bryce Johnson gave Authority members an insight into some of the key strategic areas where Fish and Game New Zealand was focussing its efforts.

Bryce Johnson raised concerns with the Authority about sports fish, with respect to the review of the general policy for national parks, and these concerns are currently being worked through with Fish and Game New Zealand.

Wendy Nelson and John Nankervis attended a meeting of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council on 23 May 2004.

(j) Ministerial Delegations

There were no Ministerial delegations during this reporting period.

4.3 Section 6C of the Conservation Act 1987 - Powers of the Authority

(a) Establishment of committees

The following committees were operative:

Training Committee

Edward Ellison, Marian van der Goes, Kerry Marshall, Lorraine Stephenson, Peter Geddes and Nganeko Minhinnick. This committee was established to address the training needs of conservation board members, including any specific needs of Maori board members, with the focus being how to assist members contribute to the better discharge of board functions.

Onepoto Pine Trees Committee

John Nankervis (convenor), Alan Mark and Wendy Nelson. This committee was established to consider a request from Quentin Mines for a determination under section 4 (2) of the National Parks Act 1980. Quentin Mines sought the retention of a stand of pine trees, located just within Te Urewera National Park at Onepoto. The committee decided not to make a determination.

Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan Committee

Marian van der Goes (convenor), Alan Mark, Bryan Hutchins and Edward Ellison. The draft revised Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan was received at the Authority meeting held in October 2003.

(b) Advocate the Interests of the Authority

The Authority made submissions to the Ministry of Fisheries on the following:

- fisheries management proposals relating to brown bullhead catfish; and
- proposals to bring North Island freshwater eels under the Quota Management System.

These submissions were consistent with the priorities established for freshwater habitat by the Authority.

The Authority approached the Minister of Conservation about its own and a number of conservation boards' concerns regarding the poor state of the eel fishery. It has recommended to the Minister that he consider measures to reverse its decline, such as closing access to fishing on public conservation land during downstream migration; pressing for national size limits for each species; closing areas of public conservation land to commercial fishing; advocating for bypass flows or other mechanisms to assist downstream migration past all hydro dams; and initiating or supporting research into the effects of whitebaiting on glass eel survival and eel recruitment.

The Authority, following on from its interest in the programme of action for quality and allocation of freshwater, received a presentation on the programme from officials of the Ministry for the Environment.

Lorraine Stephenson and Peter Geddes represented the Authority at the Royal Society of New Zealand's "Freshwater Conference" in Auckland on 13 and 14 November 2003.

Marian van der Goes made representations, on behalf of the Authority, to the Foundation of Research, Science and Technology on environmental research priorities and funding in support of the Authority's conviction that sound science is essential for good conservation.

The Authority made a submission to the reviewer of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, based on a set of coastal principles that it adopted at its meeting in December 2003.

5. FUNCTIONS UNDER THE NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980

5.1 General Policy for National Parks

A review of the general policy is currently in progress. See comments under section 4.2.

5.2 National Park Management Plans

Details of national park management plans' approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2004 can be found in the Second Schedule at the back of this annual report.

The Authority considered the draft revised Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan during the reporting period. It was ready for referral to the Minister of Conservation for his comments at the end of the reporting period.

5.3 **Establishment of, Additions to, and Deletions from National Parks**

The Authority recommended to the Minister of Conservation that part of Te Urewera National Park, known as the proposed Ruakituri Wilderness Area, be set apart as a wilderness area and that the Oteha Wilderness Area in Arthur's Pass National Park be revoked.

The Authority supported the exclusion of a number of small areas from Kahurangi National Park between Glenhope and Kawatiri Junction and Owen River (situated beside State Highway No. 6) for road realignment purposes.

5.4 **National Park Investigations**

No new national park investigations were initiated during this reporting period.

The Authority agreed at its meeting in December 2003 to a request by Forest and Bird to defer until December 2004 any formal consideration of Forest & Bird's proposal to establish a national park in the Kaikoura Ranges. The request was made in light of potential changes in land tenure adjacent to existing conservation land in the Kaikoura Ranges, which could affect the park proposal; release of the draft general policies for national parks and conservation lands for public comment; and the wider debate about a network of high country parks and reserves.

6. **MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

6.1 **JD Stout Trust** - the Authority is a member of the J D Stout Trust. The Trust makes donations or interest-free loans for conservation and cultural purposes. Kerry Marshall is the Authority's representative.

6.2 **The World Conservation Union (IUCN)** - the Authority is one of seven members of the New Zealand Committee of the IUCN. This committee holds meetings quarterly. Wendy Nelson is the Authority's representative.

The Authority decided to continue its membership of the IUCN for the 2004 and 2005 financial years. It felt it was important to support an international forum where conservation issues could be discussed and the particular conservation interests of Pacific nations could be pursued.

Kerry Marshall represented the Authority at the 5th World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, from 8 to 17 September 2003 as part of the Department of Conservation's delegation.

6.3 **Threatened Species Trust** – the Authority chairperson is a trustee. This Trust meets once a year.

7. CONSERVATION BOARDS

7.1 Conservation Board Nominations

The Minister is required to consult with the Authority prior to appointing members to conservation boards. In May 2004, the Authority provided its advice to the Minister with respect to the conservation board appointments for 2004.

7.2 Authority/Conservation Board Liaison

One Authority member acts as an Authority liaison person with each conservation board. The following members are the liaison persons with the conservation boards indicated:

Conservation Board	Authority Liaison Person
Northland	Peter Geddes
Auckland	David Chandler
Waikato	Nganeko Minhinnick
Bay of Plenty	Linda Conning
Tongariro/Taupo	John Nankervis
East Coast/Hawke's Bay	Lorraine Stephenson/Linda Conning
Taranaki/Whanganui	Wendy Nelson
Wellington	Kath Dickinson
Chatham Islands	Wendy Nelson
Nelson/Marlborough	Kerry Marshall
West Coast Tai Poutini	Marian van der Goes
Canterbury/Aoraki	Alan Mark
Otago	Edward Ellison
Southland	Bryan Hutchins

The Authority meets away from Wellington once or twice a year and uses that opportunity to meet with conservation boards and discuss local conservation issues of national importance. As noted at the start of this report, the Authority met with the Southland Conservation Board in Invercargill in February 2004.

7.3 Annual Reports

The fourteen conservation boards have furnished the Authority with their annual reports for the year ended 30 June 2004 in accordance with section 6O of the Conservation Act 1987.

7.4 Implementation of Conservation Management Strategies

Most conservation boards have adopted systematic processes for monitoring CMS progress and providing advice to the Department's conservancies as they implement conservation management strategies. The boards have reported on this monitoring in their annual reports.

7.5 Conservation Management Plans

No plans were approved.

7.6 Board Advice and Advocacy

Boards were involved in a wide range of issues and processes throughout the reporting year. Most boards were involved in statutory advocacy through regional and district planning and resource consent applications. They all made submissions on the draft statements of general policy notified for public submissions.

The following table lists some of the issues and activities of individual boards during the reporting period. These matters are more fully covered in the boards' individual annual reports.

CONSERVATION BOARD	Brief summary of the main issues and activities of the board during the reporting period
<i>Northland</i>	Marine conservation issues (e.g. Marine Reserves Bill, proposed marine reserves, including the proposed Mimiwhangata Marine Reserve); Bay of Islands development issues; marine national parks concept; introduction of further species into the fisheries quota management system; marine mammal tourism; beach erosion; aquaculture management areas and the development of a more effective way of monitoring the Department's progress with the implementation of the conservation management strategy for the Northland Conservancy.
<i>Auckland</i>	The eradication of kiore from Hauturu (Little Barrier Island); recent changes in legislation through the Land Transport Management Act with a greater emphasis on preserving the environment which have forced a rethink about the northern motorway extension; and marine conservation issues surrounding customary take, commercial and recreational fishing and marine reserves.
<i>Waikato</i>	Promotion and encouragement of organisations involved in significant community conservation initiatives such as the National Wetlands Trust, Farm Environment Award Trust and Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust. Monitoring the implementation of the CMS for the Waikato Conservancy has highlighted problems associated with the effective erosion of baseline funding for the Department to carry out expected duties and tasks over time. Responsiveness of the Department to Treaty responsibilities.

<i>Bay of Plenty</i>	Monitoring CMS implementation; developing better ways to monitor the implementation of section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987; submissions on a range of conservation issues including the introduction of kahawai, North Island eels and other species into the fisheries quota management system; Waikato's Regional Policy Statement - geothermal module; walking access in the New Zealand outdoors; Environment Bay of Plenty's draft policy on regional parks; and review of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement. The board also organised a geothermal forum as a way to promote better recognition and protection of geothermal resources in the Bay of Plenty.
<i>East Coast/Hawke's Bay</i>	Implementing aspects of the Te Urewera National Park Management Plan, in particular securing the necessary ministerial approval to set apart the Ruakituri Wilderness Area and the establishment of new by laws; commented on the draft CMS review SOP and the concessions processing review as well as a number of other local conservation issues.
<i>Tongariro/Taupo</i>	Revision of the Tongariro National Park Management Plan; review of the Kaimanawa Forest Park Management Plan and undertaken monitoring of the implementation by the Department of the CMS for the Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy.
<i>Taranaki/Whanganui</i>	Review of the Whanganui National Park Management Plan; and advocacy for more funding towards field research into the effectiveness of animal control techniques to protect kiwi chicks and the kiwi recovery policy being directed towards the pursuit of protection in situ of the remaining kiwi populations, rather than kiwi sanctuaries.
<i>Wellington</i>	Continued advocacy work on water quality; pressure on coastal areas from subdivision and the retention of its natural character; raising concern with the Ministry of Fisheries about the decline in the North Island eel stocks and monitoring the Department's implementation of the CMS for the Wellington Conservancy. In partnership with the Department, and with support from the Minister of Conservation the board held the presentation of its annual conservation awards in Parliament.

<i>Nelson/Marlborough</i>	Instigated discussions on freshwater issues within the Nelson/Marlborough region as freshwater is expected to be an environmental issue of major significance in future; and provided advice to the Department on a number of national and local issues. Involved in plans for Queen Charlotte Track management and the Kahurangi National Park air access strategy.
<i>West Coast</i>	Preparation of submissions on the two draft general policies; provision of advice to the Department on a number of concession applications; comment on some major resource consent applications such as Pike River and Solid Energy's Cypress Mine proposal and took an active part in the Department's West Coast Recreational Opportunities Review.
<i>Canterbury Aoraki</i>	Review of the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Management Plan; close involvement with local communities and provided advice to the Department on a number of conservation issues, including concession applications, predator control, land status changes and tenure review.
<i>Otago</i>	Project Aqua on the Waitaki River - a great deal of time and thought was put into this issue by the board; primary focus continues to be high country tenure review and the impacts of new and rapid economic development in Central Otago on well-loved and iconic landscapes of the region, and the pressure of tourism growth on conservation land in Central and Coastal Otago.
<i>Southland</i>	The review of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan; advocacy work on freshwater issues in Southland, including involvement with the proposed regional freshwater plan and commercial surface water activities in the fiords via submissions on a number of resource consent applications; and the management of concessions at visitor hot-spots in Southland.
<i>Chatham Islands</i>	Biosecurity; continuation of strong linkages with the local community; taken a keen interest in the reports detailing progress by the Department to implement the CMS for the Chatham Islands and provided advice to the Department on cultural taonga allocation; transfer of buff weka; research proposals and land status changes.

8. CONCLUSION

The overwhelming focus for the Authority over the past year has been on the revision of the General Policy for National Parks.

Authority members have worked “hand in glove” with the policy writers to ensure that the policies will provide effective guidance and direction to both the Department and the users of national parks for the next 20 years or so.

I have been impressed by the Authority members’ willingness to spend extraordinary amounts of time to fine-tune the policy language so that there should be no misinterpretation of their intent.

As tourism numbers grow in both domestic and international terms, more “use” will be sought of public conservation lands. National parks will continue to bear the brunt of that pressure. The new General Policy will require all planning documents to identify the values of different places, the desired outcomes based on those values and then set objectives for management so as to achieve those outcomes. We would like to think that these processes will ensure both protection and appropriate use for a sustainable future of these iconic public conservation lands.

The Authority has taken an active interest in the land tenure review process and associated outcomes. The Government’s \$79 million funding package to resource tenure review was seen by the Authority as an essential prerequisite to establishing a network of parks and reserves in the South Island high country. The Authority has been heartened by the work over the last year, in particular the Clent Hills Station and Birchwood Station purchases. They are examples of good results for conservation that can be achieved when leaseholders and the Government work together. The Authority sees these results as benchmarks to inspire future negotiations.

We have held a number of meetings and presentations (amongst ourselves and with other others) with the Minister and the Department. Both audiences have been receptive to Authority views on land tenure review and other key conservation issues that we raised from time to time.

Threats to our indigenous flora and fauna, both on land and in the marine area, are matters of considerable concern to the Authority. We need to ensure that intrinsic values and the needs of the plants and animals which live in these environments are safeguarded, as policy is developed addressing the future development and management of these resources.

Recent monitoring of New Zealand’s public conservation lands indicates that while some brilliant and innovative mechanisms are employed by the Department and others to save our flora and fauna, we are barely holding the line. While there is a burgeoning community involvement and engagement throughout New Zealand, we will not save the world until all New Zealanders actively commit to the conservation ethic.

There are plenty of challenges for the Authority and all New Zealanders associated with the management of our environment that need to be tackled. Sitting on our hands and letting things slip by, is not an option. Our environment is an integral part of our lives that makes New Zealand special; it needs our continued and vigilant attention.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

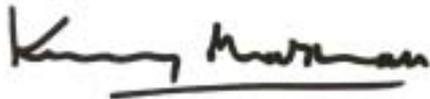
I wish to acknowledge the Government's commitment to protecting New Zealand's environment but there is still much to be done.

I also want to acknowledge the members of the Authority for their dedication to the work of the Authority over the past year. It has been a superb effort and I thank them for that.

We have been fortunate in having a Minister of Conservation who is engaging and enthusiastic in matters conservation. I have personally appreciated his accessibility and support. The Minister and his Government continue to provide tangible support to New Zealand's natural heritage through targeted funding.

I would like to thank Hugh Logan, the Director-General for his continued support and co-operation with the Authority. His staff who service the Authority and those who work closely with it rate a special mention this year for their sterling efforts and commitment.

Finally I acknowledge the efforts and energy of conservation board members and their associated staff for their work in addressing a myriad range of conservation issues in the past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerry Marshall", with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Kerry Marshall
Chairperson
New Zealand Conservation Authority

FIRST SCHEDULE

Approval dates and/or status of conservation management strategies as at 30 June 2004

CMS	APPROVAL DATES/STATUS
Northland	Approved in April 1999 on the understanding that a review would be considered after 3 years. The decision to develop general policy delayed the review.
Auckland	Approved in June 1995
Waikato	Approved in September 1996
Bay of Plenty	Approved in December 1997
East Coast	Approved in October 1998
Tongariro/Taupo	Approved in April 2002
Wanganui	Approved in April 1997
Hawke's Bay	Approved in September 1994
Wellington	Approved in March 1996
Nelson/Marlborough	Approved in September 1996
West Coast	Refer to third paragraph of section 4.2 (b)
Canterbury Aoraki	Approved in June 2000
Otago	Approved in June 1998
Southland	Stewart Island approved in December 1997 Subantarctic Islands approved in July 1998 Mainland Southland/West Otago approved in July 1998
Chatham Islands	Approved in August 1999

SECOND SCHEDULE

National park management plans - approval dates and/or status of reviews as at 30 June 2004

National Park Management Plan	Date approved	Review update
Abel Tasman	July 1986	Currently under review
Aoraki/ Mount Cook	August 2004	
Arthur's Pass	October 1994	Currently under review
Egmont	February 2002	
Fiordland	August 1991	Currently under review
Kahurangi	June 2001	
Mt Aspiring	October 1994	Currently under review
Nelson Lakes	October 2002	
Paparoa	November 1992	
Rakiura	To be prepared	
Te Urewera	February 2003	
Tongariro	December 1989	Currently under review
Westland	December 2001	
Whanganui	March 1989	Currently under review